

out of doors only from curiosity, and in search of new specimens, prompted by the love of travel and adventure, or as companions to commercial and colonising expeditions, they are now forced to do so, because one of the greatest agencies in nature—"the struggle for existence"—can only be studied in nature herself. Before Darwin the study of nature was artificial; through his influence it has become natural. From the point of view of the history of thought, this is surely a much greater result than any of the several theories or special arguments which are connected with his name. These are indeed numerous, each making, as it were, a distinctly new departure in scientific reasoning, characterised by that unmistakable sign¹ of all that is really novel in the realm of thought, the creation of a new vocabulary of distinct terms and phrases. Varieties were known to botanists before Darwin, but who studied "variation" and "variability"? or who spoke of the "divergence of character"? Breeders of stock and pigeon-fanciers knew what "selection" meant, but the

¹ The late Hewett Cottrell Watson, author of the 'Cybele Britannica'—one of a most valuable series of works on the topography and geographical distribution of the plants of the British Islands—wrote to Darwin shortly after the publication of the 'Origin of Species,' 21st November 1859: "I am tempted to write you the first impressions, not doubting that they will, in the main, be the permanent impressions. Your leading idea will assuredly become recognised as an established truth in science—*i.e.*, 'Natural Selection.' It has the characteristics of all great natural truths, clarifying

what was obscure, simplifying what was intricate, adding greatly to previous knowledge. You are the greatest revolutionist in natural history of this century, if not of all centuries. . . . Now these novel views are brought fairly before the scientific public, it seems truly remarkable how so many of them could have failed to see their right road sooner. How could Sir C. Lyell, for instance, for thirty years read, write, and think on the subject of species and their succession, and yet constantly look down the wrong road?" ('Life of Darwin,' vol. i. p. 352, and vol. ii. p. 226.)