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A
SELECTION
OF THE
CORRESPONDENCE
OF
LINNÆUS,
AND
OTHER NATURALISTS,
FROM THE
Original Manuscripts.

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IN TWO VOLUMES.

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You have been a severe critic of Rivinus, but I shall think you very great if you do not fall under the same censure. If you assume rules, you ought to follow them, else you can accomplish no system. If you lay down natural classes, you ought to conform to them. How much circumspection becomes necessary! If you infringe any of their limits, you commit a fault. If you can combine them all, and proceed in safety through them, you will be more fortunate than any other man. But if you go in search of affinities, independent of rules or combinations, what do you produce? not the promised system. Would you follow the traces of Morison?

Are the outermost flowers of the *Opulus* irregular*? and what then is your definition of regularity?

Why is any one wrong in assigning a solitary seed to *Sanguisorba*, and four seeds to *Tormentilla* †? The latter may be as correct as eight or sixteen.

Why may not trees with an umbilicated fruit be associated with such as are otherwise? I fear you do not well understand what is meant by this term. Do you place *Rubus* in a different class from *Rosa*? Are you not rather incautious here?

I should like to see your characters of *Orchis* and its allies, not taken from the spur. Do but turn over the American species in Plukenet, Petiver, and

* "They are." Haller.

† "There are more." Haller.

Ray; and in the first place the European ones in Vaillant, &c.

Page 8. You object to Tournefort's system. I allow that he has his errors, and in great number; yet no system more natural than his has been seen before or since. I confess that many of his classes are entirely arbitrary. I wish you may be able to reduce them all to natural classes. Tournefort's *Labiatae*, *Cruciformes*, *Liliacei*, *Umbellati*, *Papilionacei*, and *Compositi*, are all good*, with a few slight additions or removals.

Page 9. Pontedera struck upon rocks which Tournefort avoided, for Pontedera was less solicitous of following nature. He undoubtedly created great confusion in the order of *Compositi*; but in many instances he was useful, though less so than Vaillant. Pontedera was almost the only philosophical botanist, though I cannot every where subscribe to his theory.

You say "Knaut's method was overthrown by Dillenius." Why is this? There surely was never a more unjust judge than Dillenius, in his apology for various methods. I wonder he was never answered. He certainly deserved it. He wrote learnedly indeed, and was therefore worthy of a learned reply.

As to Magnol, I regret that we have not more artificial methods, founded on various parts. If we had, they might easily help us to decide in which

* "But they are not Tournefort's own." Haller.

classes any particular part of the fructification was of importance, and in which it was not.

With regard to Vaillant, I have never yet met with any body more sagacious in genera than he was, and I am daily sensible of this. Possibly he may have given characters where you say there are none. And what if he has not correctly ascertained the plants of Bauhin? Can this be always done with accuracy from imperfect descriptions, without figures, and without particular information? If I should publish an absurd definition, are all to be reckoned unlearned who may not understand me?

In your judgment of the systems of Boerhaave and Ray I agree, that their classes are faulty in the point in question; but are there any preferable to them?

I wonder at your conjunction of *Lychnis* and *Rapunculus*!

That trees ought not to be separated from herbs, is evident upon inspection; for in what does an herb differ from a tree?

Page 10. Are there not herbs with an umbilicated fruit and others not so, as well as trees?

Are not *Cachrys* and *Simpla nobla* * arborescent, though of the tribe with two naked seeds?

Is not *Tournefortia*, though a tree, one of the *Asperifoliae*?

Are there not shrubs without end among the *Labiatae*, or plants with four naked seeds?

* *Phyllis nobla*. Linn. Sp. Pl. 335.

How many arboreous species of *Conyza* have we from Africa and America, as well as other very large trees with compound flowers?

What do you understand by the double calyx of *Chenopodium*, or a calyx of the fruit different from the common calyx *?

Have you traced any distinctive characters among the cups of the Lichens? or do you derive any from the quantity of their leaves?

Page 11. I wonder that, after having seen Plummer's book on Ferns, you can look for their characters in the shape of the leaves.

Certainly I never saw your genera, nor those of Dillenius, before my own were written. It is curious to observe how we, nevertheless, have adopted the same opinion in various places. So it happens with respect to the flower of the *Unifolium*, my account of which occurs in a page of the *Flora Lapponica*, printed in April last year.

Page 13. You cite Vaillant and Dillenius whenever you wish to give an example of any faults. Who has always avoided errors? happy is he who commits the smallest number! I would not, if I could, pick out the faults of good authors. There are easier modes of correcting others.

Page 16. You assign to the *Uva Ursi* a four-cleft calyx; and you elsewhere say it has eight stamens. The *Uva Ursi* of *Fl. Lapp.* t. 6, f. 3, known

* Haller apparently means the *Utriculus* of some recent authors, a fine close membrane covering the seed in *Chenopodium*.

to me from my childhood, has always ten stamens, with a five-cleft calyx*. Have you any other species under this name?

You object to a definition of parts, founded on their use, or physiology; and you reprehend Pontederia on this account. I doubt whether you could, in zoological subjects, define the nose, otherwise than by its use, so as to render your definition applicable to every kind of animal, as birds, fishes, insects, &c. The task would surely be difficult.

This very day your kind present of plants is come to hand, for which I cannot sufficiently thank you, but I will do all I can to show my gratitude. Among them all the *Aphyllanthes* has given me most pleasure, as your specimen enables me to supply what was wanting in my character of that genus.

Anonis alpina humilior, radice ampld†, seems a species of *Trifolium*, not of *Anonis*, though there are many seeds in each pod!

Androsace alpina angustifolia glabra, flore singulari‡, appears to be wanting, which I much regret. I wish I could see but a flower, to know certainly whether it be my *Diapensia* §.

Salix alpina, alni folio rotundo glabra is *Fl. Lapp. n. 355* ||.

* "Right," says Haller in a note. He had evidently confounded the *Arbutus* in question with *Vaccinium Vitis Idæa*,

† *Trifolium alpinum*. Linn. Sp. Pl. 1080.

‡ *Androsace lactea*. Linn. Sp. Pl. 204.

§ "They are widely different." Haller.

|| *S. herbacea*, Linn. Sp. Pl. 1445.

*Alchemilla affinis alpina** seems a species of *Alsinella*, or rather *Arenaria*.

The *Thora* † I never saw before, and I rejoice to have now seen its nectaries, so as to ascertain that point.

Cruciata alpina latifolia lævis, in my garden is only a male plant. What you have sent has stamens and pistils in the same flower ‡. Have you ever seen the male? Is it a different species from the *Rubia quadrifolia vel latifolia lævis* of C. Bauhin, or *Rubia quadrifolia italica hirsuta* of J. Bauhin?

Polygaloides and *Chamæbuxus* are but varieties of the same species §.

Acini pulchra species || is a species of *Teucrium*, and comes very near the *Marum Cortusi*. The upper lip of the corolla is wanting.

Salix alpina rotundifolia incana, is *Fl. Lapp. n. 359, t. 7, f. 1, 2* (*S. reticulata*).

Astragalus alpinus, foliis vicæ, ramosus, &c. is *Fl. Lapp. n. 267* (*A. alpinus*). I perceive, by another specimen, the *A. Onobrychis dictus* is sufficiently different in appearance. Whether these two

* "*Cherleria*." Haller.

† *Ranunculus Thora*. Linn. Sp. Pl. 775.

‡ "It is always androgynous." Haller. The plant is *Asperula taurina* of Linnæus.

§ "The same plant." Haller.

|| *Thymus alpinus*. Linn. Sp. Pl. 326. Haller rightly says, "the upper lip is not wanting."