

mon with the typical group of the *Noctuidæ*, where we see it in *Agrotis*, and a number of separated genera of smaller extent. This spinosity of the tibiæ is not frequent in the *Bombycidae*, or in the *Geometridæ*; it is not so far apparent in the lowest group of the Owlet Moths, the *Deltoidinæ*. In the *Catocalinæ*, however, the body tends to become untufted and concolorous, the abdomen tapers to the tip, and the resemblance to the *Geometridæ* is further heightened by the looping larvæ.

Either from actual structural characters, or from the peculiar *form*, or as a matter finally of pure convenience for the student, I have divided the Noctuidæ into five sub-families: the *Thyatirinae*, the *Noctuidæ*, the *Catocalinæ*, the *Deltoidinæ*, the *Brephinae*. All these grounds for subdivision are recognized by modern systematists. The divisional terms help, as I have elsewhere said, to light up the group to enable us to compare the representation of the family in different quarters of the globe, and to arrive at conclusions relative to distribution and origin. For, on common sense grounds, I object to a classification absolutely technical and rigid; so rigid as to take no note of the plasticity of the forms, and so ignorant of the process by which a spine or a tuft is formed, as to be unable to determine categorically what characters are most difficult, or take more time to be produced in nature. The value of characters for systematic purposes may, therefore, stand in opposition to their biological value. A reasonable entomologist will therefore take note of *all* the facts presented, and will make his categories correspond, so far as possible, with the total qualities of the creatures he proposes to classify. The bare record of structure, and the erection of an artificial nomenclature is the smallest part of a naturalist's work. The thinking mind will discover the bearing of facts upon each other, and educe therefrom the action of natural law.

1.—Sub-family *Thyatirinae*.

With the exception of *Pseudothyatira* and *Leptina* the generic representation of this group, which differs by the position of vein seven of the secondaries, is the same in Europe and North America. The former we may regard as a modification of *Habrosyne*, while the latter seems more removed from the different European generic groups allied to *Bombycia* (*Cymatophora* of Authors non Hübn). North America has one; Europe another, and Japan a third species of *Habrosyne*, so closely allied that they may be considered as geographical or representative species. These