INTRODUCTION.

In selecting the Family of Trogons as the subject of my second Monograph, I was influenced by the full conviction, not only that it was one fraught with interest, but that much was left buried in obscurity, which when brought to light would materially tend to the advancement of Ornithology.

The Trogons, as their general structure and their habits sufficiently indicate, belong to the fissirostral tribe of the Insessores. Greatly insectivorous, they seize the flitting insect on the wing, which their wide gape enables them to do with facility; while their feeble tarsi and feet are such as to qualify them merely for resting on the branches, as a post of observation, whence to mark their prey as it passes, and to which, having given chase, to return. As in all other groups, however, we shall find modifications of the type, constituting the ground of generic or sub-generic divisions, to which we shall advert more fully when we come to speak of them in detail.

If not strictly elegant in form, the Trogons in the brilliancy of their plumage are surpassed only by the *Trochilidæ*: their splendour amply compensates for every other defect. Denizens of the intertropical regions of the Old and New World, they shroud their glories in the deep and gloomy recesses of the forest, avoiding the light of day and the observation of man; dazzled by the brightness of the meridional sun, morning and evening twilight is the season of their activity. We can add, however, but little to the elegant description of their habits given in Mr. Griffith's edition of Cuvier's Animal Kingdom; I venture therefore to quote his words.