with old precedent, to date only from the time of Pyrrho of Elis, there can be no doubt that the main currents of Sophistic thought were sceptical in the wider sense of that term. The Sophists were the first in Greece to dissolve knowledge into individual and momentary opinion (Prota­goras), or dialectically to deny the possibility of know­ledge (Gorgias). In these two examples we see how the weapons forged by the dogmatic philosophers to assist in the establishment of their own theses arc sceptically turned against philosophy in general. As every attempt to rationalize nature implies a certain process of criticism and interpretation to which the data of sense arc subjected, and in which they are, as it were, transcended, the anti­thesis of reason and sense is formulated early in the history of speculation. The opposition, being taken as absolute, implies the impeachment of the veracity of the senses in the interest of the rational truth proclaimed by the philosophers in question. Among the pre-Socratic nature-philosophers of Greece, Heraclitus and the Eleatics are the chief representatives of this polemic against the “ lying witness ” of the senses. The diametrical opposi­tion of the grounds on which the veracity of the senses is impugned by the two philosophies (viz., by Heraclitus because they testify to an apparent permanence and identity in things, by the Eleatics because they testify to an apparent multiplicity and change) was in itself sugges­tive of sceptical reflexion. Moreover, although these philo­sophers are not in any sense themselves sceptical, their arguments are easily susceptible of a wider application. Accordingly we find that the arguments by which Heraclitus supported his theory of the universal flux are employed by Protagoras to undermine the possibility of objective truth, by dissolving all knowledge into the momentary sensation or persuasion of the individual. The idea of an objective flux, or law of change constituting the reality of things, is abandoned, and subjective points of sense alone remain,— which is tantamount to eliminating the real from human knowledge.

Still more unequivocal was the sceptical nihilism ex­pressed by Gorgias in his three celebrated theses:—(1) nothing exists ; (2) if anything existed, it would be un­knowable ; (3) if anything existed and were knowable, the knowledge of it could not be communicated. The arguments of his book, “ Concerning the Non-existent, or Nature,” were drawn from the dialectic which the Eleatics had directed against the existence of the phenomenal world. Rut they are no longer used as indirect proofs of a universe of pure and unitary Being. The prominence given by most of the Sophists to rhetoric, their cultiva­tion of a subjective readiness as the essential equipment for life, their substitution of persuasion for conviction, all mark the sceptical undertone of their teaching. This attitude of indifference to real knowledge passed in the younger and less reputable generation into a corroding moral scepticism which recognized no good but pleasure and no right but might.

What Socrates chiefly did was to recreate the instinct for truth and the belief in the possibility of its attain­ment. The scientific impulse thus communicated was sufficient to drive scepticism into the background during the great age of Greek philosophy (*i.e.*, the hundred years preceding Aristotle’s death, 323 B.C.). The captious logic of the Megaric school,—in which the Eleatic in­fluence was strong,—their devotion to eristic and the elab­oration of fallacies, was indeed in some cases closely related to sceptical results. The school has been considered with some truth to form a connecting link with the later scep­ticism, just as the contemporary Cynicism and Cyrenaicism may be held to be imperfect preludes to Stoicism and Epicureanism. The extreme nominalism of some of the

Cynics also, who denied the possibility of any but identical judgments, must be similarly regarded as a solvent of knowledge. But with these insignificant exceptions it holds true that, after the sceptical wave marked by the Sophists, scepticism does not reappear till after the exhaustion of the Socratic impulse in Aristotle.

The first man in antiquity whose scepticism gave name to his doctrine was Pyrrho of Elis (about 360-270 B. C. ). Pyrrho proceeded with the army of Alexander the Great as far as India, in the company of Anaxarchus, the Democritean philosopher. He afterwards returned to his native city, where he lived in poor circumstances, but highly honoured by his fellow-citizens. Pyrrho himself left no writings, and the accounts of his doctrine arc mainly derived from his pupil Timon of Phlius (about 325-235 B. c. ). Timon is called the Sillographist, from his satirical poem (Σtλλoι), in which all the philosophers of Greece are held up to ridicule, with the exception of Xenophanes, who honestly sought, and Pyrrho, who succeeded in finding, the truth. Other disciples are mentioned besides Timon, but the school was short-lived, its place being presently taken by the more moderate and cultured doubt of the New Academy. Zeller sums up Pyrrho’s teaching in three propositions: —We know nothing about the nature of things; hence tho right attitude towards them is to withhold judgment; the necessary result of withholding judgment is imperturbability. The technical language of the school expresses the first position by the word ***ακαταληψία***; things are wholly incompre­hensible or inaccessible; against every statement the opposite may be advanced with equal justice ***(ίσoσθeveιa των λόγων).*** The sceptical watchword which embodies the second position is ϵ***πoχη,*** reserve of judgment, or, as it is put by Timon, ***ov8ev μάλλον,*** that is, no one assertion is truer than another. This complete suspense of opinion is also expressed by the terms ***appcψia,*** or equilibrium, and ***aψaσιa,*** or refusal to speak, as well as by other expressions. The Pyrrhonists were consistent enough to extend their doubt even to their own principle of doubt. They thus attempted to make their scepticism universal, and to escape the reproach of basing it upon a fresh dogmatism. Mental imperturbability ***(αταραξία)*** was the result to be attained by cultivating such a frame of mind. Tho happiness or satisfaction of the individual was the end which dominated this scepticism as well as the contem­porary systems of Stoicism and Epicureanism, and all three philosophies place it in tranquillity or self-centred indif­ference. Scepticism withdraws the individual completely into himself from a world of which he can know nothing. It is men’s opinions or unwarranted judgments about things, say the sceptics, which betray them into desire, and painful effort, and disappointment. From all this a man is delivered who abstains from judging one state to be preferable to another. But, as complete inactivity would have been synonymous with death, it appears to have been admitted that the sceptic, while retaining his consciousness of the complete uncertainty enveloping every step, might follow custom in the ordinary affairs of life.

The scepticism of the New Academy (or, to speak more strictly, of the Middle Academy, under Arcesilaus and Carneades, founders respectively of the so-called second and third Academies) differed very little from that of the Pyrrhonists. The differences asserted by later writers are not borne out on investigation. But the attitude main­tained by the Academics was chiefly that of a negative criticism of the views of others, in particular of the some­what crude and imperious dogmatism of the Stoics. They also, in the absence of certainty, allowed a large scope to probability as a motive to action, and defended their doctrine on this point with greater care and skill. The