makes to the real eccentricities of manner and uncouthness of person in Socrates, the points on which he desires to fix the attention of the theatre. It is the important modifica­tion of the Athenian character, under a system of education which had now reached its maturity. Under the adminis­tration of Pericles, that system had already infected the policy of the state, and perverted its courts of justice into sinks of corruption and oppression. Now, at length, it was found domesticated at Athens in the sanctuary of pri­vate life. An Athenian had appeared in the character of a professor of philosophy ; and around him were gathered citizens of all ranks, from the noble youth who aspired to the helm of the state, and the wealthy patron of literature, to the mean artizan who worked at the forge, and the drudge of the market. What was further to be observed now, was, that the system came recommended by the eloquence of lively and exciting conversation. And how powerful must have been such conversation, as it came forth from the lips of the speaker in the elegant and terse Attic idiom ! It was no wonder, therefore, that the comic poet should have seized this moment for portraying the danger which he anticipated to his country from the fashionable educa­tion of the day, and thrown all the force of his ridicule on the most attractive form in which it then presented itself, as displayed in the personal teaching and example of So­crates.

The testimony of Plato is to the same effect. Plato has not given us an exact portrait of Socrates any more than Aristophanes has ; for he has evidently transferred to the Socrates of his Dialogues, not less of his own cast of mind and manner, than Aristophanes did to the Socrates of his comedy, of the general tone of the sophists. And this is to be accounted for, as in the case of Aristophanes, from the fact, that Plato regarded Socrates as the impersonation of the philosophy of the times. He felt that, to give his own doctrines a proper authority and weight, he could not employ a more effectual organ than the tongue of him who had first given to philosophy an Attic expression, and from whom it would henceforth derive its proper Grecian cha­racter.

But though the drama **of “** The Clouds” was unsuccessful as an attack on Socrates, if it were intended as such, or as an attack on the sophists under the name of Socrates, which is the more probable view of its design, it must not be supposed that the play produced no effect unfavourable to Socrates. The tradition, that Aristophanes was employed by Anytus and Melitus to write down Socrates, does not seem altogether without reason ; though it can hardly be literally true, when we look to the distance of time which intervened between the production of the play and the accusation. In the *Apo­logy* of Plato there is an allusion to the prejudice excited in the young men by the representation given of the philo­sopher in this play. Nor had “The Clouds” been the only attack on Socrates by Aristophanes ; not to mention other comic writers who had made him the object of their humour. In the year 405, not more than five years be­fore the prosecution, the play of “ The Frogs” had been exhibited, in which a pointed allusion is made to the influence of Socrates in terms of reprobation.@@1 In the mean time, also, the same note had been struck ; for the play of “The Birds” was produced in the middle of this

interval between “The Clouds” and “The Frogs,” in the year 414 ; and in that again the Athenians are warned against the corruptions and enchantments of the philoso­pher.@@8 And it is very possible that many who lived to witness the formal accusation of Socrates, might have re­ceived their earliest prejudices against the philosopher by what they heard in the theatre then,.—prejudices, too, which the course of events, the miseries of the Peloponnesian war, and the anarchy consequent upon it, may have ripened into exasperation.@@5 For they saw their country fallen from its proud station in Greece, to the condition of a depend­ent state ; and they were led to ascribe their misfortunes to a change of habits since the days of Marathon and Sa­lamis,—to their having deserted the palaestra and the field, and become, from a body of devoted patriots and soldiers, students of rhetoric and masters in debate.@@\* During all this time Socrates continued the unrivalled teacher of the youth of Athens; increasing, indeed, in renown and popula­rity ; and surrounded by a number of students of philosophy and political science from all parts of Greece. He had, in fact, converted Athens into a university of Greece. For though he had no professed school,—no ***φροvτιστήριov,*** as Aristophanes jocosely represents the scene of Socrates amongst his dis­ciples,—no regular place of meeting, such as Plato had in the Academia, and Aristotle in the Lyceum ;—there might be seen around him in familiar conversation, in every part of the city, day after day, the statesmen, and orators, and generals of the republic,—philosophers of established re­pute from other cities,—the sons of the noblest families of Athens as well as of the humblest citizens,—and the resident foreigners and occasional visitors of the city ; some seeking instruction in the art of government, some investigating by his guidance the chief good of man, some studying the theo­ry of eloquence and criticism, some exploring, by the light of his searching questions, the depth of metaphysics, and the subtile speculations of the earlier philosophers; all ac­cording to their different pursuits, and in their different de­grees, receiving information and general mental culture from the great Athenian sage. Those who clung to the thought of Athens in its days of military glory and empire, would pain- fully observe how great a change had taken place in the internal habits of the city. Formerly it was enough for the intellectual improvement of the youth, that in childhood he had the grammarian for his instructor, and as he grew up to manhood, was consigned to the poets;@@5

ro?{ *μi. γaf vajiap<uβnι*

*iβrι* Λδccffxαλo{ *iβ∏f* pfαζt∕, *∙rtueo i>t∣j3iβι τοιiιraι@@6*

Now even the slaves were becoming literary. The dis­tresses of war had occasioned the addition to the roll of ci­tizens, of many even from that class. And these might be seen, as the comic poet represents them, “ each with his book, learning clever things;”

*βιβλίο, f ϊχω> sxaβrο( μaviam rà ieζιu.@@'*

Formerly, their wise men were obliged to leave the ig­norance and rudeness of their own city, and learn philosophy by foreign travel. Solon had brought back with him from his travels the wisdom of Crete and of Asia to enrich their code of laws, but had not given philosophy a domicile at Athens; had not affected domestic life there with its refinements.

@@@’ Aristoph. Ranæ, 1487.

@@@\* Aristoph. Aves, 1282, 1554.

@@@5 See Thucyd. iii. 82, *in μi∣∣ γaξ tigf∣n∣XΛ∣ iγat)tιi τpiγμaΛt, ×.τ.λ,*

@@@\* In Xenopb. Mem. iii. 5, the younger Pericles asks Socrates how the Athenians are to be brought again to become enamoured of their ancient virtue, glory, and happiness ; and afterwards he expresses his wonder how the state ever began to decline. Socrates imputes their degeneracy to their neglect of the institutions of their ancestors. The particulars mentioned are, want of respect to elders, neglect of bodily exercises, even to the ridicule of them, insubordination to authorities, mutual irritation, envy, quarrelsomeness, litigation, covetous­ness, incompetence of their generals.

@@@\* If we except the profession of the Sophists, when at its height of public favour, skill in the composition of tragedy was the most highly rewarded of all talents at Athens. Plato, *Laches* 183. b. p. 168. The poets of Athens, therefore, were naturally jealous of the popularity of philosophers and sophists.

@@@• Aristophan. Ran. 1052.

@@@7 Aristophan. Ran. 1111.