

nature is not lost even in the vicinity of large cities; for the natural vegetation of the hedges and hillsides overpowers in picturesque effect the artificial labor of man. Hence there are only a few spots where the bright red soil affords a strong contrast with the universal clothing of green. From the edges of the plain there are distant views either of the ocean, or of the great bay with its low-wooded shores, and on which numerous boats and canoes show their white sails. Excepting from these points, the scene is extremely limited; following the level pathways, on each hand, only glimpses into the wooded valleys below can be obtained. The houses, I may add, and especially the sacred edifices, are built in a peculiar and rather fantastic style of architecture. They are all white-washed; so that when illumined by the brilliant sun of mid-day, and as seen against the pale blue sky of the horizon, they stand out more like shadows than real buildings.

Such are the elements of the scenery, but it is a hopeless attempt to paint the general effect. Learned naturalists describe these scenes of the tropics by naming a multitude of objects, and mentioning some characteristic feature of each. To a learned traveller this possibly may communicate some definite ideas: but who else from seeing a plant in a herbarium can imagine its appearance when growing in its native soil? Who from seeing choice plants in a hothouse can magnify some into the dimensions of forest trees, and crowd others into an entangled jungle? Who when examining in the cabinet of the entomologist the gay exotic butterflies, and singular cicadas, will associate with these lifeless objects the ceaseless harsh music of the latter, and the lazy flight of the former—the sure accompaniments of the still, glowing noon-day of the tropics? It is when the sun has attained its greatest height that such scenes should be viewed: then the dense splendid foliage of the mango hides the ground with its darkest shade, while the upper branches are rendered, from the profusion of light, of the most brilliant green. In the temperate zones the case is different—the vegetation there is not so dark or so rich, and hence the rays of the declining