

nefert, which was governed by the corolla; for number is more definite than irregular form. It was more readily employed than any of those which depend on the fruit, for the flower is a more obvious object, and more easily examined. Still, it can hardly be doubted, that the circumstance which gave the main currency to the system of Linnæus was its physiological signification: it was the *Sexual System*. The relation of the parts to which it directed the attention, interested both the philosophical faculty and the imagination. And when, soon after the system had become familiar in our own country, the poet of *The Botanic Garden* peopled the bell of every flower with "Nymphs" and "Swains," his imagery was felt to be by no means forced and far-fetched.

The history of the doctrine of the sexes of plants, as a point of physiology, does not belong to this place; and the Linnæan system of classification need not be longer dwelt upon for our present purpose. I will only explain a little further what has been said, that it is, up to a certain point, a natural system. Several of Linnæus's classes are, in a great measure, natural associations, kept together in violation of his own artificial rules. Thus the class *Diadelphica*, in which, by the system, the filaments of the stamina should be bound together in two parcels, does, in fact, contain many genera which are *monadelphous*, the filaments of the stamina all cohering so as to form one bundle only; as in *Genista*, *Spartium*, *Anthyllis*, *Lupinus*, &c. And why is this violation of rule? Precisely because these genera all belong to the natural tribe of Papilionaceous plants, which the author of the system could not prevail upon himself to tear asunder. Yet in other cases Linnæus was true to his system, to the injury of natural alliances, as he was, for instance, in another portion of this very tribe of *Papilionaceæ*; for there are plants which undoubtedly belong to the tribe, but which have ten separate stamens; and these he placed in the order *Decandria*. Upon the whole, however, he inclines rather to admit transgression of art than of nature.

The reason of this inclination was, that he rightly considered an artificial method as instrumental to the investigation of a natural one; and to this part of his views we now proceed.

Sect. 5.—Linnæus's Views on a Natural Method.

THE admirers of Linnæus, the English especially, were for some time in the habit of putting his Sexual System in opposition to the Natural Method, which about the same time was attempted in France. And