

## MR. DARWIN'S LAST BOOK,

"Expression in Man and Animals," and draws a ludicrous picture, at Mr. Darwin's expense, of the manner in which he made his "several young children" the subjects of scientific observation :

In one place Mr. Darwin's words clearly imply that he kept a note-book in which he recorded his ideas of passing expressions on the faces of his own infants ; and, in fact, we find that he believes he knows the exact dates at which they first smiled, sobbed, or shed tears. How many children he has is a question which a parent can scarcely help wondering about, and his own amiable frankness almost invites speculation. As, for example, on page 287: "Several years ago, I was surprised by seeing *several* of my young children earnestly doing something together on the ground ; but the distance was too great for me to ask what they were about. Therefore I threw up my open hands with extended fingers above my head ; and as soon as I had done this I became conscious of the action. I then waited, without saying a word, to see if my children had understood this gesture ; and as they came running to me, they cried out, 'We saw that you were astonished at us.'" Now, as Mrs. Partington said, "It's a wonderful world—my husband knowed a woman as had eighteen children in five years, or five children in eighteen years, I ain't sure which." And certainly these words, "*several* of my young children," do suggest a brood large enough to furnish an ample field of investigation for an inquiring mind. There is nothing really and finally ludicrous in one's taking notes of the facts nearest to us, and using them for scientific purposes. I took such notes when I was a boy, and yet possess the records of them, but I could not do it now ; and I find I cannot help laughing at other people's doing it. The reader may be amused by some illustrative extracts from Mr. Darwin's volume :

Page 86. "It is curious how early in life the modulation of the voice becomes expressive. With any of my children, under the age of two years, I clearly perceived that his humph of assent was rendered by a slight modulation strongly emphatic ; and that by a peculiar wince his negative expressed obstinate determination."

Page 153. "Infants, whilst young, do not shed tears or weep, as is well known to nurses and medical men. This circumstance is not exclusively due to the lacrymal glands being as yet incapable of secreting tears. I first noticed this fact from having accidentally [oh, ah !] brushed with the cuff of my coat the open eye of one of my infants, when 77 days old, causing this eye to water freely [monster !] ; and though the child screamed violently, the other eye remained dry, or was only slightly suffused with tears." This is followed by a series of observations as to the dates at which inchoate or complete crying set in with different children ; e. g., "A similar slight effusion occurred ten days previously in both eyes during a screaming fit. The tears did not run over the eyelids and roll down the cheeks of this child whilst screaming badly, when 122 days old. This first happened" [—in your knowledge, you mean ? or did you keep up a sleepless watch for seventeen days and nights, ready to interrogate nature still further with coat-cuff and noise-boxes ?] "seventeen days later, at the age of 139 days . . . In one case, I was positively assured tears ran down at the unusually early age of 42 days."

Page 157. "With one of my infants, when 77 days old, the inspirations" [in a screaming fit] "were so rapid and strong that they approached in character to sobbing ; when 138 days old I first noticed distinct sobbing. . . . The keepers of the Zoological Gardens assure me that they have never heard a sob of any kind from a monkey." This really seems to disappoint Mr. Darwin !

Page 159. "I asked one of my boys to shout as loudly as he possibly could, and as soon as he began he firmly contracted his orbicular muscles ; I observed this repeatedly, and, on asking him why he had every time so firmly closed his eyes, I found him quite unaware of the fact. He had acted instinctively or unconsciously."

Now, this should have been illustrated: "Master Darwin shouting as loudly as he could, at the request of Mr. Darwin."

Page 189. "I made three of my children, without giving them any clue to my object, look as long and attentively as they could at the summit of a tall tree, standing against an extremely bright sky. With all three, the orbicular, corrugator, and pyramidal muscles were energetically contracted . . . so that their eyes might be protected from the bright light. But they tried their utmost" (the patient little angels !) "to look upwards, and now a curious struggle, with spasmodic twitchings, would be observed."

Page 201. "I touched with a bit of paper the sole of the foot of one of my infants when only seven days old" (where was Mrs. Darwin ? where was the nurse ?) "and it was suddenly jerked away, and the toes curled about, as in an older child." Once more, who will not

regret that this scene was not photographed, and the result reproduced for the benefit of the reader ?