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NOTE: James Edmund Harting (1841-1928), a prominent naturalist, particularly devoted to ornithology. There are only two known letters between him and Darwin.

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MEMOIR OF THE LATE CHARLES DARWIN, LL.D., F.R.S.

THE name of Charles Darwin has so long been a "household word" that the news of his decease, which took place on April 19th, will be received with profound regret by the entire civilised world. At the ripe age of seventy-three, in the arms of those nearest and dearest to him, he passed calmly and peacefully away, full of honours, and leaving behind him an illustrious and imperishable name.

The studies and researches which contributed to render his name so famous appear to have been commenced at an early period of his life, when, meditating the pursuit of medicine as a profession, he was sent to Edinburgh, then at the height of its reputation as a medical school, and in the University of which city his grandfather, Dr. Erasmus Darwin, had taken his degrees. After two years of study there he proceeded to Cambridge, where in due course, at Christ college, he graduated B.A. and M.A. Finding about this time that his private means were sufficient to render him independent of a profession, he abandoned the idea of adopting the practice of medicine and devoted himself, from the love of it, to the study of Biology.

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Although known at this time to only a small circle of scientific friends, his abilities as a naturalist soon became more widely recognised; and in 1831, when the Hon. Capt. Fitzroy - afterwards better known as Admiral Fitzroy, of meteorological fame - was ordered, with the 'Adventure' and 'Beagle' to survey the coasts of Antarctic America, Charles Darwin was appointed Naturalist to the Expedition.

He sailed in December, 1831, and returned in October, 1836, during which interval he visited the Straits of Magellan and the coasts north of that Strait, and crossed the country from Valparaiso to Buenos Ayres, visiting besides the Galapagos, Ascension, the coasts of Australia, and other regions touched by the vessels during their voyage. In every locality visited he made large and important collections of rare or new animals and plants, recording in his journal a mass of valuable notes to be afterwards utilised. His services on this expedition were highly appreciated by Capt. Fitzroy, who paid a deserved tribute to his merits when receiving the medal voted him by the Royal Geographical Society; and the esteem in which he was held by his fellow voyagers has been fitly perpetuated in the names bestowed on Port Darwin in North Australia, and Darwin Mount and Sound, in Tierra del Fuego.

On his return from this expedition he settled at Down, near Beckenham, in Kent, where he has ever since resided, and where he commenced and prosecuted those literary and scientific labours which have since procured for him a world-wide reputation. In 1839 appeared his 'Journal' of a Naturalist, giving a narrative of his voyage, and written in a style so pleasing, and withal so instructive, that it has maintained a popularity to this day, and is regarded as quite a model work of its kind.

Between 1839 and 1842 appeared the official 'Zoology of the Voyage of Her Majesty's ship Beagle,' in four quarto volumes, by "various eminent hands," though the whole work was edited by Mr. Darwin, and the habits of the animal and their range were given by his own pen. In this work, for the first time, were described those great mammals of geological ages which were found in the Argentine Pampas, in addition to a series of observations on almost every other group of mammals. Not to enumerate many detached memoirs of interest, the next conspicuous work of

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Mr. Darwin was 'The Structure and Distribution of Coral Reefs' (1842-46), in which was enunciated the theory of their growth which is now generally accepted. This treatise was the first part of the Geology of the 'Adventure' and 'Beagle'; the 'Geological Observations on Volcanic Islands' (1844) formed the second volume; 'Geological Observations of South America' appeared in 1846, as the third section of the work; and this, with the exception of a number of detached papers, may be said to have completed the formal systematic account of the task he had officially undertaken between 1831 and 1836. 'A Monograph of the Fossil Balanidæ and Verucidæ of Great Britain' (1854), published by the Palæontographical Society, was an elaborate and laborious treatise on the extinct Barnacle; while that on 'Fossil Lepadidæ' (1851), published three years before, referred to another section of the same group. In the same year, he also published, through the Ray Society, a monograph of the living forms of Barnacles.

But the treatises here enumerated were merely the fore-runners of that work which, more than any other, has made the name of Darwin famous, namely, 'The Origin of Species,' which appeared in 1859, and which in its turn became the preface, as it were, to the elaborate series of works which at intervals followed it. The theory, as set forth in this remarkable volume, of the evolution of species from a few simple organisms, by a system of natural selection, is now too well known to require comment, but the circumstances which led to its somewhat premature publication may be briefly referred to.

In 1858 Mr. Alfred Russel Wallace, who was exploring the Malay Islands, sent home a paper describing his own views as to the "Origin of Species." Sir Charles Lyell and Dr. Hooker on reading it were struck by the fact that Mr. Wallace had arrived at conclusions almost identical with those which Mr. Darwin had already communicated to them. It was felt that delay would no longer be fair to Mr. Wallace, or just to Mr. Darwin, whose manuscript was still unpublished. Accordingly, on the 1st July 1858, papers by both authors were read to the Linnean Society, and from that period must be dated the birth of the "Darwinian Theory,"

though it was not till the 24th November, 1859, that Mr. Darwin's 'Origin of Species' appeared.

In 1862 was published 'The Various Contrivances by which Orchids are Fertilised,' and, 1865, 'The Movements and Habits

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of Climbing Plants,' both works of the highest botanical value.

In 1868, 'The Variations of Plants and Animals under Domestication,' and in 1871 'The Descent of Man' revived the controversy regarding the character of the Darwinian doctrines which had been occasioned by the appearance of 'The Origin of Species.'

'The Expression of the Emotions of Men and Animals' did not do much to allay this, though none could deny that the author had enriched knowledge with a marvellous series of curious observations. In 1875, 'Insectivorous Plants,' describing the carnivorous propensities of certain plants, *Drosera*, *Dionæa*, &c., contained another excellent series of botanical observations. 'The Effects of Cross and Self Fertilisation' (1876), 'The Different Forms of Flowers on Plants of the same Species' (1877), and 'The Movements of Plants' (1880), at once proved Mr. Darwin not only to be an ingenious theorist, but the first physiological botanist of his age. Finally in 1881, his now familiar treatise on the Earthworm and its ways has only served to enhance his reputation.

Whether his now well-known theory of evolution will meet the fate of others which have preceded it, or become more enduring amongst scientific doctrines than the views of Lamarck and the author of 'The Vestiges of Creation,' it is of course impossible to say; but the impetus which his various works have been given to modern thought and research, and the extraordinary number of biological facts which have been collected and brought to light by his untiring industry, will cause naturalists of every nation to be for ever indebted to him.