

those of every other group, besides forming a circle in themselves; and in order to carry out this idea, all animals are arranged in circular groups, in such a manner as to bring out these analogies, whilst the most obvious affinities are set aside to favor a preconceived view. But that I may not appear to underrate the merits of this system, I will present it in the very words of its most zealous admirer and self-complacent expounder, the learned William Swainson.¹

“The *Hornæ Entomologicæ*,² unluckily for students, can only be thoroughly understood by the adept, since the results and observations are explained in different parts; the style is somewhat desultory, and the groups, for the most part, are rather indicated than defined. The whole, in short, is what it professes to be, more a rough sketch of the leading peculiarities of the great divisions of animals, and the manner in which they are probably connected, than an accurate determination of the groups themselves, or a demonstration of their real affinities. More than this, perhaps, could not have been expected, considering the then state of science, and the herculean difficulties which the author had to surmount. The work in question has now become exceedingly scarce, and this will be an additional reason with us for communicating occasional extracts from it to the reader. Mr. McLeay's theory will be best understood by consulting his diagram; for he has not, as we have already remarked, defined any of the vertebrated groups. Condensing, however, the result of his remarks, we shall state them as resolvable into the following propositions: 1. That the natural series of animals is continuous, forming, as it were, a circle, so that, upon commencing at any one given point, and thence tracing all the modifications of structure, we shall be imperceptibly led, after passing through numerous forms, again to the point from which we started; 2. That no groups are natural which do not exhibit such a circular series; 3. That the primary divisions of every large group are ten, five of which are composed of comparatively large circles, and five of smaller: these latter being termed osculant, and being intermediate between the former, which they serve to connect; 4. That there is a tendency in such groups as are placed at the opposite points of a circle of affinity ‘to meet each other;’ 5. That *one* of the five larger groups into which every natural circle is divided, ‘bears a resemblance to all the rest, or, more strictly speaking, consists of types which represent those of each of the four other groups, together with a type peculiar to itself.’ These are the chief and leading principles which Mr. McLeay considers as belonging to the natural system. We shall now copy his diagram, or table of the animal kingdom, and then endeavor, with this help, to explain the system more in detail.”

¹ SWAINSON, (W.) A Treatise of the Geography and Classification of Animals, London, 1835, 1 vol. 12mo., p. 201-205.

² McLEAY, (W. S.) *Hornæ Entomologicæ*, or Essays on the Annulose Animals, London, 1819-21, 2 vols. 8vo.