

DARWIN'S NEW BOOK.—The present year will be signalised by all naturalists by the publication of Mr. Darwin's work on the "Variation of Animals and Plants," which has been issued while this sheet is passing through the press. A mere inspection of the table of contents, of the headings of the chapters, the profuse references, and the copious index, suffice to show the importance of the work. The mere fact of so vast a body of facts, methodically arranged, and carefully digested, as they are sure to be under such authorship, will give these volumes an especial value to naturalists and physiologists, and, we may add, an interest for the intelligent public, which it is scarcely possible to over-estimate; and this wholly irrespective of any speculative views which may be advanced, and on which opinions must necessarily differ. It will be our duty, and our pleasure, to lay before our readers a full account of this work; but we must for the present content ourselves with saying that these volumes are devoted "to the whole subject of variation under domestication." Domestic animals, horses, pigs, cattle, pigeons, fowls—in fact, birds, beasts, fishes, insects down to silkworms, cultivated plants, cereal and culinary, fruit trees, ornamental trees, flowers, "sports"—all these are examined in the first volume; while the second volume is devoted to such subjects as Inheritance, Reversion, Crossing, Hybridisation, Selection, Causes and Laws of Variation, &c. Lastly, for the purpose of bringing together a multitude of facts which are at present left disconnected by any efficient cause, a new hypothesis called Pangenesis is brought forward, "which implies that the whole organisation, in the sense of every separate atom or unit, reproduces itself." Hence ovules and pollen granules—the fertilised seed, or egg, as well as buds—include and consist of a multitude of germs thrown off from each separate atom of the organism.