

CAMBRIDGE LIBRARY COLLECTION

Books of enduring scholarly value

Darwin

Two hundred years after his birth and 150 years after the publication of 'On the Origin of Species', Charles Darwin and his theories are still the focus of worldwide attention. This series offers not only works by Darwin, but also the writings of his mentors in Cambridge and elsewhere, and a survey of the impassioned scientific, philosophical and theological debates sparked by his 'dangerous idea'.

The Foundation of the Origin of Species

The development of Charles Darwin's views on evolution by natural selection has fascinated biologists since the 1859 publication of his landmark text On The Origin of Species. His experiences, observations and reflections during and after his pivotal journey on the Beagle during 1831–36 were of critical importance. Darwin was not, however, a man to be rushed. While his autobiography claims that the framework of his theory was laid down by 1839, its first outline sketch did not emerge until 1842. That essay was heavily edited, with many insertions and erasures. It formed the vital kernel of his more expansive but also unpolished and unpublished essay of 1844. Following careful editing by his son Francis, both essays were published in 1909, and are reproduced here. Reading these side by side, and together with the Origin, permits us to scrutinize selection and evolution truly in action.



Cambridge University Press has long been a pioneer in the reissuing of out-of-print titles from its own backlist, producing digital reprints of books that are still sought after by scholars and students but could not be reprinted economically using traditional technology. The Cambridge Library Collection extends this activity to a wider range of books which are still of importance to researchers and professionals, either for the source material they contain, or as landmarks in the history of their academic discipline.

Drawing from the world-renowned collections in the Cambridge University Library, and guided by the advice of experts in each subject area, Cambridge University Press is using state-of-the-art scanning machines in its own Printing House to capture the content of each book selected for inclusion. The files are processed to give a consistently clear, crisp image, and the books finished to the high quality standard for which the Press is recognised around the world. The latest print-on-demand technology ensures that the books will remain available indefinitely, and that orders for single or multiple copies can quickly be supplied.

The Cambridge Library Collection will bring back to life books of enduring scholarly value across a wide range of disciplines in the humanities and social sciences and in science and technology.



The Foundation of the Origin of Species

Two Essays Written in 1842 and 1844 by Charles Darwin

CHARLES DARWIN
EDITED BY FRANCIS DARWIN





CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge New York Melbourne Madrid Cape Town Singapore São Paolo Delhi

Published in the United States of America by Cambridge University Press, New York

www.cambridge.org
Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781108004886

© in this compilation Cambridge University Press 2009

This edition first published 1909 This digitally printed version 2009

ISBN 978-1-108-00488-6

This book reproduces the text of the original edition. The content and language reflect the beliefs, practices and terminology of their time, and have not been updated.



THE FOUNDATIONS OF THE ORIGIN OF SPECIES



CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

Mondon: FETTER LANE, E.C. C. F. CLAY, MANAGER



Edinburgh: 100, PRINCES STREET

ALSO

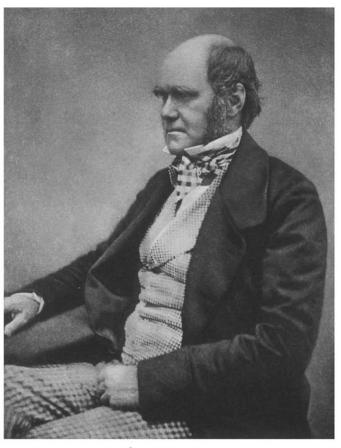
London: H. K. LEWIS, 136, GOWER STREET, W.C.

Berlin: A. ASHER AND CO.
Leipzig: F. A. BROCKHAUS
Leiw Hork: G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS

Bombay and Calcuita: MACMILLAN AND Co., LTD.

