tion of his own mind, by extending it to the minds of others. He was fond of describing it as an *examination* or *scrutiny* of the mind ; a method of finding out the real con­dition of each mind, and so of preparing it for the due exer­cise of its powers in the practical emergencies of human life. He saw that, the evils of life arose, in great part, from the wrong judgments of men,—from their mistaking their own powers, presuming on their knowledge, and ability, and the truth of opinions adopted without inquiry. He endeavoured then to effect the cure of human error and unhappiness by a re­formation of the intellect. The first step towards this would be taken, if men could be only divested of this vain self-con­fidence ; if they could be brought to *suspect* that they might be mistaken in their judgments, and so to *question* themselves. This preliminary labour was employment enough for any one man’s life, especially in a society such as that of Athens, so entirely infected with the sophistical leaven. Socrates wisely confined his exertions to this simple object. He is content to excite inquiry,—to provoke discussion,—and thus to sug­gest the necessity of self-discipline in order to right judgment. He does not, like other philosophers, quit the seclusion of a study, or the field of foreign travel, to come forth to the world the accomplished teacher of the accumulated wisdom of years of solitary thought and reflection. Whilst philoso­phizing in the agora and the streets of Athens, in the work­shops of the artizan, or at the banquets of the rich, he is still employed in the work of *disciplining* the mind. Thus he passes on insensibly from the education of himself to the education of others, and it is difficult consequently, or rather impossible, to say in his case, where the character of the learner ends, or where that of the philosopher and teacher begins.

Yet, entirely as Socrates disregarded all positive know­ledge, and threw himself on the resources of a shrewd and extensive observation of human nature, we must not sup­pose that he neglected to inform himself in the existing systems of philosophy, and the particular sciences as they were then understood and taught. There is reason to be­lieve, that he had accurately studied the systems of the early physical philosophers of the Ionic school, as well as the moral and mathematical theories of the Pythagoreans, and the dialectics of the school of Elea. Without suppos­ing him so deeply versed in the doctrines of the several schools, as would be inferred from his exact discussions in the dialogues of Plato, there is still ample evidence, from the more direct account of Xenophon, that he was by no means ignorant of them. He had doubtless read much,@@1 as well as observed much, when he commenced his philosophic mission. Xenophon indeed tells us that Socrates consider­ed the physical and dialectical theories of his predecessors as unprofitable. But he takes care to add, that Socrates was not unacquainted with these theories. And in particu­lar, as to the sciences of astronomy and geometry, he thought the attention of the student wasted in investigating their more abstruse theorems. But he was able (as Xenophon further observes), to speak on the subjects of these sciences also from his own knowledge of them.@@2

Nor are we to suppose that, whilst he had properly no master in that line of philosophical study which he had marked out for himself,@@1 he had no aid in the cultivation of his mind, from the living masters of philosophy in his day. The long residence of Anaxagoras at Athens, probably coincides in time with part of the early life of Socrates.@@4 To him, therefore, Socrates would naturally have access, as well as to Archelaus,@@s his disciple, and the inheritor of his doctrines. If he had no personal intercourse with Anaxagoras, it is at least highly probable, from the testimony of Plato, that he was acquainted with the famous treatise of Anaxagoras, which contained his theory of the universe.@@· And perhaps we may distinctly trace the early and abiding influence of the lessons of this great philosopher throughout the teach­ing of Socrates, in his uniform maintenance of the principle of an all-disposing mind, the glory of the system of Anaxa­goras.

To the writings of Heraclitus, his attention appears to have been drawn by the poet Euripides ; if the anecdote be true, as related by Laertius, that on being asked by Eu­ripides, who had put them into his hand, what he thought of them, he replied, alluding to the studied obscurity of that philosopher ; “ What I understand is excellent ; so also, I suppose, is what I do not understand ; only there is need of some Delian diver to reach the sense.”@@7 He had also opportunities of conversing with Zeno the Eleatic, and Theodorus of Cyrene ; the former eminent for his dialectical skill, the latter the most distinguished geometrician of the time. And though his scanty means precluded his attendance on the professional lectures of Prodicus, the fashionable teach­er of rhetoric at that day at Athens, it cannot be doubted that he would on several occasions have been among the company assembled at the house of some wealthy citizen, and there heard from the lips of that accomplished master of language those elaborate oratorical displays which made his name proverbial for wisdom.@@8 With the poet Euripides, indeed, the disciple of Anaxagoras and Prodicus, and who was his senior only by a few years, he appears to have lived in habits of intimacy. With Euripides he would probably often have discussed those ethical topics which the poet so greatly delighted to transfuse into his tragic scenes, and as­sociate with the interest of dramatic incident. They were in fact brother-labourers in the same cause, though in dif­ferent ways. For whilst Euripides endeavoured to work a reformation of his countrymen, by didactic addresses insi­nuated through their feelings, amidst the interest of tragic story, Socrates appealed at once to their understandings, and amidst the business or pastime of real life. The envy of contemporaries was prone to attribute the excellence of the poet in some of his dramatic efforts, to the aid of his philosopher-friend.@@® The truth probably is, that the benefit of their intercourse was mutual ; that, whilst the poet’s ima­gination was informed and chastened by the shrewd and severe wisdom of the philosopher, the philosopher also, ever intent on his calling, would enlarge his mind with riches drawn from the genius, and taste, and learning of the poet.

The co-existence of literary and philosophic elegance with the most disgusting coarseness of moral feeling and conduct, in the character of the Athenian courtesan, has been already noticed. To Aspasia, the heroine of her class, as we may call her, when we refer to her in­fluence over Pericles, and the encomiums of her by Plato and others, Socrates is expressly stated to have been indebt-

@@@1 Xenoph. Mem, i. 6.

@@@\* Xenoph∙ Mem. iv. 7.

@@@’ He reckons himself in Xenoph. Conviv. i. 5. among the *alτοvpγ>ι* τ⅞s ⅛ιλoσoφιαr.

@@@• It must be admitted, however, that the chronology of the life of Anaxagoras is very doubtful.

@@@6 Archelaus is called both a Milesian and an Athenian. The probability is that he was a Milesian, since philosophy bad scarcely yet found a home at Athens.

@@@• See the Phædo, p. 97. The writings of Anaxagoras appear to have been extensively circulated. Socrates is made in Plato’s *Apοlοgy*

to say to Melitus, o ιn *avrovς aκ.ιpovt γραμμάτων* eιvαt, *ωστe ovκ iιδivaι oτι τ Αναζαγόρον βιβλία rôv* Kλofoμevtou *γiμsι* rwrwv τών λόγων.

@@@, Diog. Laert. in vit. ii. 7.

@@@• Plato, Meno. p. 96. *Kιvδvvtυoμtv, J* Mc'vωv, *tγω τt* καl <rv, *φαύλοι τιv.t tιvaι 5vδptr, και σt τt Γoργιat ivχ lκavωs πtιraΛevκtvaι,*

xαl *iμi Πρόδικοί.* P. 382. Bipont.

@@@∙ Aristoph. Nub. Diog. Laert. in vit. ii. 5.