—not having knowledge of them, because universal knowledge is unattainable ; after which he is in a position to define the sophist (7) as a conscious impostor who, in private, by discontinuous discourse, compels his interlocutor to contradict himself, in opposi­tion to the *δημoλoγικός*, who, in public, by continuous discourse, imposes upon crowds.

It is clear that the final definition is preferred, not because of any intrinsic superiority, but because it has a direct bearing upon the question “Are sophist, statesman, and philosopher identical or different ? ” and that the various definitions represent different stages or forms of sophistry as conceived from different points of view. Thus the first and second definitions represent the founders of the sophistry of culture, Protagoras and Prodicus, from the respective points of view of the older Athenians, who disliked the new culture, and the younger Athenians, who admired it; the third and fourth definitions represent imitators to whom the note of itinerancy was not applicable ; the fifth definition represents the earlier eristics, contemporaries of Socrates, whom it was necessary to distinguish from the teachers of forensic oratory ; the sixth is framed to meet the anomalous case of Socrates, in whom many saw the typical sophist, though Plato conceives this view to be unfortunate ; and the seventh and final definition, having in view eristical sophistry fully developed, distinguishes it from *δημολογική*, *i.e.*, political rhetoric, but at the same time hints that, though *σοφιστική* and *δημολογική* may be discriminated, they are neverthe­less near akin, the one being the ape of philosophy, the other the ape of statesmanship. In short, Plato traces the changes which, in less than a century, had taken place in the meaning of the term, partly through changes in the practice of the sophists, partly through changes in their surroundings and in public opinion, so as to show by a familiar instance that general terms which do not describe natural kinds cannot have a stable connotation.

Now it is easy to see that in this careful statement Plato recognizes three periods. The first four definitions represent the period of Protagoras, Prodicus, and their immediate successors, when the object sought was “virtue,” “excellence,” “culture,” and the means to it was literature. The fifth and sixth definitions represent the close of the 5th century, when sophistry handled eristically, and perhaps, though Plato demurs to the inclusion, dialectically, questions of justice, injustice, and the like, *δικαvική* or forensic rhetoric being its proximate rival. The seventh definition represents the first half of the 4th century, when sophistry was eristical in a wider field, having for its rival, not forensic rhetoric, but the rhetoric of the assembly. Plato’s classi­fication of educational theories is then substantially the classifica­tion adopted in this article, though, whereas here, in accordance with well-attested popular usage, all the educational theories mentioned are included under the head of sophistry, Plato allows to rhetoric, forensic and political, an independent position, and hints that there are grounds for denying the title of sophist to the dialectician Socrates. Incidentally we gather two important facts,— (1) that contemporary with the dialectic of Socrates there was an eristic, and (2) that this eristic was mainly applied to ethical ques­tions. Finally, we may be sure that, if Plato was thus careful to distinguish the phases and aspects of sophistical development, he could never have fallen into the modern error of bestowing upon those whom the Greeks called sophists either indiscriminate censure or indiscriminate laudation.

(2) *Relations of Sophistry to Education, Literature, and Philosophy.—*If then the sophists, from Protagoras to Isocrates, were before everything educators, it becomes necessary to inquire whether their labours marked or pro­moted an advance in educational theory and method. At the beginning of the 5th century b.c. every young Greek of the better sort already received rudimentary instruction, not only in music and gymnastics, but also in reading and writing. Further, in the colonies, and especially the colonies of the West, philosophy and art had done some­thing for higher education. Thus in Italy the Pytha­gorean school was, in the fullest sense of the term, an educational institution ; and in Sicily the rhetorical teach­ing of Corax and Tisias was presumably educational in the same sense as the teaching of Gorgias. But in central Greece, where, at any rate down to the Persian Wars, politics, domestic and foreign, were all-engrossing, and left the citizen little leisure for self-cultivation, the need of a higher education had hardly made itself felt. The overthrow of the Persian invaders changed all this. Henceforward the best of Greek art, philosophy, and literature gravitated to Athens, and with their concentra­tion and consequent development came a general and

growing demand for teaching. As has been seen, it was just at this period that philosophy and art ceased to be available for educational purposes, and accordingly the literary sophists were popular precisely because they offered advanced teaching which was neither philosophical nor artistic. Their recognition of the demand and their attempt to satisfy it are no small claims to distinction. That, whereas before the time of Protagoras there was little systematic education in the colonies and less in central Greece, after his time attendance in the lecture- rooms of the sophists was the customary sequel to attend­ance in the elementary schools, is a fact which speaks for itself.

But this is not all. The education provided by the sophists of culture had positive merits. When Protagoras included in his course grammar, style, interpretation of the poets, and oratory, supplementing his own continuous expositions by disputations in which he and his pupils took part, he showed a not inadequate appreciation of the requisites of a literary education; and it may be conjectured that his comprehensive programme, which Prodicus and others extended, had something to do with the develop­ment of that versatility which was the most notable element in the Athenian character.

There is less to be said for the teachers of rhetoric, politics, and eristic, who, in limiting themselves each to a single subject,—the rhetoricians proper or forensic rheto­ricians to one branch of oratory, the politicians or political rhetoricians to another, and the eristics to disputation,— ceased to be educators and became instructors. Neverthe­less, rhetoric and disputation, though at the present day strangely neglected in English schools and universities, are, within their limits, valuable instruments; and, as specialization in teaching does not necessarily imply specialization in learning, many of those who attended the lectures and the classes of a rhetorician or an eristic sought and found other instruction elsewhere. It would seem then that even in its decline sophistry had its educational use. But in any case it may be claimed for its professors that in the course of a century they discovered and turned to account most of the instruments of literary education.

With these considerable merits, normal sophistry had one defect, its indifference to truth. Despairing of philosophy,—that is to say, of physical science,—the sophists were prepared to go all lengths in scepticism. Accordingly the epideictic sophists in exposition, and the argumentative sophists in debate, one and all, studied, not matter but style, not accuracy but effect, not proof but persuasion. In short, in their hostility to science they refused to handle literature in a scientific spirit. That this defect was serious was dimly apprehended even by those who frequented and admired the lectures of the earlier sophists; that it was fatal was clearly seen by Socrates, who, himself commonly regarded as a sophist, emphatically reprehended, not only the taking of fees, which was after all a mere incident, objectionable because it seemed to preclude independence of thought, but also the fundamental disregard of truth which infected every part and every phase of sophistical teaching. To these contemporary censures the modern critic cannot refuse his assent.

To literature and to oratory the sophists rendered good service. Themselves of necessity stylists, because their professional success largely depended upon skilful and effective exposition, the sophists both of culture and of rhetoric were professedly teachers of the rules of grammar and the principles of written and spoken discourse. Thus, by example as well as by precept, they not only taught their hearers to value literary and oratorical excellence.