

Mr. Darwin's new work treats of "The Variation of Animals and Plants under *Domestication*." He treats varieties as incipient species, and supports his theory by the following reasoning, which must be taken by the sceptic or the bigot for what it may be worth. He says, in effect, that the perpetuation of varieties may be caused either by man's artificial interference, or by the action of causes purely natural. The natural causes must be more or less obscure to us, since we cannot watch them with sufficient closeness or for a sufficient length of time; but the artificial agency we can both perceive and register. Once having done so, and having carefully noted both operation and result, we shall be in a position to approach the less amenable phenomena presented to us by nature, with an explanation founded upon research among analogous facts existing at our own doors. Hence the importance of a treatise on the variation of animals and plants under domestication as the first step of all.

The hypothesis raised by Mr. Darwin is atwain to Dr. Shorthouse's theory of perpetuating inherent excellence in the racehorse by a sound discrimination in mating. Were I to support the Doctor's theory he would not care a rap for my feeble prop; and should I oppose him he would cudgel me and tongue-lash me within an inch of my existence. Now I would no more presume to say that Mr. Darwin, as a theorist, is superior to the Carshalton sage than I would affirm that Pope is as great a poet as Shakspeare. I would no more say this than I would declare that Dr. Cumming is a greater prophet than Zadkiel, Paul Walmsley, or the gipsy-crew who tell fortunes and cast nativities by poring

"Owre the devil's pictur'd beuks."

I would no more venture upon such an assertion than I would denounce the Alcoran in the presence of Mohammedans, or assert in the mosque that Socrates was a greater man than Mahomet!