

*Murray, Feb. 27/1872*

DEATH OF PROFESSOR DARWIN.

The death of Professor Charles Darwin, at his residence, Down House, Down, near Romney, Kent, took place on Wednesday last at the age of 73. He had been suffering for some time past from weakness of the heart, but had continued to do a slight amount of experimental work up to the last. He was taken ill on the night of Tuesday last, when he had an attack of pain in the chest with faintness and nausea. The latter lasted with more or less intermission during Wednesday, and culminated in his death, which took place at about four o'clock on Wednesday afternoon. He remained fully conscious to within a quarter of an hour of his death. His wife and several of his children were present at the dining room. The eminent philosopher leaves, besides his widow, a family of five sons and two daughters. Mr. Darwin was born at Shrewsbury on February 12, 1809, being the son of Dr. Robert Waring Darwin, F.R.S., physician of that town. His grandfather was the celebrated Dr. Erasmus Darwin, F.R.S., the poetical, philosophical, and scientific physician of Litchfield, whose "Zoonomia Garden," "Temple of Nature," "Zoonomia," and "Origin of Society," were more extensively read and greatly admired. Mr. Darwin's mother was a daughter of Josiah Wedgwood, the mother founder of the English pottery manufacture. He was educated first at Shrewsbury Grammar School, under Dr. Potter, afterwards Bishop of Litchfield; he went to the University of Edinburgh in 1825, remained there two years, and next entered Christ's College, Cambridge, where he graduated B.A. in 1831, and M.A. in 1833. His hereditary aptitude for the study of natural science was early pointed by his instructors; the Rev. Mr. Huxford, professor of history at Cambridge, recommended him therefore to Captain Fitzroy and the Lords of the Admiralty, in 1831, when a naturalist was to be chosen to accompany the second surveying expedition of her Majesty's ship Beagle in the Southern Sea. The first expedition, that of the Adventure and Beagle (1826-30), had explored the coast of Patagonia; the Beagle, which sailed again December 27, 1831, and returned to England October 23, 1835, made a scientific circumnavigation of the globe. Mr. Darwin served without salary, and partly paid his own expenses on condition that he should have the entire disposal of his zoological, botanical, and geological collections. On returning to England he published a "Journal of Researches into the Geology and Natural History" of the various countries he had visited. This originally appeared with a general account of the voyage by Captain Fitzroy, but was afterwards published separately. Since that time Mr. Darwin has prosecuted his scientific investigations in England, and for many years past he has resided near Fenchurch, in Kent. In addition to numerous papers on various scientific subjects, Mr. Darwin wrote the "Zoology of the Voyage of the Beagle," and wrote three separate volumes on geology—viz., "The Structure and Distribution of Coral Reefs," 1842, second edition 1871; "Geological Observations on Volcanic Islands," 1844; and "Geological Observations on South America," 1845. The most important of Mr. Darwin's subsequent works are a "Monograph of the Family Characidae," published by the Ray Society in 1825-6, and on the "Fossil Species," by the Paleontographical Society. His "Origin of Species by means of Natural Selection," published in 1859, which has gone through several editions at home, and has been translated into French, German, Italian, Spanish, and other European languages, gave rise to much controversy. In this bold and ingenious way he propounded his famous philosophical theory, of which the main proposition is that all the various forms of vegetable and animal life, past or present, have been produced by a series of gradual changes in natural descent from parents to offspring. According to him all the animals, insects, birds, reptiles, mammals, fishes, and amphibians have descended from at most four or five progenitors; all the plants from two greater numbers. This analogy would lead to the belief that all animals and plants have together descended from some one prototype. Mr. Darwin's subsequent works have had for their object the supplying the data on which he founded his conclusions. A treatise on "The Fertilization of Orchids," published in 1862, was followed by "Domesticated Animals and Cultivated Plants; or the Principles of Variation, Inheritance, Acclimation, Crossing, Interbreeding, and Selection, under Domestication," in 1868. In 1871 he published the "Descent of Man and Selection in Relation to Sex," two volumes, a new edition of which was published in 1874, in one volume, with large additions. These volumes fill like a book into the way of philosophy, for in them Mr. Darwin

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