

ANTHROPOLOGICAL MISCELLANEA.

THE EXPRESSION OF THE EMOTIONS IN MAN AND ANIMALS. By CHARLES DARWIN, M.A., F.R.S., &c. With Photographic and other Illustrations. London: Murray, 1872.

A work from the pen of Mr. Darwin on any subject connected with natural history, will always command attention, however it may fail to make a convert of the reader to the peculiar theory which the author advocates in regard to the descent of our race from the animal kingdom. Independent, however, of the truth of the theory in question, there is sufficient of real value and of intense interest in every production which emanates from Mr. Darwin, to ensure its being acceptable to every intelligent mind, whether naturalist, anthropologist, or only a searcher after general knowledge.

The book before us may be viewed in three distinct lights: 1. As an argument in continuation of that contained in Mr. Darwin's other works, in support of what is now generally known as the Darwinian theory. 2. As a treatise on certain points in natural history. 3. As an exposition of a very important branch of art.

The main argument which the author endeavours to adduce from the facts which he has collected together in the present volume is, that as man is wont to manifest so many exhibitions of emotions and passions in various ways, closely resembling those exerted by animals on corresponding occasions and from corresponding causes, it may reasonably be inferred that animals have not only much in common, but that man must almost necessarily be descended from some member of the animal kingdom.

We prefer, however, giving a summary of the writer's argument in his own words; when he states that "the study of the theory of expression confirms, to a certain limited extent, the conclusion that man is derived from some lower animal form, and supports the belief of the specific or subspecific unity of the several races," p. 367.

Illustrations in support of his theory are afforded in different parts of his work. Thus, in the case of fear, he observes "With regard to the involuntary bristling of the hair, we have good reason to believe that in the case of animals this action, however it may have originated, serves, together with certain voluntary movements, to make them appear terrible to their enemies; and as the same involuntary and voluntary actions are performed by animals nearly related to man, we are led to believe that man has retained, through inheritance, a relic of them, now become useless," p. 308. So also as regards the

means of intercourse, both between men and animals, we are told that "the power of communication between the members of the same tribe by means of language, has been of paramount importance in the development of man; and the force of language is much aided by the expressive movements of the face and body. We perceive this at once when we converse on an important subject with any person whose face is concealed," p. 365. The expression of rage in the case of man, is thus traced to its exhibition in the animal creation: "Our early [animal] progenitors when enraged would probably have exposed their teeth more freely than does man, even when giving full vent to his rage, as with the insane. We may also feel almost certain that they would have protruded their lips when sulky or disappointed in a greater degree than is the case with our own children, or even with the children of existing savage races," p. 363.

Lavater, in his "Physiognomy," traced out the similarity as regards the type of form in each, between the faces of certain men and certain animals, which he illustrated by plates; and further contended that those men who are adorned with countenances which resemble particular animals, partake largely of the nature of those animals; thus contributing to establish the affinity between the nature of man and that of animals in some respects, perhaps even further than Mr. Darwin has done; if, indeed, Lavater did not thus, to a certain extent, supply the missing link which has been so frequently said to be wanting in order to connect the two species together.

White, too, in his "Gradation of Man and Animals," established the general and gradual gradation both in men and animals, and between the different species of each. He tells us that "the hint that suggested this investigation was taken from Mr. John Hunter, who had a number of skulls which he placed upon a table in a regular series, first showing the human skull, with its varieties in the European, the Asiatic, the American, and the African; then proceeding to the skull of the monkey, and so on to that of a dog, in order to demonstrate the gradation both in the skulls and in the upper and lower jaws," p. 41.

We have thus endeavoured, as fairly as we could, allowing for the narrow limits to which our space extends, and as favourably to Mr. Darwin as it appeared that we were warranted in doing, to present before our readers what seemed to us to be the leading points in support of his theory; as regards which, although supported with all the ingenuity, all the eloquence, and all the information which Mr. Darwin has so abundantly at command, most of his readers will, we believe, conclude that, although like our friend "the claimant," he may be said, to a certain extent, to have made out a very fair case, yet there are certain essential links to be supplied, and certain facts to be got over, without which it is impossible to carry conviction.

Viewed merely as a treatise on natural history, we believe that it will be difficult to over estimate the value of the work before us. It treats, indeed, not only on natural history, but upon that branch of it

which is at once the highest, the most difficult, and the most important. Not merely the physical structure, but the instinctive endowments and impulses of the animal race are here investigated, and the penetration and discrimination of the author have effected valuable service in bringing much to light, which was previously in obscurity. To a certain extent, perhaps, we may regret that his work has been *settled*, if we may use the expression, by his particular theory, and by his desire to make every fact contribute to the support of that theory, instead of discussing the subject of natural history free from prejudice, and with a desire only to arrive at the simple truth. He, in fact, appears as an advocate, when he should have assumed the judicial character. Be this as it may, the work is of essential value as a contribution to natural history, and is highly servicable to the study of anthropology also.

Considering Mr. Darwin's book as an exposition of a very important branch of art, the expression of the emotions, we are inclined to attach to it very high value. This department of the arts is, moreover, one which is not only of great consequence, but it is one which has been much neglected by our artists, and which we trust that Mr. Darwin's work may essentially contribute to remedy. The ancients understood these matters better than we do; in proof of which we may appeal to the Greek statues of animals in the Vatican, as also to the paintings by Rubens, Sneyders, and Rembrandt, in which animal passion is very forcibly depicted. Indeed, a member of the Anthropological Institute, Mr. G. Harris, some time ago, in his "Theory of the Arts,"* devoted some pages to the consideration of this very subject, and urged its importance as connected with the study of art, pointing out how, from the expression both of emotion and passion exhibited by animals, much may be learnt, alike as regards truth and force in exhibiting that of man. The ancient poets, too, more especially Homer and Virgil, in their descriptions of violent passion and emotion in man, were wont to institute comparisons with animals when similarly excited.

Mr. Darwin's work is enriched with photographic and other illustrations throughout, which make it at once fully intelligible to the general reader, and highly servicable to artists. On the whole, however we may differ from the author on many points, we feel bound to pronounce his book as one of sterling value, as well as of deep interest, and without which the library of no man of scientific acquirements, or of profundity as a naturalist, can be considered to be complete.

THE HAMATH INSCRIPTIONS.

SIR,—Mr. Hyde Clarke's speculations as to the origin and analogies of the Hamath character *o/c* are ingenious, but I much fear that they will lead to little practical result. This would, in my opinion, be better attained by seeking for a modern key to the Hamath inscriptions, than even by comparing them with the ancient cuneiform or

* Vol. ii, pp. 74, 80