

indebted; I mean, the ever-memorable and great Sir CHARLES LINNÆUS, who at one view has drawn together, as it were, all Nature and her productions, in his *Systema Naturæ*. This work has brought down our subject, among the rest, through twelve editions, as far as the year 1767 †. In this undertaking, his aim has been conciseness; but in gaining this, he has lost sight, I fear, of *sufficient* instruction; having done little more than pointed out where such instruction may be found.

His arrangement of Birds is, in general, approved of, and his division into Genera scarcely to be altered for the better; but as it is now some years since he wrote, many new lights have been thrown on Natural History, sufficient to excuse future writers, if in some few instances, at least, they should differ from him; which will be the case in the work now before us.

There is one thing in *Linnaeus's* arrangement of Birds, which, I must confess, has ever appeared to me unaccountable, and in which he differs from RAY at his first setting out. Mr. Ray divided all Birds into two grand divisions; viz. First, Those which frequent the land: Secondly, Those which frequent the water: but *Linnaeus* separates the Land Birds into two parts, and thrusts in the Water Birds between. This is certainly *unnatural*, and therefore will not be admitted in the present undertaking.

The basis then of this work will be on the prime division of Ray; but we shall adhere to the *Linnaean Genera*, except in a very

† In the *Mantissa Plantarum*, published in 1771, will be found a few more Birds described at the end; but these are only twenty in number.