the respondent did not shrink from a new effort, Socrates was ready to aid him by further questions of a suggestive sort. Consis­tent thinking with a view to consistent action being the end of the inquiry, Socrates would direct the respondent’s attention to instances analogous to that in hand, and so lead him to frame for himself a generalization from which the passions and the prejudices of the moment were, as far as might be, excluded. In this constructive process, though the element of surprise was no longer necessary, the interrogative form was studiously preserved, because it secured at each step the conscious and responsible assent of the learner.

Of the two processes of the dialectical method, the 2λeγχos or destructive process attracted the more attention, both in conse­quence of its novelty and because many of those who willingly or unwillingly submitted to it stopped short at the stage of “ perplexity.” But to Socrates and his intimates the constructive process was the proper and necessary sequel. It is true that in the dialogues of Plato the destructive process is not always, or even often, followed by construction, and that in the *Memorabilia* of Xenophon construction is not always, or even often, preceded by the destructive process. There is, however, in this nothing surprising. On the one hand, Xenophon, having for his principal purpose the defence of his master against vulgar calumny, seeks to show by effective examples the excellence of his positive teaching, and accordingly is not careful to distinguish, still less to emphasize, the negative procedure. On the other hand, Plato, his aim being not so much to preserve Socrates’s positive teaching as rather by written words to stimulate the reader to self-scrutiny, just as the spoken words of the master had stimu­lated the hearer, is compelled by the very nature of his task to keep the constructive element in the background, and, where Socrates would have drawn an unmistakable conclusion, to confine himself to enigmatical hints. For example, when we compare Xenophon’s *Memorabilia,* iv. 6, 2-4, with Plato’s *Euthyphro,* we note that, while in the former the interlocutor is led by a few sugges­tive questions to define “ piety ” as “ the knowledge of those laws which are concerned with the gods,” in the latter, though on a further scrutiny it appears that "piety ” is “ that part of justice which is concerned with the service of the gods,” the conversation is ostensibly inconclusive. In short, Xenophon, a mere reporter of Socrates’s conversations, gives the results, but troubles himself little about the steps which led to them ; Plato, who in early manhood was an educator of the Socratic type, withholds the results that he may secure the advantages of the elenctic stimulus.

What, then, were the positive conclusions to which Socrates carried his hearers? and how were those positive conclusions obtained? Turning to Xenophon for an answer to these questions, we note (1) that the recorded conversa­tions are concerned with practical action, political, moral, or artistic; (2) that in general there is a process from the known to the unknown through a generalization, expressed or implied ; (3) that the generalizations are sometimes rules of con­duct, justified by examination of known instances, sometimes definitions similarly established. Thus, in *Memorabilia,* iv. 1, 3, Socrates argues from the known instances of horses and dogs that, the best natures stand most in need of training, and then applies the generalization to the instance under discussion, that of men ; and in iv. 6, 13-14, he leads his interlocutor to a definition of “ the good citizen,” and then uses it to decide between two citizens for whom respectively superiority is claimed. Now in the former of these cases the process—which Aristotle would describe as “ example ” (ιταράδί^γμα), and a modern might regard as “ induction ” of an uncritical sort—sufficiently explains itself. The conclusion is a provisional assurance that in the particular matter in hand a certain course of action is, or is not, to be adopted. But it is necessary to say a word of explanation about the latter case, in which, the general­ization being a definition, that is to say, a declaration that to a given term the interlocutor attaches in general a specified meaning, the conclusion is a provisional assurance that the interlocutor may, or may not, without 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 eιτor of this sort that Socrates insisted upon rò *bplξeσθ at καθόλου* with *eπaκτLκol* λ6γot 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 ” (rò rí), 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 *(φρόνηση),* 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 well-being 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; Antis- thenes 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 Cyre- naics, 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 Pro- tagoreanism 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