abandoned the struggle and retired into exile ; and, when they returned to Athens, the most prominent of them, Plato, was careful to confine himself to theory, and to announce in emphatic terms his withdrawal from the practical politics of his native city.

*Method and Doctrine.—*Socrates was not a “philosopher,” nor yet a “ teacher,” but rather an “ educator,” having for his function “to rouse, persuade, and rebuke” (Plato, *Apology,* 30 E). Hence, in examining his life’s work it is proper to ask, not What was his philosophy ? but What was his theory, and what was his practice, of education ? It is true that he was brought to his theory of education by the study of previous philosophies, and that his practice led to the Platonic revival ; hut to attribute to him philosophy, except in that loose sense in which philosophy is ascribed to one who, denying the existence of such a thing, can give an account of his disbelief, is misleading and even erroneous.

Socrates’s theory of education had for its basis a profound and consistent scepticism ; that is to say, he not only rejected the con­flicting theories of the physicists,—of whom “some conceived existence as a unity, others as a plurality ; some affirmed perpetual motion, others perpetual rest ; some declared becoming and perish­ing to be universal, others altogether denied such things,”—but also condemned, as a futile attempt to transcend the limitations of human intelligence, their *φιλοσοφία,* their “ pursuit of knowledge for its own sake.” Unconsciously, or more probably consciously, Socrates rested his scepticism upon the Protagorean doctrine that man is the measure of his own sensations and feelings ; whence he inferred, not only that knowledge such as the philosophers had sought, certain knowledge of nature and its laws, was unattainable, hut also that neither he nor any other person had authority to overbear the opinions of another, or power to convey instruction to one who had it not. Accordingly, whereas Protagoras and others, abandoning physical speculation and coming forward as teachers of culture, claimed for themselves in this new field power to instruct and authority to dogmatize, Socrates, unable to reconcile himself to this inconsistency, proceeded with the investigation of prin­ciples until he found a resting-place, a *που στω,* in the distinction between good and evil. While all opinions were equally true, of those opinions which were capable of being translated into act some, he conceived, were as working hypotheses more serviceable than others. It was here that the function of such a one as him­self began. Though he had neither the right nor the power to force his opinions upon another, he might by a systematic inter­rogatory lead another to substitute a better opinion for a worse, just as a physician by appropriate remedies may enable his patient to substitute a healthy sense of taste for a morbid one. To ad­minister such an interrogatory and thus to he the physician of souls was, Socrates thought, his divinely appointed duty ; and, when he described himself as a “talker” or “converser,” he not only negatively distinguished himself from those who, whether philosophers or sophists, called themselves “ teachers ” (διδάσκαλοι), but also positively indicated the method of question and answer *(διαλεκτική)* which he consistently preferred and habitually practised.

That it was in this way that Socrates was brought to regard “dialectic,” “question and answer,” as the only admissible method of education is, in the opinion of the present writer, no matter of mere conjecture. In the review of theories of knowledge which has come down to us in Plato’s *Theætetus* mention is made (172 B) of certain “incomplete Protagoreans,” who held that, while all impressions are equally true, one impression is better than another, and that the “ wise man ” is one who by his arguments causes good impressions to take the place of bad ones, thus reforming the soul of the individual or the laws of a state by a process similar to that of the physician or the farmer (166 D *sq.)* ; and these “incomplete Protagoreans ” are identified with Socrates and the Socratics by their insistence (167 D) upon the characteristically Socratic distinc­tion between disputation and dialectic, as well as by other familiar traits of Socratic converse. In fact, this passage becomes intel­ligible and significant if it is supposed to refer to the historical Socrates ; and by teaching us to regard him as an “ incomplete Protagorean ” it supplies the link which connects his philosophical scepticism with his dialectical theory of education. It is no doubt possible that Socrates was unaware of the closeness of his rela­tionship to Protagoras ; but the fact, once stated, hardly admits of question.

