

nance having already begun to change. To many, this doctrine of Natural Selection, or 'the preservation of favoured races in the struggle for life,' seems so simple, when once clearly stated, and so consonant with known facts and received principles, that they have difficulty in conceiving how it can constitute a great step in the progress of science. Such is often the case with important discoveries, but in order to assure ourselves that the doctrine was by no means obvious, we have only to refer back to the writings of skilful naturalists who attempted in the earlier part of the nineteenth century, to theorise on this subject, before the invention of this new method of explaining how certain forms are supplanted by new ones, and in what manner these last are selected out of innumerable varieties, and rendered permanent.

Dr. Hooker, on the Theory of 'Creation by Variation' as applied to the Vegetable Kingdom.

Of Dr. Hooker, whom I have often cited in this chapter, Mr. Darwin has spoken in the Introduction to his 'Origin of Species,' as one 'who had, for fifteen years, aided him in every possible way, by his large stores of knowledge, and his excellent judgement.' This distinguished botanist published his 'Introductory Essay to the Flora of Australia' * in December 1859, the year after the memoir on 'Natural Selection' was communicated to the Linnæan Society, and a month after the appearance of the 'Origin of Species.'

Having, in the course of his extensive travels, studied the botany of arctic, temperate, and tropical regions, and written on the flora of India, which he had examined at all heights above the sea, from the plains of Bengal to the limits

* Introductory Essay, &c. Lovell Reeve, London, 1859.