One of the strongest arguments in favour of the doctrine of the origin of species by some process of evolution is certainly derived from the consideration of the geographical distribution of animals and plants upon the surface of the earth; and, indeed, it was from such considerations that Mr. Wallace was led to the preparation of his celebrated paper, the communication of which to the Linnean Society induced the publication of Mr. Darwin's work on the origin of species. It seems, therefore, to be only in the natural course of things that the most important book to which the promulgation of these views has given rise should be one devoted to the geographical distribution of animals,4 and bear on its title-page the name of the

naturalist who may fairly claim an equal share with Mr. Darwin in
the inauguration of the new phase of biological thought. But the
very circumstances which give so much importance to Mr. Wallace's
work, and will render it absolutely indispensable as a book of refer­
ence to every working zoologist, make it almost impossible for us
to discuss its scope and bearings properly in the space at our
command, and we must be content to give the reader a general
sketch of the mode in which the author has treated his subject.
After an introduction to the subject, containing a discussion of the
conditions governing the geographical distribution of animals in
general, Mr. Wallace proceeds to the consideration of the geographi­
cal regions which it is most convenient, and in accordance with
observed facts in nature, to adopt; and here he comes face to face
with one of the great difficulties which beset this department of
science. In the selection of such regions it is clear that there
must be something in the nature of a compromise, for, as Mr.
Wallace says, "it will evidently be impossible that the limits which
best define the distribution of one group should be equally true for
all the others." And in our author's case the difficulty is increased,
because a part of the task he has set himself, in accordance with
his belief in the theory of evolution, is to take into consideration
not only the existing species of animals, but also the fossil forms
from which, according to that theory, these have been derived. He
selects the Mammalia as the class which best fulfils all the condi­
tions necessary to furnish us with a clue to the causes of the pre­
sent distribution of terrestrial organisms; and from a considera­tion
of their arrangement on the surface of the earth, and after dis­
cussing other, and sometimes more complicated schemes, which
have been proposed by various writers, he arrives at the conclusion
that the six geographical regions originally laid down by Mr. Selater
in 1857, from the distribution of birds, are the best that can be
adopted at present. Each of these regions, again, is divided into four
natural sub-regions, and the regions and sub-regions are shown dis­
tinctly in a number of coloured maps which illustrate Mr. Wallace's
book.

The groups of which the geographical distribution is specially
treated of by Mr. Wallace are the five classes of the Vertebrata;
the Diurnal Lepidoptera, or butterflies; the families Cicindelidæ,
Carabidæ, and Lucanidæ, or tiger-beetles, ground-beetles, and stag­
beetles, among Coleopterous insects; and the Pulmoniferous Gas­
teropod Mollusca. A general sketch of the classification of animals
concludes the first or introductory section of the book. The second
part is devoted to a consideration of the distribution of extinct ani­
mal species, especially Mammalia, as evidenced by their remains which
have come down to us; and this, although exceedingly important
and interesting in itself, is really for the most part only a clearing
of the ground for the treatment of the main subject, which occupies
the remainder of Mr. Wallace's work. This is divided into two
parts, the first describing the forms of animal life inhabiting, and
characteristic of, the different regions and sub-regions into which the
author divides the surface of the earth; whilst in the second the
process is reversed, and the various groups are treated as zoological
entities, and their geographical distribution indicated. By means of
these two sections of zoological geography and geographical zoology
the facts of the geographical distribution of animals are presented in
the most complete form, and it is impossible to speak too highly of
the manner in which Mr. Wallace has performed his most difficult
and laborious task. The mere condensed results of the technical
labour which had to be undertaken by the author in getting together
the materials on which to found his arguments, and which are here
given in the form of full tables of genera, with indications of their
distribution, are almost appalling; but at the same time, these tables
of themselves, even apart from the generalisations based upon them,
will prove of the utmost value to zoologists. Any attempt to give
an idea of the more theoretical portions of Mr. Wallace's work, or of
his often successful modes of explaining the seemingly anomalous
facts of geographical distribution, would lead us too far; and
those who are acquainted with his previous writings will hardly need
to be told that they manifest great ingenuity and acuteness, and a
careful weighing of evidence. We may, however, in conclusion,
congratulate Mr. Wallace on having produced the most valuable
contribution to zoological literature that has appeared for many a
day.