All rights reserved





Charle Same

from a photograph by Maull & Fox. eire 1854



THE FOUNDATIONS OF THE ORIGIN OF SPECIES

TWO ESSAYS
WRITTEN IN 1842 AND 1844

by

CHARLES DARWIN

Edited by his son

FRANCIS DARWIN

Honorary Fellow of Christ's College

Cambridge: at the University Press



Astronomers might formerly have said that God ordered each planet to move in its particular destiny. In same manner God orders each animal created with certain form in certain country. But how much more simple and sublime power,—let attraction act according to certain law, such are inevitable consequences,—let animal(s) be created, then by the fixed laws of generation, such will be their successors.

From Darwin's Note Book, 1837, p. 101.



TO THE MASTER AND FELLOWS OF CHRIST'S COLLEGE, THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED BY THE EDITOR IN TOKEN OF RESPECT AND GRATITUDE



CONTENTS

ESSAY OF 1842

	PAGI	S
Introducti	ON	хi
	PART I	
§ i.	On variation under domestication, and on the principles of selection	1
§ ii.	On variation in a state of nature and on the natural means of selection	4
§ iii.	On variation in instincts and other mental attributes .	17
	PART II	
§§ iv. and	v. On the evidence from Geology. (The reasons for combining the two sections are given in the Intro-	
		22
§ vi.	Ocographical distribution	29
§ vii.	Affinities and classification	35
§ viii	i. Unity of type in the great classes 3	38
§ ix.	Abortive organs	l 5
§ x.	Recapitulation and conclusion 4	18



viii

CONTENTS

ESSAY OF 1844

PART I

CHAPTER I

ON THE VARIATION OF ORGANIC BEINGS UNDER DOMESTI-CATION; AND ON THE PRINCIPLES OF SELECTION.

Variation—On the hereditary tendency—Causes of Variation—On Selection—Crossing Breeds—Whether our domestic races have descended from one or more wild stocks—Limits to Variation in degree and kind—In what consists Domestication—Summary . . . 57—80

CHAPTER II

ON THE VARIATION OF ORGANIC BEINGS IN A WILD STATE; ON THE NATURAL MEANS OF SELECTION; AND ON THE COMPARISON OF DOMESTIC RACES AND TRUE SPECIES.

Variation—Natural means of Selection—Differences between "Races" and "Species":—first, in their trueness or variability—Difference between "Races" and "Species" in fertility when crossed—Causes of Sterility in Hybrids—Infertility from causes distinct from hybridisation—Points of Resemblance between "Races" and "Species"—External characters of Hybrids and Mongrels—Summary—Limits of Variation 81—111

CHAPTER III

ON THE VARIATION OF INSTINCTS AND OTHER MENTAL ATTRIBUTES UNDER DOMESTICATION AND IN A STATE OF NATURE; ON THE DIFFICULTIES IN THIS SUBJECT; AND ON ANALOGOUS DIFFICULTIES WITH RESPECT TO CORPOREAL STRUCTURES.

Variation of mental attributes under domestication—Hereditary habits compared with instincts—Variation in the mental attributes of wild animals—Principles of Selection applicable to instincts—Difficulties in the acquirement of complex instincts by Selection—Difficulties in the acquirement by Selection of complex corporeal structures . 112—132



CONTENTS

ix

PART II

ON THE EVIDENCE FAVOURABLE AND OPPOSED TO THE VIEW THAT SPECIES ARE NATURALLY FORMED RACES, DESCENDED FROM COMMON STOCKS.

CHAPTER IV

CHAPTER V

GRADUAL APPEARANCE AND DISAPPEARANCE OF SPECIES.

Gradual appearance of species—Extinction of species . . . 144—15

CHAPTER VI

ON THE GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION OF ORGANIC BEINGS IN PAST AND PRESENT TIMES.

SECTION FIRST

Distribution of the inhabitants in the different continents—Relation of range in genera and species—Distribution of the inhabitants in the same continent—Insular Faunas—Alpine Floras—Cause of the similarity in the floras of some distant mountains—Whether the same species has been created more than once—On the number of species, and of the classes to which they belong in different regions 151—174

SECOND SECTION

SECTION THIRD

An attempt to explain the foregoing laws of geographical distribution, on the theory of allied species having a common descent—Improbability of finding fossil forms intermediate between existing species 183—197

CHAPTER VII

ON THE NATURE OF THE AFFINITIES AND CLASSIFICATION OF ORGANIC BEINGS.

