

*The Movements and Habits of Climbing Plants.* By CHARLES DARWIN, M.A., F.R.S., &c. Second edition, revised. With Illustrations. John Murray.

Since the publication of the original essay ten years ago, Mr. Darwin has been adding to his store of observations on the nature of climbing plants, and we have the outcome of his prolonged researches in this volume. He gives us, too, the benefit of his opinions on the recent labours of Sachs and De Vries in the same field of study.

Every one is aware of the fact of many of our plants being climbers, but few will be prepared to find how much that is curious is involved in the process. Our author has devoted his attention specially to plants that twine, of which the hop is a familiar instance; those which use their leaves for climbing, such as the clematis; and those which throw out

tendrils, as the common vine and the passion-flower. It seems that in all cases the faculty of climbing is primarily due to the circumstance that the newer growths revolve; for though some few plants in the second and third categories scarcely show any signs of doing so, Mr. Darwin gives reasons for believing that such have lost the faculty through force of outward circumstances. Instances are given of climbing plants having adopted the erect principle of growth in situations where their natural powers could not be brought into play, and of having subsequently regained their original habit—a circumstance to which the author very naturally attaches a high significance. He, of all men, is certainly entitled to do so. Some of his readers however will be hardly prepared to accept the conclusion which, he says, is forced on his mind, that the capacity of revolving is inherent, though undeveloped, in almost every plant in the vegetable kingdom.