out falling into inconsistency, apply the term in question to a certain person or act. Moral error, Socrates conceived, is largely due to the misapplication of general terms, which, once affixed to a person or to an act, possibly in a moment of passion or prejudice, too often stand in the way of sober and careful reflection. It was in order to exclude error of this sort that Socrates insisted upon *τὸ ὁριξεσθαι καθόλου* with *ἐπακτικοὶ* λόγοι for its basis. By requiring a definition and the reference to it of the act or person in question, he sought to secure in the individual at any rate consistency of thought, and, in so far, consistency of action. Accordingly he spent his life in seeking and helping others to seek “the what” (*τὸ* τί), or the definition, of the various words by which the moral quality of actions is described, valuing the results thus obtained, not as contributions to knowledge, but as means to right action in the multifarious relations of life.

While, however, Socrates sought neither knowledge, which in the strict sense of the word he held to be unattainable, nor yet, except as a means to right action, true opinion, the results of ob­servation accumulated until they formed, not perhaps a system of ethics, but at any rate a body of ethical doctrine. Himself blessed with a will so powerful that it moved almost without friction, he fell into the error of ignoring its operations, and was thus led to regard knowledge as the sole condition of well-doing. Where there is knowledge,—that is to say, practical wisdom (*φρόνησις*)*,* the only knowledge which he recognized,—right action, he conceived, fol­lows of itself ; for no one knowingly prefers what is evil ; and, if there are cases in which men seem to act against knowledge, the inference to be drawn is, not that knowledge and wrongdoing are compatible, but that in the cases in question the supposed know­ledge was after all ignorance. Virtue, then, is knowledge, knowledge at once of end and of means irresistibly realizing itself in act. Whence it follows that the several virtues which are commonly dis­tinguished are essentially one. “Piety,” “justice,” “courage,” and “temperance” are the names which “wisdom” bears in differ­ent spheres of action : to be pious is to know what is due to the gods ; to be just is to know what is due to men ; to be courageous is to know what is to be feared and what is not ; to be temperate is to know how to use what is good and avoid what is evil. Further, inasmuch as virtue is knowledge, it can be acquired by education and training, though it is certain that one soul has by nature a greater aptitude than another for such acquisition.

But, if virtue is knowledge, what has this knowledge for its object ? To this question Socrates replies, Its object is the Good. What, then, is the Good ? It is the useful, the advantageous. Utility, the immediate utility of the individual, thus becomes the measure of conduct and the foundation of all moral rule and legal enactment. Accordingly, each precept of which Socrates delivers himself is re­commended on the ground that obedience to it will promote the pleasure, the comfort, the advancement, the wellbeing of the indi­vidual ; and Prodicus’s apologue of the Choice of Heracles, with its commonplace offers of worldly reward, is accepted as an adequate statement of the motives of virtuous action. Of the graver diffi­culties of ethical theory Socrates has no conception, having, as it would seem, so perfectly absorbed the lessons of what Plato calls “political virtue” that morality has become with him a second nature, and the scrutiny of its credentials from an external stand­point has ceased to be possible. His theory is indeed so little systematic that, whereas, as has been seen, virtue or wisdom has the Good for its object, he sometimes identifies the Good with virtue or wisdom, thus falling into the error which Plato (*Republic,* vi. 505 C), perhaps with distinct reference to Socrates, ascribes to certain “cultivated thinkers.” In short, the ethical theory of Socrates, like the rest of his teaching, is by confession unscientific ; it is the statement of the convictions of a remarkable nature, which statement emerges in the course of an appeal to the individual to study consistency in the interpretation of traditional rules of con­duct. For a critical examination of the ethical teaching which is here described in outline, see Ethics.

*The Socratics.*

It has been seen that, so far from having any system, physical or metaphysical, to enunciate, Socrates rejected “the pursuit of knowledge for its own sake ” as a delusion and a snare,—a delusion, inasmuch as knowledge, properly so called, is unattainable, and a snare, in so far as the pursuit of it draws us away from the study of conduct. He has therefore no claim to be regarded as the founder of a philosophical school. But he had made some tentative contributions to a theory of morality ; he had shown both in his life and in his death that his principles stood the test of practical application ; he had invented a method having for its end the recti­fication of opinion; and, above all, he had asserted “the autonomy of the individual intellect.” Accordingly, not one school but several schools sprang up amongst his associates, those of them who had a turn for speculation taking severally from his teaching so much as their pre-existing tendencies and convictions allowed them to assimilate. Thus Aristippus of Cyrene interpreted hedo­nistically the theoretical morality ; Antisthenes the Cynic copied