Gradual appearance and disappearance of groups—What is the Natural System?—On the kind of relation between distinct groups—Classification of Races or Varieties—Classification of Races and Species similar—Origin of genera and families 198—213



 \mathbf{x}

CONTENTS

CHAPTER VIII

UNITY OF TYPE IN THE GREAT CLASSES; AND MORPHOLOGICAL STRUCTURES.

CHAPTER IX

ABORTIVE OR RUDIMENTARY ORGANS.

CHAPTER X

RECAPITULATION AND CONCLUSION.

Portrait frontispiece
Facsimile to face p. 50



INTRODUCTION

WE know from the contents of Charles Darwin's Note Book of 1837 that he was at that time a convinced Evolutionist¹. Nor can there be any doubt that, when he started on board the Beagle, such opinions as he had were on the side of immutability. When therefore did the current of his thoughts begin to set in the direction of Evolution?

We have first to consider the factors that made for such a change. On his departure in 1831, Henslow gave him vol. I. of Lyell's Principles, then just published, with the warning that he was not to believe what he read2. But believe he did, and it is certain (as Huxley has forcibly pointed out³) that the doctrine of uniformitarianism when applied to Biology leads of necessity to Evolution. If the extermination of a species is no more catastrophic than the natural death of an individual, why should the birth of a species be any more miraculous than the birth of an individual? It is quite clear that this thought was vividly present to Darwin when he was writing out his early thoughts in the 1837 Note Book :--

"Propagation explains why modern animals same type as extinct, which is law almost proved.

¹ See the extracts in *Life and Letters of Charles Darwin*, ii. p. 5.

² The second volume,—especially important in regard to Evolution,—reached him in the autumn of 1832, as Prof. Judd has pointed out in his most interesting paper in *Darwin and Modern Science*. Cambridge, 1909.

³ Obituary Notice of C. Darwin, *Proc. R. Soc.* vol. 44. Reprinted in Huxley's *Collected Essays*. See also *Life and Letters of C. Darwin*, ii.

p. 179.

See the extracts in the *Life and Letters*, ii. p. 5.



xii INTRODUCTION

They die, without they change, like golden pippins; it is a generation of species like generation of individuals."

"If species generate other species their race is

not utterly cut off."

These quotations show that he was struggling to see in the origin of species a process just as scientifically comprehensible as the birth of individuals. They show, I think, that he recognised the two things not merely as similar but as identical.

It is impossible to know how soon the ferment of uniformitarianism began to work, but it is fair to suspect that in 1832 he had already begun to see that mutability was the logical conclusion of Lyell's doctrine, though this was not acknowledged by

Lyell himself.

There were however other factors of change. In his Autobiography¹ he wrote:—"During the voyage of the Beagle I had been deeply impressed by discovering in the Pampean formation great fossil animals covered with armour like that on the existing armadillos; secondly, by the manner in which closely allied animals replace one another in proceeding southward over the Continent; and thirdly, by the South American character of most of the productions of the Galapagos archipelago, and more especially by the manner in which they differ slightly on each island of the group; none of the islands appearing to be very ancient in a geological sense. It was evident that such facts as these, as well as many others, could only be explained on the supposition that species gradually become modified; and the subject haunted me."

Again we have to ask: how soon did any of these influences produce an effect on Darwin's mind? Different answers have been attempted. Huxley held that these facts could not have produced their essential effect until the voyage had

¹ Life and Letters, i. p. 82.

² Obituary Notice, loc. cit.



INTRODUCTION

xiii

come to an end, and the "relations of the existing with the extinct species and of the species of the different geographical areas with one another were determined with some exactness." He does not therefore allow that any appreciable advance towards evolution was made during the actual voyage of the *Beagle*.

