

ready acquainted with a great variety of vegetable forms. The intimate connection which existed among the different Buddhist sacerdotal establishments contributed its influence in this respect. Temples, cloisters, and burying-places were surrounded by gardens, adorned with exotic trees, and covered by variegated flowers of different forms. Indian plants were early diffused over China, Corea, and Nipon. Siebold, whose writings give a comprehensive view of all matters referring to Japan, was the first to draw attention to the cause of the mixture of the floras of remotely-separated Buddhist lands.\*

The rich abundance of characteristic vegetable forms presented by the present age to scientific observation and to landscape painting, must act as a powerful incentive to trace the sources which have yielded us this increased knowledge and enjoyment of nature. The enumeration of these sources must be reserved for the history of the contemplation of nature in the succeeding portion of this work. Here my object has been to depict, in the reflection of the external world on the mental activity and the feelings of mankind, those means which, in the progress of civilization, have exercised so marked and animated an influence on the study of nature. Notwithstanding a certain freedom of development of the several parts, the primitive force of organization binds all animal and vegetable forms to fixed and constantly-recurring types, determining, in every zone, the character that peculiarly appertains to it, or *the physiognomy of nature*. We may therefore regard it as one of the most precious fruits of European civilization, that it is almost every where permitted to man, by the cultivation and arrangement of exotic plants, by the charm of landscape painting, and by the inspired power of language, to procure a substitute for familiar scenes during the period of absence, or to receive a portion of that enjoyment from nature which is yielded by actual contemplation during long and not unfrequently dangerous journeys through the interior of distant continents.

\* Ph. Fr. von Siebold, *Kruidkundige Naamlijst van Japansche en Chinese Planten*, 1844, p. 4. What a difference do we not find on comparing the variety of vegetable forms cultivated for so many centuries past in Eastern Asia, with those enumerated by Columella, in his meager poem *De Cultu Hortorum* (v. 95-105, 174-176, 225-271, 295-306), and to which the celebrated garland-weavers of Athens were confined! It was not until the time of the Ptolemies that in Egypt, and especially in Alexandria, the more skillful gardeners appear to have devoted any great attention to variety, particularly for winter cultivation. (Compare *Athen.*, v., p. 196.)