theory, however remote and dazzling, would seize every hint that dropped from the lips of Socrates for the indulgence of his Speculative imagination. Still Xenophon may be regard­ed as having presented the most natural, as well as most exact, specimens of the method of Socrates. In the sim­plicity of his honest admiration and grateful recollection of the instructor and guide of his youth, he evidently records what had most impressed his own mind, both as to the sub­stance and the manner of the conversations of Socrates, with­out any attempt either at dramatic or theoretic effect. From Xenophon we learn how Socrates appeared to the young Athenian, who, without any theories of his own, approached him, simply with the desire of hearing him, and applying what he might learn from the philosopher to his own im­provement. Plato, on the other hand, whilst he also has given a faithful portrait of Socrates in the general outline, (and the faithfulness is shown by its close correspondence with that given by Xenophon,) studied to give effect, at the same time, to his own philosophic sketches, by placing the figure of Socrates in such a light as to harmonize with his own sublime and beautiful ideal of truth.

Thus we see how Socrates was the founder of the moral and logical science of the schools of Athens. He taught nothing positively in either branch of philosophy, but he taught men to inquire, and set them on the right track of inquiry. He trained men to think for themselves, to accept no opinion which should be contradicted by the moral and intellectual principles of their own nature, and to rest in no opinion until they had traced it up to these principles.

An exact logic, and a sound ethical system, would in time naturally result from such a direction of men’s minds.

In giving account to themselves of their opinions, men would be led to examine into the connexions and depend­encies of their ideas. Observations would be made on the relations of ideas, and of words as their signs and represen­tatives. And such observations methodically stated, would at length constitute a system of logic, such as that which Aristotle brought to light about half a century after the death of Socrates. In the mean time, however, the value of ideas in themselves, apart from their expression by words, would engage attention; and a metaphysical logic,—a logic having for its object the determination of the true notion or idea of a thing, and for its business the discussion of the probabilities or appearances of truth surrounding the matter in ques­tion,—would naturally be the first to succeed. Such was the Dialectic of Plato,—a science of discourse or discussion, as its name imports; not a particular science, like the logic which grew out of it, but as general in its comprehension as the method itself of Socrates, of which it was the formal development, and equivalent, therefore, to philosophy in the highest sense of that term, as being a search after the na­ture of things, or, according to him, a theory of Ideas.

Again, in giving account to themselves of their opinions, men would be led to trace the connexion of their moral sen­timents and actions with an internal standard of right, inde­pendent of the variations of opinion. The examination of this relation would suggest, in process of time, a system of rules for bringing the variable—the sentiments and actions rtf the individual moral agent—into accordance with the in­variable principles of his moral nature. The first ethics, identical, like the first logic, with philosophy in general, would be employed in carrying the views of men to those great principles themselves.—discussing and removing ob­structions to the pure contemplation of the nature of virtue. But the more mature study of ethics, taking up the subject as a separate branch of philosophy, would develop the ap­plication of the doctrine of the fixed standard, by shewing

throughout the field of man’s moral nature, how every mo­ral sentiment is strictly limited by its reference to such a standard. The former is the chief business of Plato’s ethical philosophy; the latter, that of Aristotle’s·—the first tending to a contemplative morality, to a love of the tran­scendent beauty and excellence of virtue,—the latter, to a theory of active virtue,—to a regulated state of the affec­tions in all the offices of life;—both natural consequences in their order, of that awakening of the reason of men, of which Socrates had been the living instrument.

Socrates, at the same time, by the method which he pur­sued, taught men the beginning of an art of criticism. From an examination of existing opinions, the transition was na­tural to the systems of philosophers, and the records of the opinions of men of former days. And, in this respect, So­crates may be regarded as the father of the history of phi­losophy. Even had the criticism of the writings of philo­sophers formed no part of his conversations, still he must have prompted such an inquiry by his method of inter­rogating, and exacting from every one an account of his opinions. But he did more than this. Though not pro­perly erudite, in that sense in which Plato and Aristotle were, he had yet acquainted himself with the doctrines of former philosophers. The chief part of his life was spent with his eye, not on books, but on men. Still, as we are informed by Xenophon, he had read, and had selected, in the course of his reading, whatever he thought valuable in the writings of those before him.@@1 Plato, accordingly, has made great part of the conversation of Socrates consist of criticism of the theories of philosophers. Much of this criti­cism evidently belongs to the richly-various and elaborate learning of the disciple, rather than to the master from whose lips it proceeds. But that Plato is not gratuitously ascrib­ing this kind of learning to Socrates, we see from the man­ner in which the less erudite disciple refers to the discus­sions by Socrates of the doctrines of former philosophers. Not only does Xenophon mention, in common with Plato, the comments of Socrates on the more recent system of Anaxagoras,@@® but he refers also to his examination of the great antagonist theories of the older schools, of Parme­nides, Xenophanes, Melissus, and others, on the one hand; Heraclitus, Empedocles, and their followers, on the other; though without formally introducing their names.@@’

That various and discordant schools of philosophy should have arisen out of the excitement produced by the energetic call of Socrates to his countrymen, was in the natural course of things. Powerful minds, shaking off the yoke of sloth and indifference, and now at length roused to self-exertion, would, however generally docile to the guidance of a leader, be tempted to try their own powers, and strike out a path for themselves. We are not to wonder, then, that Aristippus, the advocate of pleasure, and Antisthenes, the austere cynic, should have been among the hearers of So­crates, or that Plato should have founded a contemplative mysticism on the sober homely philosophy of his master. Socrates, as we have all along shewn, did not propose any precise system of doctrine to his followers. His mission was accomplished in making them exert themselves. He did not desire that they should think alike, but that all should think and judge for themselves. It is no wonder, therefore, that some should have gone into extravagancies, and that, whilst general good resulted from the excitement, partial evil also should have accompanied it. An Aristip­pus, or an Antisthenes, could not have issued from the school of Pythagoras. But how much evil generally may have resulted from the abject submission to the authorita­tive opinions of Pythagoras, in the neglect of self-examina­

@@@, Xenoph. Mem. i. 6. 14. Kni *τους 6ησaυρoi∣ς τών πάλαι σοφών άν&ρών,* our *lκtιvoι κατ.λιπον ∣v βιffkιoις ypaφavτfct avtλiττωv κοινή σνν* τorr φιλoιr *Sιtpχoμaι, κ.τ.* λ.

@@@\* Xenoph. Mem. iv. 7. <

@@@» Ibid. i. 1. 1416.