
Darwin's Seclusion.

George Alfred Townsend.

Much comment is being made among the clerical classes here at Darwin being interred in Westminster Abbey, where it is said Huxley and Tyndall will also be laid. A person who knew Darwin remarked of him: "To Englishmen Mr. Darwin was merely a name. Of those who knew that he was the author of the 'Origin of Species,' comparatively few could have told where he lived or what were his occupations. No famous man has remained in such complete seclusion, rarely ever coming to London, and then seen by few persons; engaged in no controversies; never putting himself before the public. This was due partly to his health, which had been weak for nearly his whole life, and was so uncertain even twelve years ago that he was then forbidden to come to Oxford to receive an honorary degree, lest the excitement of an appearance in a crowd should prove too much for him. No one cared less for popular applause or was more absolutely devoted to the pursuit of truth for its own sake. There was nothing morose, or proud, or ungenial about his seclusion. It was that of a man who knew where his duty and his functions lay, and understood that stillness and concentration were necessary as well for the prosecution of his researches as for his own personal well being. A man, too, whose pleasures were those best and simple pleasures which depend upon the affection of family and friends and the enjoyment of nature."
