

America, one species takes the place of another, a third succeeds the second, and so on, until finally the fauna is found to be completely changed, though it is not always possible to mark the precise line which divides the one from the other.

405. The range of species does not at all depend upon their powers of locomotion; if it were so, animals which move slowly and with difficulty would have a narrow range, whilst those which are very active would be widely diffused. Precisely the reverse of this is actually the case. The common oyster extends at least from the St. Lawrence to the Carolinas; its range is consequently very great; much more so than that of some of the fleet animals, as, for instance, the Moose. It is even probable that the very inability of the oyster to travel really contributes to its diffusion, inasmuch as, having once spread over extensive grounds, there is no chance of its return to a former limitation, inasmuch as, being fixed, and consequently unable to choose positions for its eggs, they must be left to the mercy of currents; while Fishes, by depositing their eggs in the bays and inlets of the shore, undisturbed by currents and winds, secure them from too wide a dispersion.

406. The nature of their food has an important bearing upon the grouping of animals, and upon the extent of their distribution. Carnivorous animals are generally less confined in their range than herbivorous ones; because their food is almost every where to be found. The herbivora, on the contrary, are restricted to the more limited regions corresponding to the different zones of vegetation. The same remark may be made with respect to Birds. Birds of prey, such as the eagle and vulture, have a much wider range than the granivorous and gallinaceous birds. Still, notwithstanding the facilities they have for change of place, even the birds that wander widest recognize limits which they do