

development with a particular type, breaks will be found interfering with the perfect symmetry of our plan.

What Mr. Swainson intends by naming the groups which make up each circle, *typical*, *sub-typical*, and *aberrant*, is that one of these groups will be found to be especially characterized by those peculiarities of structure or mode of life which belong to the whole circle, so as to display its distinctions in their most striking form, and this one is generally found to be the most numerous in species: another group will approach this both in its relations to the type and in number of species, but will exhibit special features in analogy with some other circle, so as to show the characters of the type differently modified. The remaining groups, with a preponderance of the characters of the type, unite such deviations expressing their own peculiar plan of development, as make them appear like transitional forms leading towards other circles. Mr. Swainson placed what he took to be the typical group first, then the sub-typical, and after these the aberrant; the consequence of which is, that he places analogous forms in different positions in the different circles. I by no means deny that in each circle there is one group whose plan of development is specially adapted to the type, and which thence displays most abundance and variety of species; this, indeed, logically follows from my general theory; but as I always place the representatives of the same tendencies of development in the same position in each circle, it must follow that the typical groups will have various situations in the different circles, according to the characteristic tendency in each, whilst the analogical groups will always be found in the same position, and this I regard as a very important advantage of my plan.

The preceding remarks will be sufficient on the present occasion, as illustrating my idea of a natural system in the animal kingdom, and I have had occasion to enumerate the great divisions of the class Birds, with their mutual relations. It has been stated that the family *Pelecanidae*, with which we are now more immediately concerned, belongs to the order *Natatores* (swimming-birds), which may upon the whole be regarded as containing the lowest forms of bird life. We will first inquire how many really distinct primary families are found in this order, and further, how far their structure and habits correspond to the notion of their representing in this circle, by modifications of its general type, tendencies of development which have been already indicated in the orders themselves, and which, according to our theory,