

which the intellect perceives to await accomplishment after a mass of work has been performed in recognising the different kinds. It is hardly advanced by the use of difficult language and the employment of abstruse terms ; for my own part I have always tried to use plain English in the proportion as I seemed really to understand the subject I had in hand, and, without in any way undervaluing the use of proper scientific terms, I think that writings on our Butterflies and Moths are occasionally overloaded with them, to the detriment of the clear understanding of the subject. We are here facing the one simple problem of the ancestry of our present species and in explaining the existence of the different elements in our fauna, and in trying to sort a few of our leading genera, I have aimed at making the subject clear and attractive, if I could, rather than at expressing myself in a simply technical manner. After the first passion for possessing rare or fine specimens has become blunted, the deeper problems connected with these beautiful and interesting insects obtain a hold on the mind, exercising a more controlling fascination as they lead to wider results. I have been especially struck with the fact that so many leading genera, e.g., *Catocala*, do not cross the Equator, being confined to the Northern Hemisphere, as also that there is perhaps, on the whole, between the different faunæ, from East to West, a greater general resemblance than from North to South. The hot central Equatorial Region evidently precludes the passage of certain genera, notwithstanding its fecundity in peculiar forms. And notwithstanding physical barriers, such as oceans and mountains, there seems to have been a transference through changes in climate on isothermal lines around the globe. All these matters are very interesting to speculate upon, and the common mistake of setting up an hypothesis and then treating it five minutes afterwards as a fact as old and well established as the hills, I have myself often, no doubt, fallen into. But I have always relied on my friends to correct my mistakes in print, a matter they have ever promptly attended to, so that, in some sense, I feel quite secure in my statements, which, if they are likely to be true, will be "absorbed," and, if they are not, will be "corrected," myself abused and the public disabused by the operation.

The subject of geographical distribution is, as I have said, best studied in connection with the topography of the country. In this connection the two principal drainages of the country, the Mississippi and its tributaries, and the chain of the Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence, must be taken into consideration. Valleys and water courses have attracted and furthered