

matter, and the book in its present shape is undoubtedly the best History of Doctrines ever published. Many objections which might be well put against all others cannot be presented against this. The first edition appeared in 1840, and the present (the fifth) is, therefore, the maturity of a childhood and youth of twenty-seven years. After the introduction the work proper is divided into five periods, as follows: Period first—the Age of Apologetics; period second—the Age of Polemics; period third—the Age of Systematic Theology; period fourth—the Age of Polemico-Ecclesiastical Symbolism, the Conflict of Confessions of Faith; period fifth—the Age of Criticism or Speculation, and of the Antagonism between Faith and Knowledge, Philosophy and Christianity, Reason and Revelation, and attempts to reconcile these antagonisms. One of the excellences of the present above previous editions is a large increase of the literature relating to the subject. The index at the close is in every respect a model.

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*Philosophy, Metaphysics, and General Science.*

*The Variation of Animals and Plants under Domestication.* By CHARLES DARWIN, M.A., F.R.S., etc. Authorized Edition, with a Preface, by Prof. ASA GRAY. With Illustrations. In two volumes, pp. 494, 568. New York: Orange Judd & Co.

When Mr. Darwin several years since published his "Origin of Species," he stated that he should at a subsequent day present the facts on which the conclusions there given were founded. The present volumes are prepared in fulfillment of that promise. A second work will discuss the variability of organic beings in a state of nature; and a third will apply the principle of "Natural Selection" to the facts thus evolved.

These volumes are chiefly devoted to facts relative to domesticated animals and plants, in procuring which Mr. Darwin was greatly aided by zoologists, botanists, geologists, breeders of animals, horticulturists, foreigners, merchants, and government officers, all of whom he found courteous and prompt in their assistance. On the subjects of which they treat, this is probably the largest and best arranged collection of facts that has ever been made, and must be of great value to the student. The first volume is devoted to the history of our most important domestic animals and plants; and the second to such questions as inheritance, reversion to earlier forms, hybridism, the causes of sterility and of variability, and the laws of variation. The work may therefore be justly concluded to possess a great attractiveness for various

classes of practical men, as well as the professional naturalist or physiologist. The facts which are so faithfully collected and so candidly presented will stand, whatever becomes of the theories which are attempted to be built upon them.

To the philosopher and theologian the work possesses an interest of another kind. The author tells us that it was his observation of birds, reptiles, and plants in the Galapagos archipelago, five hundred miles from the South American coast, which first led him to those investigations which resulted in the theory which is now called by his name. We must, of course, wait for the publication of the other works before we shall be fully in possession of the facts and reasonings which have influenced his own mind; and, indeed, it is only in the final one of the series that we shall find an explanation of those "singular and complex affinities" that group together all organic beings of the past and present, and show their descent from a single root. We can easily believe that all horses have descended from one ancestor, and that the numerous varieties of pigeons might, if we only had their genealogical tables, be traced to the same nest; and we shall wait patiently for the simple explication of "the hand of a man, the foot of a dog, the wing of a bat, the flipper of a seal, on the principle of the natural selection of successive slight variations in the diverging descent from a single progenitor."

Meanwhile, it is certainly fair that the successive steps of the argument as it is developed be closely examined. The reader cannot fail to observe how much of it turns upon likelihood and probability. Inferences and guesses, however correct they may often prove, must not be taken for demonstrated propositions upon which to rear another course of inferences, the final end of which will be claimed to be the overthrow of the most firmly settled thing in the world, the truth of God's word. Conceding the facts, the significance given them by Mr. Darwin has in it so much of hypothesis and confessed ignorance that his "rational explanation" seems to us most irrational.

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