



THE

Knox College Monthly

AND

PRESBYTERIAN MAGAZINE.

VOL. XII.

AUGUST, 1890.

No 4.

RUSSEL WALLACE ON DARWINISM.

THE object of Alfred Russel Wallace's book is to give the intelligent reader a clear conception of Darwin's work on Evolution, and an understanding of the power and range of his great principle of Natural Selection, or as Huxley so fittingly put it, the "Survival of the fittest."

The opinion which prevailed prior to Darwin, that each species was specially created, he considers as now obsolete or absurd, and only of interest as exhibiting the mental conditions of the most advanced scientific men, who had not then taken the first step towards a satisfactory explanation of the derivation of species. So Darwin is claimed to be the Newton of Natural History. As Newton, by the discovery of the law of gravitation, established order out of chaos, and laid a sure foundation for all future study of the starry heavens, so Darwin, by discovering the law of Natural Selection, has thrown a flood of light on the process of development of the organic world, and established a firm foundation for all future study of Nature. To prove this position he cites a very large number of most interesting facts, many of which he himself established by experiments.

The theory of Natural Selection rests on two main facts :

1. The power of multiplication is in geometrical progression.