

OUR EMOTIONS.—Mr. Darwin, in his new work on "The Expression of the Emotions in Men and Animals," considers that the principles which account for the majority of the expressions and gestures involuntarily used by us are three in number:—1. The principle of serviceable associated habits.—Certain complex actions are of direct or indirect service under certain states of the mind, in order to relieve or gratify certain sensations, desires, &c.; and whenever the same state of mind is induced, however feebly, there is a tendency through the force of habit and association for the same movements to be performed, though they may not then be of the least use. Some actions ordinarily associated through habit with certain states of the mind may be partially repressed through the will, and in such cases the muscles which are least under the separate control of the will are the most liable still to act, causing movements which we recognise as expressive. In certain other cases the checking of one habitual movement requires other slight movements; and these are also expressive. (2.) The principle of antithesis.—Certain states of the mind lead to certain habitual actions, which are of service, as under our first principle. Now when a directly opposite state of mind is induced there is a strong and involuntary tendency to the performance of movements of a directly opposite nature, though these are of no use; and such movements are in some cases highly expressive. (3.) The principle of actions due to the constitution of the nervous system, independently from the first of the will, and independently to a certain extent of habit.—When the sensorium is strongly excited, nerve force is generated in excess, and is transmitted in certain definite directions, depending on the connection of the nerve-cells, and partly on habit; or the supply of nerve force may, as it appears, be interrupted. Effects are thus produced which we recognise as expressive. The third principle may, for the sake of brevity, be called that of the direct action of the nervous system.