

## NEW BOOKS.

ON THE ORIGIN OF SPECIES BY MEANS OF NATURAL SELECTION; OR, THE PRESERVATION OF FAVORED RACES IN THE STRUGGLE FOR LIFE. BY CHARLES DARWIN, M. A.

Students of science will be startled by the novel theory propounded in this work, and the broad induction of facts upon which it is based. Not natural history alone, but almost all subjects of human thought, come within the circle of its influence. This volume—the result of many years of patient labor and deep meditation—is but the abstract of a larger work, not yet completed.

Heretofore, naturalists have assumed that each species of plants and animals has been independently created. Mr. Darwin denies the assumption, and affirms that species are not unchangeable, but that those which belong to the same genera are the lineal posterity of another and generally extinct species. By what means are the descendants made to differ from their parents in structure and habits? Mainly, by means of natural selection. Thus animals and plants are exceedingly prolific, but there are destroying influences at work which limit their number, such as climate, enemies, starvation. He advances the suggestion that there is a terrible struggle for existence going on in the world. Necessarily, the weakest perish, and those most fitted to resist destructive agencies survive. This is nature's method of selection. Accidental peculiarities of organism and habit in the individual, which assist in the preservation of life, are thus perpetuated and increased in the offspring, till eventually a new species is formed, widely different from its first parents. For instance: in a forest where deer are hunted by swift hounds, those which are slow and feeble soon fall a prey to their pursuers, while those which are strong and fleet manage to escape. The qualities which preserved the more vigorous animals are transmitted in a higher degree to some of their progeny; so that, gradually, a more powerful and quick-footed race of deer are created.

We cannot enter into details, or explain why many facts are in apparent antagonism to Mr. Darwin's views. None, however, can deny their boldness and originality, or the convincing array of scientific proof he has collected to support them. They establish a new foundation for psychology; they settle forever the long-disputed question—the unity or diversity of the origin of races; they inaugurate a new era in natural history, and indicate a new law of progression in animated nature.

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