Professor Judd¹ takes a very different view. He holds that November 1832 may be given with some confidence as the "date at which Darwin commenced that long series of observations and reasonings which eventually culminated in the pre-

paration of the Origin of Species."

Though I think these words suggest a more direct and continuous march than really existed between fossil-collecting in 1832 and writing the *Origin of Species* in 1859, yet I hold that it was during the voyage that Darwin's mind began to be turned in the direction of Evolution, and I am therefore in essential agreement with Prof. Judd, although I lay more stress than he does on the latter part of the voyage.

Let us for a moment confine our attention to the passage, above quoted, from the Autobiography and to what is said in the Introduction to the Origin, Ed. i., viz. "When on board H.M.S. 'Beagle,' as naturalist, I was much struck with certain facts in the distribution of the inhabitants of South America, and in the geological relations of the present to the past inhabitants of that continent." These words, occurring where they do, can only mean one thing,—namely that the facts suggested an evolutionary interpretation. And this being so it must be true that his thoughts began to flow in the direction of Descent at this early date.

I am inclined to think that the "new light which was rising in his mind?" had not yet attained any

Darwin and Modern Science.



xiv INTRODUCTION

effective degree of steadiness or brightness. I think so because in his Pocket Book under the date 1837 he wrote, "In July opened first note-book on 'transmutation of species.' Had been greatly struck from about month of previous March¹ on character of South American fossils, and species on Galapagos Archipelago. These facts origin (especially latter), of all my views." But he did not visit the Galapagos till 1835 and I therefore find it hard to believe that his evolutionary views attained any strength or permanence until at any rate quite late in the voyage. The Galapagos facts are strongly against Huxley's view, for Darwin's attention was "thoroughly aroused²" by comparing the birds shot by himself and by others on board. The case must have struck him at once,—without waiting for accurate determinations,—as a microcosm of evolution.

It is also to be noted, in regard to the remains of extinct animals, that, in the above quotation from his Pocket Book, he speaks of March 1837 as the time at which he began to be "greatly struck on character of South American fossils," which suggests at least that the impression made in 1832 required reinforcement before a really powerful effect was produced.

We may therefore conclude, I think, that the evolutionary current in my father's thoughts had continued to increase in force from 1832 onwards, being especially reinforced at the Galapagos in 1835 and again in 1837 when he was overhauling the results, mental and material, of his travels. And that when the above record in the Pocket Book was made he unconsciously minimised the earlier beginnings of his theorisings, and laid more stress on the recent thoughts which were

¹ In this citation the italics are mine.

² Journal of Researches, Ed. 1860, p. 394.



INTRODUCTION

 $\mathbf{x}\mathbf{v}$

naturally more vivid to him. In his letter' to Otto Zacharias (1877) he wrote, "On my return home in the autumn of 1836, I immediately began to prepare my Journal for publication, and then saw how many facts indicated the common descent of species." This again is evidence in favour of the view that the later growths of his theory were the essentially

important parts of its development.

In the same letter to Zacharias he says, "When I was on board the Beagle I believed in the permanence of species, but as far as I can remember vague doubts occasionally flitted across my mind." Unless Prof. Judd and I are altogether wrong in believing that late or early in the voyage (it matters little which) a definite approach was made to the evolutionary standpoint, we must suppose that in 40 years such advance had shrunk in his recollection to the dimensions of "vague doubts." The letter to Zacharias shows, I think, some forgetting of the past where the author says, "But I did not become convinced that species were mutable until, I think, two or three years had elapsed." It is impossible to reconcile this with the contents of the evolutionary Note Book of 1837. I have no doubt that in his retrospect he felt that he had not been "convinced that species were mutable" until he had gained a clear conception of the mechanism of natural selection, i.e. in 1838-9.

But even on this last date there is some room, not for doubt, but for surprise. The passage in the Autobiography² is quite clear, namely that in October 1838 he read Malthus's *Essay on the principle of Population* and "being well prepared to appreciate the struggle for existence..., it at once struck me that under these circumstances favourable variations would tend to be preserved.