In the application of the “dialectical” or “maieutic” method two processes are distinguishable,—the destructive process, by which the worse opinion was eradicated, and the constructive process, by which the better opinion was induced. In general it was not mere “ignorance” with which Socrates had to contend, but “ignor­ance mistaking itself for knowledge” or “false conceit of wisdom,”— a more stubborn and a more formidable foe, who, safe so long as he remained in his entrenchments, must be drawn from them, circum­vented, and surprised. Accordingly, taking his departure from some apparently remote principle or proposition to which the re­

spondent yielded a ready assent, Socrates would draw from it an unexpected but undeniable consequence which was plainly incon­sistent with the opinion impugned. In this way he brought his interlocutor to pass judgment upon himself, and reduced him to a state of “doubt” or “perplexity” *(ἀπορία).* “Before I ever met you,” says Meno in the dialogue which Plato called by his name (79 E), “ I was told that you spent your time in doubting and lead­ing others to doubt ; and it is a fact that your witcheries and spells have brought me to that condition ; you are like the torpedo : as it benumbs any one who approaches and touches it, so do you. For myself, my soul and my tongue are benumbed, so that I have no answer to give you.” Even if, as often happened, the respond­ent, baffled and disgusted by the *ἔλεγχoς* or destructive process, at this point withdrew from the inquiry, he had, in Socrates’s judg­ment, gained something ; for, whereas formerly, being ignorant, he had supposed himself to have knowledge, now, being ignorant, he was in some sort conscious of his ignorance, and accordingly would be for the future more circumspect in action. If, however, having been thus convinced of ignorance, the respondent did not shrink from a new effort, Socrates was ready to aid him by further ques­tions of a suggestive sort. Consistent thinking with a view to con­sistent action being the end of the inquiry, Socrates would direct the respondent’s attention to instances analogous to that in hand, and so lead him to frame for himself a generalization from which the passions and the prejudices of the moment were, as far as might be, excluded. In this constructive process, though the element of surprise was no longer necessary, the interrogative form was studi­ously preserved, because it secured at each step the conscious and responsible assent of the learner.

Of the two processes of the dialectical method, the *ἔλεγχoς* or destructive process attracted the more attention, both in conse­quence of its novelty and because many of those who willingly or unwillingly submitted to it stopped short at the stage of “ perplex­ity.” But to Socrates and his intimates the constructive process was the proper and necessary sequel. It is true that in the dia­logues of Plato the destructive process is not always, or even often, followed by construction, and that in the *Memorabilia* of Xenophon construction is not always, or even often, preceded by the destruc­tive process. There is, however, in this nothing surprising. On the one hand, Xenophon, having for his principal purpose the defence of his master against vulgar calumny, seeks to show by effective examples the excellence of his positive teaching, and accordingly is not careful to distinguish, still less to emphasize, the negative procedure. On the other hand, Plato’s aim being not so much to preserve Socrates’s positive teaching as rather by written words to stimulate the reader to self-scrutiny, just as the spoken words of the master had stimulated the hearer, he is compelled by the very nature of his task to keep the constructive element in the background, and, where Socrates would have drawn an un­mistakable conclusion, to confine himself to enigmatical hints. For example, when we compare Xenophon’s *Memorabilia,* iv. 6, 2-4, with Plato’s *Euthyphro,* we note that, while in the former the in­terlocutor is led by a few suggestive questions to define “piety” as “the knowledge of those laws which are concerned with the gods,” in the latter, though on a further scrutiny it appears that “piety” is “that part of justice which is concerned with the service of the gods,” the conversation is ostensibly inconclusive. In short, Xenophon, a mere reporter of Socrates’s conversations, gives the results, but troubles himself little about the steps which led to them ; Plato, who in early manhood was an educator of the Socratic type, withholds the results that he may secure the advan­tages of the elenctic stimulus.

What, then, were the positive conclusions to which Socrates carried his hearers ? and how were those positive conclusions obtained ? Turning to Xenophon for an answer to these questions, we note (1) that the recorded conversations are concerned with practical action, political, moral, or artistic ; (2) that in general there is a process from the known to the unknown through a generalization, expressed or implied ; (3) that the generalizations are sometimes rules of conduct, justified by examination of known instances, sometimes definitions similarly established. Thus, in *Memorabilia,* iv. 1, 3, Socrates argues from the known instances of horses and dogs that the best natures stand most in need of training, and then applies the generalization to the instance under discus­sion, that of men ; and in iv. 6, 13-14, he leads his interlocutor to a definition of “the good citizen,” and then uses it to decide between two citizens for whom respectively superiority is claimed. Now in the former of these cases the process—which Aristotle would describe as “example” *(παράδειγμα),* and a modern might regard as “induction” of an uncritical sort—sufficiently explains itself. The conclusion is a provisional assurance that in the particular matter in hand a certain course of action is, or is not, to he adopted. But it is necessary to say a word of explanation about the latter case, in which, the generalization being a definition, that is to say, a declaration that to a given term the interlocutor attaches in general a specified meaning, the conclusion is a pro­visional assurance that the interlocutor may, or may not, with-