

CHAPTER XVII.

PEDIGREE AND HISTORY OF THE VEGETABLE KINGDOM.

The Natural System of the Vegetable Kingdom.—Division of the Vegetable Kingdom into Six Branches and Eighteen Classes.—The Flowerless Plants (Cryptogamia).—Sub-kingdom of the Thallus Plants.—The Tangles, or Algæ (Primary Algæ, Green Algæ, Brown Algæ, Red Algæ.)—The Thread-plants, or Inophytes (Lichens and Fungi).—Sub-kingdom of the Prothallus Plants.—The Mosses, or Muscinæ (Water-mosses, Liverworts, Leaf-mosses, Bog-mosses).—The Ferns, or Filicinæ (Leaf-ferns, Bamboo-ferns, Water-ferns, Scale-ferns).—Sub-kingdom of Flowering Plants (Phanerogamia).—The Gymnosperms, or Plants with Naked Seeds (Palm-ferns = Cycadeæ; Pines = Coniferæ.)—The Angiosperms, or Plants with Enclosed Seeds.—Monocotylæ.—Dicotylæ.—Cup-blossoms (Apetalæ).—Star-blossoms (Diapetalæ).—Bell-blossoms (Gamopetalæ).

EVERY attempt that we make to gain a knowledge of the pedigree of any small or large group of organisms related by blood must, in the first instance, start with the evidence afforded by the existing "*natural system*" of this group. For although the natural system of animals and plants will never become finally settled, but will always represent a merely approximate knowledge of true blood relationship, still it will always possess great importance as a hypothetical pedigree. It is true, by a "*natural system*" most zoologists and botanists only endeavour to express in a concise way the subjective conceptions which