and caricatured the austere example ; Euclides of Megara prac­tised and perverted the elenctic method ; Plato the Academic, accepting the whole of the Socratic teaching, first developed it harmoniously in the sceptical spirit of its author, and, afterwards conceiving that he had found in Socrates’s agnosticism the germ of a philosophy, proceeded to construct a system which should embrace at once ontology, physics, and ethics. From the four schools thus established sprang subsequently four other schools,— the Epicureans being the natural successors of the Cyrenaics, the Stoics of the Cynics, the Sceptics of the Megarians, and the Peri­patetics of the Academy. In this way the teaching of Socrates made itself felt throughout the whole of the post - Socratic philo­sophy. Of the influence which he exercised upon Aristippus, Antisthenes, and Euclides, the “incomplete Socratics,” as they are commonly called, as well as upon the “complete Socratic” Plato, something must now be said.

The “incomplete Socratics” were, like Socrates, sceptics; but, whereas Aristippus, who seems to have been in contact with Pro­tagoreanism before he made acquaintance with Socrates, came to scepticism, as Protagoras had done, from the standpoint of the pluraliste, Antisthenes, like his former master Gorgias, and Euclides, in whom the ancients rightly saw a successor of Zeno, came to scepticism from the standpoint of Eleatic monism. In other words, Aristippus was sceptical because, taking into account the subjective element in sensation, he found himself compelled to regard what are called “things” as successions of feelings, which feelings are themselves absolutely distinct from one another ; while Antisthenes and Euclides were sceptical because, like Zeno, they did not under­stand how the same thing could at the same moment bear various and inconsistent epithets, and consequently conceived all predica­tion which was not identical to be illegitimate. Thus Aristippus recognized only feelings, denying things ; Antisthenes recognized things, denying attributions ; and it is probable that in this matter Euclides was at one with him. For, though since Schleiermacher many historians, unnecessarily identifying the εἰ*δωv φίλοι* of Plato’s *Sophist* with the Megarians, have ascribed to Euclides a theory of “ideas,” and on the strength of this single passage thus con­jecturally interpreted have added a new chapter to the history of Megarianism, it is difficult, if not impossible, to see how, if the founder of the school had broken loose from the trammels of the Zenonian paradox, his successors, and amongst them Stilpo, should have re­conciled themselves, as they certainly did, to the Cynic denial of predication.

While the “incomplete Socratics” made no attempt to overpass the limits which Socrates had imposed upon himself, within those limits they occupied each his department. Aristippus, a citizen of the world, drawn to Athens by the fame of Socrates, and retained there by the sincere affection which he conceived for him, inter­preted the ethical doctrine of Socrates in accordance with his own theory of pleasure, which in its turn came under the refining in­fluence of Socrates’s theory of *φρόνησις.* Contrariwise, Antisthenes, a rugged but not ungenerous nature, a hater of pleasure, troubled himself little about ethical theory and gave his life to the imita­tion of his master’s asceticism. Virtue, he held, depended upon “works,” not upon arguments or lessons; all that was necessary to it was the strength of a Socrates (Diog. Laert., vi. 11). Yet here too the Socratic theory of *φρόνησις* had a qualifying effect ; so that Cyrenaic hedonism and Cynic asceticism sometimes exhibit unexpected approximations. The teaching of Euclides, though the Good is still supposed to be the highest object of knowledge, can hardly be said to have an ethical element ; and in consequence of this deficiency the dialectic of Socrates degenerated in Megarian hands, first into a series of exercises in fallacies, secondly into a vulgar and futile eristic. In fact, the partial Socraticisms of the incomplete Socratics necessarily suffered, even within their own narrow limits, by the dismemberment which the system had under­gone. Apparently the maieutic theory of education was not valued by any of the three ; and, however this may be, they deviated from Socratic tradition so far as to establish schools, and, as it would seem, to take fees like the professional educators called Sophists.

Of the relations in which the metaphysic of Plato stood to the Socratic search for definitions there are of necessity almost as many theories as there are interpretations of the Platonic system. Hence in this place the writer must content himself with a summary state­ment of his own views. Initiated into philosophical speculation by the Heraclitean Cratylus, Plato began his intellectual life as an absolute sceptic, the followers of Heraclitus having towards the end of the 5th century pushed to its conclusion the unconscious scepticism of their master. There would have been then nothing to provoke surprise, if, leaving speculation, Plato had given him­self to politics. In 407, however, he became acquainted with Socrates, who gave to his thoughts a new direction. Plato now found an occupation for his intellectual energies, as Socrates had done, in the scrutiny of his beliefs and the systematization of his principles of action. But it was not until the catastrophe of 399 that Plato gave himself to his life’s work. An exile, cut off from political ambitions, he came forward as the author of dialogues