

**RECORD:** Anon. 1882. [Obituary]. The foreign press on the late Mr. Darwin. *The Aberystwith Observer*, (29 April), p. 2.

**REVISION HISTORY:** Transcribed by Christine Chua and edited by John van Wyhe 2.2020. RN1.

[page] 2

THE FOREIGN PRESS ON THE LATE MR. DARWIN.

Writing on the 21st inst. the Paris Correspondent of The Standard says:-

To-day's French papers contain detailed biographical notices of Mr. Darwin. All unite in paying warm tributes to the dignity of his character, and recount in sympathetic terms his distinguished services to science. As to the value of his work in regard to the progress and happiness of the human race, the judgments passed naturally vary, according to the standpoint of the writers.

The Liberté says:-

"Darwin was one of the most considerable men of our age. He was, moreover, one of the most distinguished for his scientific candour and probity. His knowledge was immense and his researches were extended to subjects the most various. Upon everything that he approached he threw some new light. No one is to be compared to him for delicacy and patience of investigation, and for his skill in so grouping analogies as to beget generalisations. Some of such generalisations are not even indicated in Darwin's work; they have arisen as it were spontaneously, and many of them have been drawn by German savants. It must be added that his work has been comprised by the exaggerations based upon these generalisations, which the illustrious naturalist himself has had the weakness to sanction.

Charles Darwin occupies a place of his own in the scientific world, and the most implacable adversaries of the doctrine of descent are unanimous in paying homage to his exceptional qualities. His doctrine has had a calamitous influence upon our age, but Science can only feel grateful for the rich store of new ideas for which she is indebted to him."

The Temps remarks:-

"The theory that the entire animal and vegetable kingdoms are descended from a single prototype was not absolutely new. It had, indeed, been previously propounded by the French naturalist Lamarck. Darwin's great claim to originality in his discovery of the natural laws proving that theory. The mass of facts collected, classified, and elucidated by this patient observer is truly marvellous."

The France observes:-

"Darwin's work has not been merely the exposition of a system, but as it were the production of an epic—the great poem of the genesis of the universe, one of the grandest that ever proceeded from a human brain—an epic magnificent in its proportions, logical in its deductions, and superb in its form. Darwinism may be disputed, but if it be true that, according to Greek etymology, 'poet' means 'creator,' how can the name of poet be refused

to him who intellectually has created a world, and has propounded so wonderful a theory of its origin and development? Darwin deserves not only a place by the side of Leibnitz, Bacon, or Descartes, but is worthy to rank with Homer and Virgil."

The Patrie says:-

"While rendering justice to the enormous knowledge of the illustrious naturalist, and to his prodigious power of work, it is impossible to acquit him of an abuse of his theories by rearing upon them the desolating system of natural philosophy, at which his disciples, under the authority of his great name, are still at work, with the view of dethroning religion and setting it up in its place."

A Vienna correspondent writes:-

The whole Vienna press assigns a prominent place in its columns to the news of the death of the great English philosopher Darwin, and to their notices of his eminent services to Natural Science.

The Vienna Allgemeine even says:-

"We must apologise for touching on political matters on a day when humanity has suffered so great a loss. It seems to us that the world has become gloomier and grown greyer since this star ceased to shine. Our century was Darwin's century. We can now suffer no greater loss, as we do not possess a second Darwin to lose."

The Neue Freie Presse says:-

"Darwin's death causes lamentations as far as truth has penetrated, and wherever civilisation has made any impression. Darwin advanced the progress of mankind. Although his peculiar work was determining man's real position in Nature, the life of Darwin had far greater importance in point of culture than the life and work of many more exalted personages who were interred with pomp."

Almost all the other Vienna papers published notices of the deceased philosopher of an equally eulogistic character. Almost all the German papers published obituary notices of Darwin, and agree in regarding him as one of the greatest men of the nineteenth century.

The Cologne Gazette calls him:-

"a man of science who made a mark upon his times in a manner unparalleled by any of his contemporaries. He compelled every branch of science to acknowledge his revolutionising discoveries. The completion of his gigantic system will give abundant occupation to the remotest generations; but the memory of the founder of this prodigious scientific structure will remain imperishable to all time."

The World remarks:-

"As soon as Mr. Darwin's death was announced, an effort was made to obtain for Westminster Abbey the honour of holding the bones of the greatest of English savants.

Twenty- even ten- years ago such a proposal would have been deemed a wild dream. But science is aggressive nowadays, and parsons are unwilling to stem the tide. Accordingly, nobody was astonished to find that the first person to propose that the author of the Origin of Species should sleep among dead men, few of whom were as great as he, and many of whom were unworthy to be named in the same breath with him, was Dean Bradley himself.”