whom we constantly find checked in their special series of investigations by the really insuperable difficulty of sharply distinguishing individual species. In all systematic works, which are in any degree thorough, one meets with endless complaints, that here and there species cannot be distinguished because of the excessive number of transition forms. Hence every naturalist defines the limit and the number of individual species differently. Some zoologists and botanists, as I mentioned (vol. i. p. 276), assume in one and the same group of organisms ten species, others twenty, others a hundred or more, while other systematic naturalists again look upon these different forms only as varieties of a single "good" species. In most groups of forms there is, in fact, a superabundance of transition forms and intermediate stages between the individual species.

It is true that in many species the forms of transition are actually wanting, but this is easily explained by the principle of divergence or separation, the importance of which I have already explained. The circumstance that the struggle for existence is the more active between two kindred forms the closer they stand to each other, must necessarily favour the speedy extinction of the connecting intermediate forms between the two divergent species. If one and the same species produce diverging varieties in different directions, which become new species, the struggle between these new forms and the common primary form will be the keener the less they differ from one another; but the stronger the divergence the less dangerous the struggle. Naturally therefore, it is principally the connecting intermediate forms which will in most cases