

from it if they wish; and, in addition, if the stem grows after it is applied—as it nearly always does—it slides up without making any ugly hitch in an attempt to push up against ties, as in the old way. A man might make a hundred in a single evening out of half-a-crown's worth of wire, and apply them to plants next day in less than half an hour.—A. D.

A PLEA FOR OUR HEATHS.

Why are our native Heaths not more frequently grown than they are in grounds kept and arranged for pleasure? Why not have a Heathery as well as a Rockery or Fernery? There are spots in every place of any dimensions where Heaths would be useful, growing as they do where many things will not succeed. How to cover that ugly "bank," is often a matter of concern to those who possess such places. Attempts are sometimes made to clothe such a place with ferns; but if the bank is elevated and open, Heaths would be the right plants in the right place. They glory in such a spot—plenty of air, plenty of sun. It is astonishing what they will encounter and conquer, even in dry seasons. They send their roots down after moisture to a considerable depth. Even in stony poor soil they somehow get through the severest drought when once established. A bank of Heath in flower, with rocks jutting out here and there, is a sight which invariably commands attention. In strolling through a wood some time ago, I came upon broad masses of *Erica ciliaris* full of flower, and again suddenly upon what must have been acres of *E. cinerea*, to which a few straggling Firs here and there served as supports, thus forming cones of flower. This, thought I, affords a pleasure which our dazzling terrace-gardens do not give, and furnishes a sight which ought to be more frequently seen. I have also found bushes of *E. vagans* six feet through every way, forming huge balls of flower. But this is describing some of Nature's flower shows. The question is, how shall we copy her example in having such spots of beauty in dressed ground? It is of no use to go and offer battle to Nature, and rob her of her big plants, bring them home, and think the thing is done. No; we must, like her, begin with little plants; although we have seen Heaths grow in almost any soil from which lime is absent, and sometimes where it may be said there was no soil at all, yet it is best to make a little preparation for them in the way of excavating little cavities and filling up with peat or very rotten leaf-mould, mixed with loam. This will save time in getting the plants to a good size, and save trouble and attention, which want of preparation would incur. If the distance is not great, and the soil in which these plants grow naturally can be got, that is best for them, taking the surface off three inches deep. Do not by any means allow any plants to be put in with hard balls of soil about them; loosen it as much as possible, without damaging the roots, before planting, otherwise no water will penetrate, and they will consequently die. Almost any nurseryman could supply our native Heaths and their varieties at a cheap rate; some catalogue as many as fifty hardy kinds, beside the Mediterranean varieties.

HENRY MILLS.

Enys, Cornwall.

THE LIBRARY.

DARWIN'S "ORIGIN OF SPECIES."*

WE have to record and to welcome the appearance of a new and cheap edition of this remarkable and most interesting book. It is needless to say anything in reference to its object now, as, since the appearance of the work originally, the chief ideas which it contains have been fully discussed. Few will deny (except perhaps those who discuss what they call "Darwinism," without having read the book, and such people are far from uncommon) that, even if they cannot go as far as the author and his more pronounced co-workers and disciples, the work has opened up a new and delightful field of thought and observation. On Mr. Darwin's labours we cannot do better than cite the opinion of Mr. I. Anderson-Henry, a well-known and very successful hybridizer of plants, who by no means adopts Mr. Darwin's views. It occurs in a paper read before the Botanical Society of Edinburgh:—

THE various papers and publications given to science and the world in recent years by Darwin and others have directed the attention of all botanical observers of phenomena in that department to

* Darwin's "Origin of Species." Sixth and cheap edition. London: John Murray, Albemarle Street.

the changes which have been and may be effected on the existing species of plants; and those who reflect on the diversity of the vegetable kingdom as displayed in the grandeur of the various forms which compose the primeval forests of the torrid zone, or in the no less diversified but homelier forms of our temperate climes, must be attracted with the statement that, throughout all past time, change—slow but incessant—has passed on everything that now has life; insomuch, that we see no more the things which were in the things that do appear. So at least holds Darwin, whose observations for general accuracy, so far as they are open to scrutiny, stand well the test of investigation; though beyond that limit they diverge, as he himself admits, into speculations which, however logically deduced, all of us are free to adopt or reject, as we are or are not convinced by them. Much, I am free to acknowledge, I believe of the Darwinian theory—more now than I once did. Yet, as I have been asked by a high authority (in reference to a paper which I read in March last), whether I adopted the Lamarckian view, which forms the germ, if not the basis, of the Darwinian doctrines, I reply unhesitatingly, No—not in their beginning or their ending—though where the latter is, Mr. Darwin is perhaps as much at sea as any one of us. But lop off that beginning and ending—above all, lop it off as regards his views of the animal creation—and there remains in that great work, "The Origin of Species," a body of botanical philosophy, so well sustained by the author's own accurate observations and wonderful discoveries, that it constitutes, in my opinion, the most valuable contribution ever yet made to botanical science, and marks an epoch in its annals more brilliant than any yet attained. This is no inflated eulogy. For the last quarter of a century I have myself devoted every spare hour of my professional leisure, and for the last seven years (when free from professional yoke), my leisure almost entirely, to similar pursuits. And, as a humble labourer in the same field during all that time, I have some claim to be recognised as capable of forming an estimate of what has been discovered and achieved by Darwin, and given to the world in that great work, and in his scarcely less wonderful book "On the Fertilization of Orchids," and his papers read before the Linnean Society. He has not only accomplished great things by himself; but he has aroused attention, and stirred up other admirably qualified observers to extend his researches, and, it may be, has thus led the way to no less startling discoveries.

Nature has many mysteries to unfold. She has fixed rules, some so plain, that he who runs may read; and she has exceptions to these rules. Look at the wonderful provision she has made for the fertilization of orchids, and look at the no less marvellous modes she has adopted for the same end in the dimorphic forms of the genus *Primula*, and also in some forms of the genus *Linum*—of all which Darwin was the grand discoverer. I was myself almost a sceptic in the results obtained by him till I tested the statement he enunciated in the former genus by actual experiment, and found it true. Before he wrote, I had been myself at work among the species of the genus *Linum*, and while I found some of them tractable and open to self-fertilization, I found a disturbing element among others, for which I never could account, till I found it cleared up by Darwin in his dimorphic discovery. To a mind like his, ever alive to follow out by untiring research every perplexing cause which baffles the expected result, one discovery followed and perhaps suggested another, and it may be that the most brilliant of all yet awaits him. Let us follow in his wake; and though few are so constituted or so gifted as to attain to like successes, there is much for all to do. There is romance in the pursuit, and laurels to be gathered by every acute, industrious observer.

WAGES OF LABOURERS IN VARIOUS COUNTRIES.

THE Hon. Edward Stanhope sends the *Times* the following statement, showing the comparative earnings of agricultural labourers in the principal countries of Europe, with the purchase-power of money and the usual diet, where it has been possible to ascertain these particulars. The statement is founded mainly upon the reports of her Majesty's representatives abroad on the Tenure of Land, and on the condition of the Industrial Classes in Foreign Countries 1869-70-71. Reference is also made to the appendix to the lecture of Mr. James Howard, M.P., on Continental Farming and Peasantry. For comparison, the rates of wages and diet in Great Britain and Ireland are appended. The table deals only with hired labourers, and avoids all mention of the small proprietors at home or abroad. One disadvantage in the way of the foreign workman is the number of holidays or village fêtes, which number in Russia from 30 to 100 during the year, in Austria at least 76, in Turkey 48, and which are very numerous in Belgium, Spain, and Switzerland:—

"AUSTRIA.—Wages—Galicia, 9d. a day in summer and 6d. in