

Reviews.

THE VEGETABLE KINGDOM.*

Just six years ago, the late Canon Kingsley, in a lecture at Stion College on "The Theology of the 'Future,'" recommended Mr. Darwin's "Fertilisation of Orchids," to which the work before us is in some sort a sequel...

pairs, and, when they had thus become hermaphrodite, having their sexes again separated because to bear a double set of reproductive elements and to mature the ovules was too great an expenditure of vital force...

Now, we feel a deep respect for Mr. Darwin's patience and clear-sightedness as an observer and tabulator of facts; but we must strongly demur to the logical soundness of the above conclusion...

We have no right to maintain that the sterility of species when first crossed, and of their hybrid offspring, is determined by some cause fundamentally different from that which determines the sterility of the individuals both of ordinary and of hybrid plants when united in various ways...

The only modifying facts are that the unproductiveness is most influenced by the conditions to which the crossed species are subjected, and that the increasing sterility of hybrids counts for nothing, seeing that close interbreeding has hitherto been always practised between them...

On the whole, the world, as men have hitherto observed it (and the observation extends, in the case of plants, to very many generations), differs strikingly from that Darwinian world in which things went wildly backwards and forwards, animals being formed by the fusion of individual

for more than sixty years occupied the attention of naturalists. C. K. Sprengel published in 1793, "Das entdeckte Geheimnis der Natur," proving the part which insects play in fertilising plants...

Cross-fertilisation is of course more essential in plants, because their self-fertilisation is closer than the closest possible breeding of animals; and the results are strikingly different for different kinds of plants; thus, with Primula sinensis crossing was of no advantage as to size—the crossed flowers produced more or less a trifle than those from the seed of self-fertilised flowers...

The plant which Mr. Darwin followed up further, was the Ipomoea, or convolvulus major, of South America. Tables of results are given for ten generations; and in every case the seedlings from crossed plants were stronger and taller than those from self-fertilised plants...

ments were made, and the way in which the chance of error was reduced to a minimum. Mr. Darwin has once more proved himself a patient investigator, worthy to rank with men like Hildebrand and Kölreuter and Godron and Kerner...

PARLIAMENTARY GOVERNMENT IN ENGLAND.*

Mr. Bisset is evidently more at home at writing in party periodicals, or in a political pamphlet which should be read and forgotten in about the same time, than in writing history...

A conspicuous instance of his unfairness is seen in his dealing with the question of Parliamentary representation. Simon de Montfort is held up to admiration as a patriot, because he directed the sheriffs of counties to return representatives of the counties and boroughs within their jurisdiction...

* History of the Struggle of Parliamentary Government in England. By Andrew Bisset. In Two Vols. 8vo.—London: King and Co., 1877.

* The Effects of Cross and Self Fertilisation in the Vegetable Kingdom. By Charles Darwin, M.A., F.R.S., &c.—London: John Murray, 1876.