

On the present occasion I shall follow the system of Linné, as improved by Baron Cuvier, in the last edition of his *Règne Animal*, adopting from Illiger his Order of *Cursors*, or runners, which appears to be osculant between the *gallinaceous* Order and that of the *waders*.

That the series ought to begin with the *web-footed* Birds, as approaching nearest to the Reptiles, there is no doubt; but which should terminate it, seems not satisfactorily determined. The *birds of prey* appear naturally to connect with the *beasts of prey*, rather than with the Cetaceans, next before which Cuvier has placed them; Carus ends the series with the Gallinaceans, which Linné *contrasts* with the Ruminants; and Mr. W. S. Mac Leay *connects* with the Gnawers,* and Illiger and Lacepede end with the Psittaceans, which are analogues of the Quadrumanes, but these are probably mostly analogous forms; there seems a more strict affinity between the web-footed birds and the *Monotremes*, the *Ornithorhynchus*, *Echidna*, &c., which, in some respects, appear to form an osculant *Order*, between the birds and the beasts. In fact the Birds, though united into one group with the Beasts by common characters, may be regarded as forming a *parallel* series with the latter rather than a *continuous* one, several of the members of which, respectively, represent each other, both as to many of their external features and their functions. Branches, like those of a tree, seem indeed to issue from every natural series, whether vegetable or animal, on all sides, and to run in all directions towards those of other series, so as to form together a perplexing labyrinth, to thread which, although in many places there appears an evident clue, in others it becomes evanescent, and the investigator of nature seems lost. But when we reflect that the Author of Nature is *infinite* in his essence and attributes, we must expect there

* Rodentia.