

OUR BOOK SHELF

The Descent of Man, and Selection in relation to Sex.

By Charles Darwin, M.A., F.R.S. Second Edition, revised and augmented. Pp. 688. (Murray: 1874.)

SINCE the first edition of this great work was reviewed in these pages (*NATURE*, vol. iii., pp. 442, 463), it has been repeatedly reprinted without any important change. But the new issue differs, not only in form, but also in many important additions, from the first. In spite of the added material, the whole work is now comprised in a single volume scarcely larger than one of the previous two. For this purpose the print has been much compressed, and the paper is thinner. The leaves have also been cut. So that although in some respects more convenient, the present form is less pleasing than the original one. We would suggest the desirableness of publishing a library edition of this and Mr. Darwin's other works, uniform with "*Animals and Plants under Domestication*," so that the *opera omnia* of our great biologist may stand ranged in a well-ordered row, printed in legible type with ample margin on opaque paper, fit to be clad in the sober dignity of russia. The present volume looks more like a school cram-book than a treatise which makes a generation illustrious. A prospectus has just reached us from Stuttgart of a German translation of the works of Mr. Darwin, by Victor Carus, to be published in numbers, with photographic and woodcut illustrations, portrait, indices, &c., and to be completed in ten handsome volumes. It would surely not be creditable were there to be no corresponding edition in English.

A list of the principal additions and corrections made in this edition of the "*Descent of Man*" is prefixed, and shows at a glance that the most important additions have been on the subject of Sexual Selection.

The whole treatise is now divided into three parts: The *Descent of Man*; Sexual Selection generally; and Sexual Selection in relation to Man. The two somewhat disjointed sections of the original work are thus combined into more of an organic unity. Beside innumerable references to the vast literature bearing on the subject scattered through the periodicals and books of travel of the civilised world, there is an important contribution by Prof. Huxley, on the resemblances and differences between the brain of man and that of apes, which occupies seven closely-printed pages. This and other valuable additions make this edition necessary to biologists as a work of reference, though most will probably prefer the earlier one for reading.