υ.

b

F. Darwin's Life of Charles Darwin (in one volume), 1892, p. 166.
 Life and Letters, i. p. 83.



xvi INTRODUCTION

and unfavourable ones to be destroyed. The result of this would be the formation of new species. Here then I had at last got a theory by which to work."

It is surprising that Malthus should have been needed to give him the clue, when in the Note Book of 1837 there should occur—however obscurely expressed—the following forecast of the importance of the survival of the fittest. "With respect to extinction, we can easily see that a variety of the ostrich (Petise2), may not be well adapted, and thus perish out; or on the other hand, like Orpheus, being favourable, many might be produced. This requires the principle that the permanent variations produced by confined breeding and changing circumstances are continued and produce(d) according to the adaptation of such circumstances, and therefore that death of species is a consequence (contrary to what would appear in America) of non-adaptation of circumstances."

I can hardly doubt, that with his knowledge of the interdependence of organisms and the tyranny of conditions, his experience would have crystallized out into "a theory by which to work" even without

the aid of Malthus.

In my father's Autobiography he writes, "In June 1842 I first allowed myself the satisfaction of writing a very brief abstract of my theory in pencil in 35 pages; and this was enlarged during the summer of 1844 into one of 230 pages," which I had fairly copied out and still possess." These two Essays, of 1842 and 1844, are now printed under the title The Foundations of the Origin of Species.

4 Life and Letters, i. p. 84.

¹ Life and Letters, ii. p. 8. ² Avestruz Petise; i.e. Rhea Darwins. ³ A bird.

⁵ It contains as a fact 231 pp. It is a strongly bound folio, interleaved with blank pages, as though for notes and additions. His own Ms. from which it was copied contains 189 pp.



INTRODUCTION

xvii

It will be noted that in the above passage he does not mention the MS. of 1842 as being in existence, and when I was at work on *Life and Letters* I had not seen it. It only came to light after my mother's death in 1896 when the house at Down was vacated. The MS. was hidden in a cupboard under the stairs which was not used for papers of any value, but rather as an overflow for matter which he did not wish to destroy.

The statement in the Autobiography that the MS. was written in 1842 agrees with an entry in my father's Diary:—

"1842. May 18th went to Maer. June 15th to Shrewsbury, and on 18th to Capel Curig....During my stay at Maer and Shrewsbury (five years after commencement) wrote pencil sketch of my species theory." Again in a letter to Lyell (June 18, 1858) he speaks of his "MS. sketch written out in 18421." In the Origin of Species, Ed. i. p. 1, he speaks of beginning his speculations in 1837 and of allowing himself to draw up some "short notes" after "five years' work," i.e. in 1842. So far there seems no doubt as to 1842 being the date of the first sketch; but there is evidence in favour of an earlier date². Thus across the Table of Contents of the bound copy of the 1844 MS. is written in my father's hand "This was sketched in 1839." Again in a letter to Mr Wallace³ (Jan. 25, 1859) he speaks of his own contributions to the Linnean paper of July 1, 1858, as "written in 1839, now just twenty years ago." This statement as it stands is undoubtedly incorrect, since the extracts are from the MS. of 1844, about the date of which no doubt exists; but even if it could be supposed to refer to the 1842 Essay, it must I think, be rejected. I can only account for his mistake by the supposition that my father had in

¹ Life and Letters, ii. p. 116. ³ Life and Letters, ii. p. 146.

<sup>Life and Letters, ii. p. 10.
J. Linn. Soc. Zool. iii. p. 45.</sup>



xviii INTRODUCTION

mind the date (1839) at which the framework of his theory was laid down. It is worth noting that in his Autobiography (p. 88) he speaks of the time "about 1839, when the theory was clearly conceived." However this may be there can be no doubt that 1842 is the correct date. Since the publication of Life and Letters I have gained fresh evidence on this head. A small packet containing 13 pp. of Ms. came to light in 1896. On the outside is written "First Pencil Sketch of Species Theory. Written at Maer and Shrewsbury during May and June 1842." It is not however written in pencil, and it consists of a single chapter on The Principles of Variation in Domestic Organisms. A single unnumbered page is written in pencil, and is headed "Maer, May 1842. useless"; it also bears the words "This page was thought of as introduction." It consists of the briefest sketch of the geological evidence for evolution, together with words intended as headings for discussion,—such as "Affinity,—unity of type, feetal state,—abortive organs."

