

While the herbalists were working away with quiet enthusiasm in the north, and before their labours reached their culmination in the industry of Cesalpino. Bauhin, a greater than any of them had arisen in the south. This was Andrea Cesalpino (1519-1603), a "thinker in presence of the plant world". Although he was Aristotelian in bone and marrow—a teleologist, that is to say, and a believer in "the vegetable soul"—he displayed an intensity of observation which was new, and he originated a mode of classification which, though eventually proved to be erroneous, was none the less fruitful. Although he denied the sexuality of plants, and had no idea of the real functions of leaves, he laid the foundations of comparative morphology, and elaborated a classification—an artificial classification—based on characters of seed, fruit, and flower. He seized upon certain characteristics—all too partially conceived—and forced plants into his *a priori* scheme, with the result that not more than three of his fifteen classes bear any approximation to natural groups. Had the lesson of his failure been rightly read, more than two centuries of taxonomic labour might have been saved.

To the careless and non-evolutionist readers of the history of botany Linnæus (1707-1778) was a sudden emergence, a discontinuous variation, a revolutionist who introduced order. But the facts point to a different interpretation; he was a synthetic genius who gathered up what was best in the work of the systematists from Cesalpino to Tournefort, and made a better of it. This is no depreciation; it is true even in regard to Darwinism; Linnæus was one of the "great men" in the history of science, but no small part of the secret of his greatness lay in the fact that he appreciated the work of his predecessors. The period from Cesalpino to Linnæus included a succession of illustrious workers, of whom the most important were Joachim Jung (1587-1657), Robert Morison (1620-1683), John Ray (1628-1705), Bachmann (1657-1725), and Tournefort (1656-1708).

Linnæus was pre-eminently a describer and system-