

Robert Darwin was born at Shrewsbury, on the Severn, on the 12th of February, 1809; he died at his country house at Down, in Kent, on the 19th of April, 1882, at the age of seventy-three. In his seventeenth year (1825) he entered the University of Edinburgh, and two years later Christ's College, Cambridge. When scarcely twenty-two years old, in 1831, he was invited to take part in a scientific expedition which was sent out by England, in order to survey accurately the southernmost point of South America, and to examine several parts of the South Seas. This expedition, like many other voyages of inquiry fitted out in a praiseworthy manner by England, had scientific objects, and at the same time was intended to solve practical problems relating to navigation. The vessel, commanded by Captain Fitzroy, appropriately bore the symbolic name of the *Beagle*. The voyage of the *Beagle*, which lasted five years, was of the highest importance to the full development of Darwin's genius; for in the very first year, when he set his foot on the soil of South America, the outline of the Doctrine of Descent dawned upon him. Darwin himself has described this voyage in a work which is written in a very attractive style, and we obtain from it a brilliant picture of the variously-gifted young naturalist. This book of travel, which lies far above the usual average in interest, not only shows in a very charming manner Darwin's amiable character, but we can in many ways recognize the various steps by which he arrived at his conceptions. The result of the voyage was, first, a large scientific work, the zoological and geological portion of which belong in a great measure to Darwin; and secondly, a celebrated work by him alone on