

fire and water to bear him over sea and land ; that he had learnt to rule his own appetites, to form notions of justice, to feel love and compassion, and indignation at wrong ; that he had even raised his eyes to heaven, and had formed conceptions which had grown purer and more spiritual as his knowledge extended of his Maker's will and nature.

I am not the least pretending that this has been the actual history of man in this planet, but it is unquestionably the opinion which a stranger would form coming into it from without, and drawing his inferences from the facts which he would find. Far from thinking that the being whose nature he was studying was suffering from some fundamental calamity, he would conclude rather that man was in a state of discipline for the exercise of his powers, and slowly, through conscience and intellect, was rising to a knowledge of God. Man sins, it is true, and sin is an offence against God ; but it is an offence only because the being capable of it has acquired a conception of a moral law. By the law sin entered ; and the self-reproach of the sinner is the recognition of his obligations. The actions which are sinful in us are not sinful in themselves, but only in reference, as Butler says, to the nature of the agent. Murder and incest, robbery, cunning,