The back of this "useless" page is of some interest, although it does not bear on the question of date,—the matter immediately before us.

It seems to be an outline of the Essay or sketch of 1842, consisting of the titles of the three chapters of which it was to have consisted.

The Principles of Var. in domestic organisms.

"II. The possible and probable application of these same principles to wild animals and consequently the possible and probable production of wild races, analogous to the domestic ones of plants and animals.

The reasons for and against believing that such races have really been produced, forming what are called species."

It will be seen that Chapter III as originally



INTRODUCTION

xix

designed corresponds to Part II (p. 22) of the Essay of 1842, which is (p. 7) defined by the author as discussing "whether the characters and relations of animated things are such as favour the idea of wild species being races descended from a common Again at p. 23 the author asks "What then is the evidence in favour of it (the theory of descent) and what the evidence against it." The generalised section of his Essay having been originally Chapter III1 accounts for the curious error which occurs in pp. 18 and 22 where the second Part of the Essay is called Part III.

The division of the Essay into two parts is maintained in the enlarged Essay of 1844, in which he writes: "The Second Part of this work is devoted to the general consideration of how far the general economy of nature justifies or opposes the belief that related species and genera are descended from common stocks." The Origin of Species however is

not so divided.

We may now return to the question of the date of the Essay. I have found additional evidence in favour of 1842 in a sentence written on the back of the Table of Contents of the 1844 Ms.—not the copied version but the original in my father's writing: "This was written and enlarged from a sketch in 37 pages² in Pencil (the latter written in summer of 1842 at Maer and Shrewsbury) in beginning of 1844, and finished it (sic) in July; and finally corrected the copy by Mr Fletcher in the last week in September." On the whole it is impossible to doubt that 1842 is the date of the earlier of the two Essays.

2 On p. 23 of the Ms. of the Foundations is a reference to the "back of p. 21 bis": this suggests that additional pages had been interpolated in the Ms. and that it may once have had 37 in place of 35 pp.

¹ It is evident that *Parts* and *Chapters* were to some extent interchangeable in the author's mind, for p. 1 (of the MS. we have been discussing) is headed in ink Chapter I, and afterwards altered in pencil to



xx INTRODUCTION

The sketch of 1842 is written on bad paper with a soft pencil, and is in many parts extremely difficult to read, many of the words ending in mere scrawls and being illegible without context. It is evidently written rapidly, and is in his most elliptical style, the articles being frequently omitted, and the sentences being loosely composed and often illogical in structure. There is much erasure and correction, apparently made at the moment of writing, and the MS. does not give the impression of having been re-read with any care. The whole is more like hasty memoranda of what was clear to himself, than material for the convincing of others.

Many of the pages are covered with writing on the back, an instance of his parsimony in the matter of paper. This matter consists partly of passages marked for insertion in the text, and these can generally (though by no means always) be placed where he intended. But he also used the back of one page for a preliminary sketch to be rewritten on a clean These parts of the work have been printed as footnotes, so as to allow what was written on the front of the pages to form a continuous text. certain amount of repetition is unavoidable, but much of what is written on the backs of the pages is of too much interest to be omitted. Some of the matter here given in footnotes may, moreover, have been intended as the final text and not as the preliminary sketch.

When a word cannot be deciphered, it is replaced by:—(illegible), the angular brackets being, as already explained, a symbol for an insertion by the editor. More commonly, however, the context makes the interpretation of a word reasonably sure although the word is not strictly legible. Such words are followed by an inserted mark of interrogation (?).

¹ Life and Letters, i. p. 153.



INTRODUCTION

xxi

Lastly, words inserted by the editor, of which the appropriateness is doubtful, are printed thus

(variation?).

