

"The Movements of Plants"* (by C. Darwin).—Fifteen years ago Mr. Darwin published in the Linnæan "Transactions" a very interesting paper on the "Movements and Habits of Climbing Plants." Since that time it has been known that he has continued the study, and has been examining into the movements not only of climbers, but of all plants, and the present volume is the result. Like all his books, it is a record of minute research and of patient, untiring investigation which are simply wonderful, and the results recorded are very curious. Stated generally, it may be said that there is a movement in all growing plants; growth is, in fact, a movement, either upwards, or downwards, or lateral. This, of course, is no new discovery, but what Mr. Darwin has done has been to patiently watch the growth and determine the laws which govern it. Two laws are almost without an exception—that the upward and lateral growth of plants is affected by light, and is the result of a search after light, while the downward underground growth is

* "The Movements of Plants." By C. Darwin. London: J. Murray, Albemarle Street.

the search after darkness. The inquiry naturally included the examination into the sleep of plants, and this is perhaps the part that will be most interesting to the ordinary reader, who will soon find that the so-called sleep is not sleep in the ordinary sense of the word, but is simply the way in which leaves and flowers arrange themselves on a change of temperature (not of light) "for the protection of the upper surface of the leaves from being chilled by radiation." As an additional chapter in the history of plant life the book is most interesting and valuable, and is a large contribution to the natural history of that borderland in which animal and vegetable life seem in many points to overlap each other; but to the ordinary gardener it will probably not be of much practical use, though if any one with a love of plants will read the book with the carefulness it requires (for it is close and not very easy reading, and requires some previous knowledge of scientific botany), he will not fail to find much to interest him; and if he is a practical gardener he will, at least, learn with what delicate and tender organisms he is every day called on to deal, and he may learn a lesson of carefulness, if not of admiration and reverence.