

What then are the characteristics of Reptiles that may have been presented by the inferior or hemitypic Birds? The more prominent distinctions of Reptiles are the following:

(1.) A covering of scales, or else a naked skin, instead of a covering of feathers.

(2.) A terrestrial creeping mode of life instead of an aerial or flying mode.

(3.) Incomplete circulation, and hence, to some degree, cold-blooded, instead of complete, and warm-blooded.

Now, as to the young of the Reptilian Birds, it may be inferred that—

(1.) They were unquestionably unfledged. For this is universal among birds, for a while after leaving the egg. It is quite probable that they were more completely unfledged, or for a longer time, than is common for the young of ordinary birds; for even the adult bird, judging from the Solenhofen specimen, was less completely feathered than usual.

(2.) They were unquestionably *walking* chicks. For Birds in the lower division of the class (*Præcoces* of Bonaparte) have the use of their legs immediately after leaving the egg, and seek their own food. A brood of Reptilian bird-chicks, with long tails and nearly naked bodies, creeping over the ground, would have looked exceedingly like young Reptiles—very much, indeed, as if the eggs of a Reptile had been hatched by mistake. Moreover, these Reptilian Birds were probably not only walking birds when young, but as much so as hens and turkeys are, if not more exclusively so, even when adults; for, in the inferior division of ordinary birds, the species are far inferior as flying animals to those of the superior division, and in some, as is well known, the wings only aid in running.

(3.) But the characteristics which have been mentioned under (1) and (2) are not of fundamental value, like that of the existence of gills in the young of hemitypic Reptiles, or that of the semi-oviparous method of reproduction in Oötocoid Mammals; and it would seem that there must have been some more profound Reptilian characteristic. It is therefore probable that the third distinction of Reptiles stated belonged also to the young Reptilian Bird; that is, it had incomplete circulation, and, hence, an approximation to the cold-blooded condition of Reptiles. The heart may have had its *four* cavities complete, as in Birds, and in Crocodiles among Reptiles; but, in addition, there may have been a passage permitting a partial admixture of the venous and arterial blood, such as exists not only in Crocodiles but also in the young Bird during an early stage in its development. This peculiarity in the vascular system of the young Bird of the present day ceases with the beginning of respiration. But in the Reptilian birds it may have continued