Two kinds of erasure occur in the MS. of 1842. One by vertical lines which seem to have been made when the 35 pp. Ms. was being expanded into that of 1844, and merely imply that such a page is done with: and secondly the ordinary erasures by horizontal lines. I have not been quite consistent in regard to these: I began with the intention of printing (in square brackets) all such erasures. But I ultimately found that the confusion introduced into the already obscure sentences was greater than any possible gain; and many such erasures are altogether omitted. In the same way I have occasionally omitted hopelessly obscure and incomprehensible fragments, which if printed would only have burthened the text with a string of (illegible)s and queried words. Nor have I printed the whole of what is written on the backs of the pages, where it seemed to me that nothing but unnecessary repetition would have been the result.

In the matter of punctuation I have given myself a free hand. I may no doubt have misinterpreted the author's meaning in so doing, but without such punctuation, the number of repellantly crabbed sentences would have been even greater than at present. In dealing with the Essay of 1844, I have corrected some obvious slips without indicating such alterations, because the Ms. being legible, there is no danger of changing the author's meaning.

The sections into which the Essay of 1842 is divided are in the original merely indicated by a gap in the MS. or by a line drawn across the page. No titles are given except in the case of § VIII.; and § II. is the only section which has a number in the original. I might equally well have made sections of what are now subsections, e.g. Natural



xxii INTRODUCTION

Selection p. 7, or Extermination p. 28. But since the present sketch is the germ of the Essay of 1844, it seemed best to preserve the identity between the two works, by using such of the author's divisions as correspond to the chapters of the enlarged version of 1844. The geological discussion with which Part II begins corresponds to two chapters (IV and V) of the 1844 Essay. I have therefore described it as §§ IV. and V., although I cannot make sure of its having originally consisted of two sections. With this exception the ten sections of the Essay of 1842 correspond to the ten chapters of that of 1844.

The Origin of Species differs from the sketch of 1842 in not being divided into two parts. But the two volumes resemble each other in general structure. Both begin with a statement of what may be called the mechanism of evolution,—variation and selection: in both the argument proceeds from the study of domestic organisms to that of animals and plants in a state of nature. This is followed in both by a discussion of the Difficulties on Theory and this by a section Instinct which in both cases is treated as a special case of difficulty.



INTRODUCTION

xxiii

the geological chapters, IX and X, in the *Origin*. From this point onwards the material is grouped in the same order in both works: geographical distribution; affinities and classification; unity of type and morphology; abortive or rudimentary organs;

recapitulation and conclusion.

In enlarging the Essay of 1842 into that of 1844, the author retained the sections of the sketch as chapters in the completer presentment. It follows that what has been said of the relation of the earlier Essay to the Origin is generally true of the 1844 Essay. In the latter, however, the geological discussion is, clearly instead of obscurely, divided into two chapters, which correspond roughly with Chapters IX and X of the Origin. But part of the contents of Chapter X (Origin) occurs in Chapter VI (1844) on Geographical Distribution. The treatment of distribution is particularly full and interesting in the 1844 Essay, but the arrangement of the material, especially the introduction of § III. p. 183, leads to some repetition which is avoided in the Origin. It should be noted that Hybridism, which has a separate chapter (VIII) in the Origin, is treated in Chapter II of the Essay. Finally that Chapter XIII (Origin) corresponds to Chapters VII, VIII and IX of the work of 1844.

The fact that in 1842, seventeen years before the publication of the *Origin*, my father should have been able to write out so full an outline of his future work, is very remarkable. In his Autobiography¹ he writes of the 1844 Essay, "But at that time I overlooked one problem of great importance....This problem is the tendency in organic beings descended from the same stock to diverge in character as they become modified." The absence of the principle of divergence is of course also a characteristic of the

¹ Life and Letters, i. p. 84.



xxiv INTRODUCTION

sketch of 1842. But at p. 37, the author is not far from this point of view. The passage referred to is: "If any species, A, in changing gets an advantage and that advantage...is inherited, A will be the progenitor of several genera or even families in the hard struggle of nature. A will go on beating out other forms, it might come that A would people (the) earth,—we may now not have one descendant on our globe of the one or several original creations¹." But if the descendants of A have peopled the earth by beating out other forms, they must have diverged in occupying the innumerable diverse modes of life from which they expelled their predecessors. What I wrote² on this subject in 1887 is I think true: "Descent with modification implies divergence, and we become so habituated to a belief in descent, and therefore in divergence, that we do not notice the absence of proof that divergence is in itself an advantage."

