

unlimited in space, it traces the skirts of the forest till they are wholly lost in the aërial distance, dashes the mountain torrent from cliff to cliff, and spreads the deep azure of the tropical sky alike over the summits of the lofty palms and over the waving grass of the plain that bounds the horizon. The luminous and colored effects imparted to all terrestrial objects by the light of the thinly-veiled or pure tropical sky, gives a peculiar and mysterious power to landscape painting, when the artist succeeds in reproducing this mild effect of light. The sky in the landscape has, from a profound appreciation for the nature of Greek tragedy, been ingeniously compared to the charm of the *chorus* in its general and mediative effect.*

The multiplication of means at the command of painting for exciting the fancy, and concentrating the grandest phenomena of sea and land on a small space, is denied to our plantations and gardens, but this deficiency in the total effect is compensated for by the sway which reality every where exercises over the senses. When, in the Messrs. Loddiges' palm-house, or in the *Pfauen-Insel*, near Potsdam (a monument of the simple love of nature of my noble and departed sovereign), we look down from the high gallery in the bright noonday sun on the luxuriant reed and tree-like palms below, we feel, for a moment, in a state of complete delusion as to the locality to which we are transported, and we may even believe ourselves to be actually in a tropical climate, looking from the summit of a hill on a small grove of palms. It is true that the aspect of the deep azure of the sky, and the impression produced by a greater intensity of light, are wanting, but, notwithstanding, the illusion is more perfect, and exercises a stronger effect on the imagination than is excited by the most perfect painting. Fancy associates with every plant the wonders of some distant region, as we listen to the rustling of the fan-like leaves, and see the changing and flitting effect of the light, when the tops of the palms, gently moved by currents of air, come in contact as they wave to and fro. So great is the charm produced by reality, although the recollection of the artificial care bestowed on the plants certainly exercises a disturbing influence. Perfect development and freedom are inseparably connected with nature, and in the eyes of the zealous and botanical traveler, the dried plants of an herbarium, collected on the Cordilleras of South America or in the plains of India, are often more precious than the aspect of the same species of plants within a European hot-

* Willh. von Humboldt, in his *Briefwechsel mit Schiller*, 1830, s. 470.