

taining each one family. Of the remainder, three which have a strong natural affinity have been frequently included under the common name of Gallinaceous birds, (game and poultry), and of three more one is but a family of swimming birds and another is an intermediate group between swimmers and waders, containing some forms belonging to each, and combined by an altogether artificial character. Thus we get back without difficulty to the six great orders indicated above, and all the differences among systematists will be explained and removed if we only avoid confusing families with orders, and take such pains in ascribing to the orders their true distinctions as not to admit transition groups founded on inferior and merely artificial characters. We must, however, in receiving the six orders of birds, observe the peculiar position which one of them occupies in respect to the others. The perching birds (Insessores) are more numerous than all the other orders of birds taken together; they present to us the true type of bird-life from which the other orders are deviations, and their suborders or great sections are quite as well distinguished as the other orders and present such remarkable analogies with them that we seem, on the whole, to have two circles exhibiting different degrees of development, but having corresponding divisions of about equal importance. It may be convenient at present to count Insessores as one order and its secondary groups as suborders, but whether we consider the value of the distinctions or the number of species included it will be found to be really the case that whilst we collect under the name Insessores or perching birds, five orders well distinguished by external characters and modes of life, each of these is represented by one of the other five orders of birds which display more exaggerated forms of the same general structure. In adopting, therefore, six orders of birds we really receive ten arranged in two series the members of which analogically correspond one with another, each having its proper place necessarily resulting from the characteristic by which it is distinguished.

Now as to the series in which the orders of birds may be most naturally placed, all seem agreed that the rapacious birds (Raptores) should stand first, to which I cannot entirely assent, as I deem it necessary to keep the Perchers separate from all the others, and though it signifies little whether they stand first or last, if the latter position were chosen we ought in consistency to begin with the lowest forms ascending to the higher, in which case the Swimmers (Natatores)