

SCIENCE

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FRIDAY, MARCH 20, 1903.

SOME RECENT IDEAS ON THE EVOLUTION OF PLANTS.*

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THERE is endless dissimilarity in nature. No two plants and no two animals are exactly alike. There are more plants and animals than can find a place in which to live and thrive. There results a struggle for existence. Those animals or plants which, by virtue of their individual differences or peculiarities, are best fitted to the conditions in which they are placed, survive in this struggle for existence. They are 'selected' to live. Those that survive propagate their peculiarities. By virtue of continued variation, and of continual selection along a certain line, the peculiarities may become augmented; finally the gulf of separation from the parental stem becomes great and what we call a new species has originated.

This, in epitome, is the philosophy of Darwin in respect to evolution of organic forms. It contains the well-known postulate of natural selection, the principle that we know as Darwinism. This principle has had more adherents than any other hypothesis of the process of evolution. All recent hypotheses in some way relate to it. A number of them modify it, and some cut across it. The most pronounced counter-

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