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## Darwin.

### THE DARWIN THEORY.

**THE VARIATION OF ANIMALS AND PLANTS UNDER DOMESTICATION.** By Charles Darwin, M.A., &c. New York. London: John Murray, 1881.

HAS Mr Darwin made any progress towards the establishment of his theory in these two short volumes? We hardly think he has not. They afford only a hasty reply to the inevitable objections made to possibility, evidence, and biographical evidence incontestable. It is not his, however, to deny to mind that they contain only a part of his case; and as such we would not give some account of them, for the information of our readers.

Those who have studied Mr Darwin's more famous book on the "Origin of Species by means of Natural Selection," are aware that it contained only a provisional, or, at most, a preliminary statement of his theory. The facts adduced were presented chiefly by illustrations as to explanation of the principles advanced; the main body of the evidence, which was to demonstrate the principles, was reserved for a future work. Accordingly, after an interval of nine or ten years, we have the two volumes before us as an indication of the promised evidence. They cover only a limited portion of the subject, viz., the variation of animals and plants in the hands of man. In a usual work the author proposes to discuss variation in a state of nature; and he is obliged to promise to try how far the principles of natural selection will afford a fair explanation of the classes of facts that may have been mentioned. It is rather surprising to find that the author addresses the discussion of exactly those points in which the theory holds most, and regarding which information and evidence are most to be looked for.

His present work, however, is well worthy of praise,—more particularly on account of the multitude of facts which are collected in it respecting the domestication of animals and plants. With wonderful industry, Mr Darwin has brought together almost everything that is known on that subject. He begins with dogs and cats, he proceeds to horses and asses, and so on through the whole category of domestic quadrupeds. A pigeon-breeder himself, he has given a minute account, illustrated by woodcuts, of the various races of pigeons kept in England, as well as birds, ducks, &c. He is equally painstaking in regard to milk-

