

succession of individuals, that is, species. Men have had no influence on independent animals, but they have greatly altered, modified, and changed domestic ones; therefore, we have made physical and real generas, greatly different from metaphysical and arbitrary ones, which have never existed but in idea. These physical genera, are in reality composed of all the species, which by our management have been modified and changed, and as all these species so differently altered by the hand of man, have but one common and simple origin in nature, the whole genus ought to form but one species. For example, in writing the history of tigers, we have admitted as many species as are found in all the different parts of the world, because, we are certain that man has never subjected, nor changed the species of those untractable animals, which subsist at present such as Nature produced them. It is the same with all other free and independent animals. But in composing the history of oxen and sheep, we have reduced all the first under the species of a single ox; and the latter under that of a single sheep, because, it is also certain, that man, and not Nature, has produced the different kinds which we have enumerated. Every thing concurs to support this idea, which, although clear in itself, may not, perhaps,