sciences actually arose, or how it has happened that they were more or less successfully cultivated by different nations, it cannot be either uninteresting or uninstructive to compare the progress which natural science had made in Europe, at a period shortly antecedent to the Christian era, with the state in which it now exists: and such a comparison is in strict accordance with the original intention of this treatise. The materials for this comparison, which will be attempted only on a plan the most general, have been principally derived from Lucretius, and from that work of Aristotle which is entitled, Περὶ Ζώων Ἱστορίας. It should be remembered, however, that there is a broad line of distinction between the mode in which natural science was cultivated by the ancients, and that which has been adopted by the moderns. The ancients, though on many occasions as accurate observers of the obvious phenomena of nature as the moderns, were too hasty in coming to conclusions as to the character and cause of those phenomena; and hence the crude opinions and theories with which their philosophy abounded. But, if we justly consider the precept of Thales, "Know thyself," as a precept of the highest wisdom for our moral conduct, we must, on equally strong grounds, consider it as the highest prerogative of reason, or our intellectual nature, to know the actual