

quickly die out, while the most divergent forms remain and reproduce themselves as distinct "new species." In accordance with this, we in fact no longer find forms of transition leading to those groups which are becoming extinct, as, for example, among birds, are the ostriches; and among mammals, the elephants, giraffes, Semi-apes, Edentata, and ornithorhyncus. The groups of forms approaching their extinction no longer produce new varieties, and naturally the species are what is called "good," that is, the species are distinctly different from one another. But in those animal groups where development and progress are still active, where the existing species deviate into many new species by the formation of new varieties, we find an abundance of transition forms which cause the greatest difficulties to systematic naturalists. This is the case, for example, among birds with the finches; among mammals with most of the rodents (more especially with those of the mouse and rat kind), with a number of the ruminants and with genuine apes, more especially with the South American forms (Cebus), and many others. The continual development of species by the formation of new varieties here produces a mass of intermediate forms which connect the so-called "good" species, which efface their boundaries, and render their sharp specific distinction completely illusory.

The reason that this nevertheless does not cause a complete confusion of forms, nor a universal chaos in the structure of animals and vegetables, lies simply in the fact that there is a continual counteraction at work between progressive *adaptation* on the one hand, and the *retentive* power of *inheritance* on the other hand. The degree of