The fact that there is no set discussion on the principle of divergence in the 1844 Essay, makes it clear why the joint paper read before the Linnean Society on July 1, 1858, included a letter3 to Asa Gray, as well as an extract⁴ from the Essay of 1844. It is clearly because the letter to Gray includes a discussion on divergence, and was thus, probably, the only document, including this subject, which could be appropriately made use of. It shows once more how great was the importance attached by its author to the principle of divergence.

I have spoken of the hurried and condensed manner in which the sketch of 1842 is written; the style of the later Essay (1844) is more finished.

¹ In the footnotes to the Essay of 1844 attention is called to similar

ssages.

² Life and Letters, ii. p. 15.

³ The passage is given in the Life and Letters, ii. p. 124.

⁴ The extract consists of the section on Natural Means of Selection,



INTRODUCTION

XXV

It has, however, the air of an uncorrected MS. rather than of a book which has gone through the ordeal of proof sheets. It has not all the force and conciseness of the Origin, but it has a certain freshness which gives it a character of its own. It must be remembered that the Origin was an abstract or condensation of a much bigger book, whereas the Essay of 1844 was an expansion of the sketch of It is not therefore surprising that in the Origin there is occasionally evident a chafing against the author's self-imposed limitation. Whereas in the 1844 Essay there is an air of freedom, as if the author were letting himself go, rather than applying the curb. This quality of freshness and the fact that some questions were more fully discussed in 1844 than in 1859, makes the earlier work good reading even to those who are familiar with the Origin.

The writing of this Essay "during the summer of 1844," as stated in the Autobiography, and "from memory," as Darwin says elsewhere, was a remarkable achievement, and possibly renders more conceivable the still greater feat of the writing of the *Origin* between July 1858 and September 1859.

It is an interesting subject for speculation: what influence on the world the Essay of 1844 would have exercised, had it been published in place of the *Origin*. The author evidently thought of its publication in its present state as an undesirable expedient, as appears clearly from the following extracts from the *Life and Letters*, vol. ii. pp. 16—18:

¹ Life and Letters, i. p. 84. ² Life and Letters, ii. p. 18.



xxvi INTRODUCTION

C. Darwin to Mrs Darwin.

Down, July 5, 1844.

"...I have just finished my sketch of my species theory. If, as I believe, my theory in time be accepted even by one competent judge, it will be

a considerable step in science.

"I therefore write this in case of my sudden death, as my most solemn and last request, which I am sure you will consider the same as if legally entered in my will, that you will devote £400 to its publication, and further will vourself, or through Hensleigh¹, take trouble in promoting it. I wish that my sketch be given to some competent person, with this sum to induce him to take trouble in its improvement and enlargement. I give to him all my books on Natural History, which are either scored or have references at the end to the pages, begging him carefully to look over and consider such passages as actually bearing, or by possibility bearing, on this subject. I wish you to make a list of all such books as some temptation to an editor. I also request that you will hand over (to) him all those scraps roughly divided into eight or ten brown paper portfolios. The scraps, with copied quotations from various works, are those which may aid my editor. I also request that you, or some amanuensis, will aid in deciphering any of the scraps which the editor may think possibly of use. I leave to the editor's judgment whether to interpolate these facts in the text, or as notes, or under appendices. As the looking over the references and scraps will be a long labour, and as the correcting and enlarging and altering my sketch will also take considerable time, I leave this sum of £400 as some remuneration, and any profits from

¹ Mrs Darwin's brother.