

of ingenuity. Although in a language like the English it does no doubt require considerable ingenuity to construct a satisfactory sonnet of octave and sestet running upon four rhymes, this ingenuity is only a means to an end, the end being properly that a single wave of emotion, when emotion is either too deeply charged with thought, or too much adulterated with fancy, to pass spontaneously into the movements of pure lyric, shall be embodied in a single metrical flow and return. Whether any given sonnet be composed like that of Pier delle Vigne (of two quatrains with rhymes running a, b, a, b, a, b, a, b, and of two tercets with rhymes running c, d, e, c, d, e), or whether the verses be arranged (on the authority of Shakespeare and Drayton) in three quatrains of alternate rhymes clinched by a couplet, or, as in the sonnet of Petrarch, in an octave of two rhymes and a sestet of either two or three rhymes,—in each case the peculiar pleasure which the ear derives from the sonnet as a metrical form lies in the number and arrangement of the verses being prescribed, and distinctly recognizable as being prescribed. That the impulse to select for the rendering of single phases of feeling or reflexion a certain recognized form is born of a natural and universal instinct is perhaps evidenced by the fact that even when a metrical arrangement discloses no structural law demanding a prescriptive number and arrangement of verses, the poet will nevertheless, in certain moods, choose to restrict himself to a prescribed number and arrangement, as in the cases of the Italian *stornello*, the Welsh *triban*, and the beautiful rhymeless short ode of Japanese poetry, for the knowledge of which we are indebted to Mr Chamberlain. And perhaps, if space permitted us to probe the matter deeply, we should find that the recognized prescription of form gives a sense of oneness that nothing else save the refrain can give to a poem which, being at once too long for a stanza in a series and too short to have the self-sustaining power of the more extended kinds of poetic art, suffers by suggesting to the ear a sense of the fragmentary and the inchoate. It is not then merely the number of the verses, it is also their arrangement as to rhymes,—an arrangement leading the ear to expect a prescribed sequence and then satisfying that expectation,—which entitles a form of fourteen verses to be called a sonnet.

Hence the so-called irregular sonnets of S. T. Coleridge, which lead the ear of the reader to expect the pleasure of a prescribed arrangement when what they have to offer is a pleasure of an exactly opposite kind—the pleasure of an absolute freedom from prescribed arrangement—are unsatisfactory, while (as the present writer has often pointed out) the same poet's fourteen-line poem, "Work without Hope," in which the reader expects and gets freedom from prescription, is entirely satisfactory. This same little poem of Coleridge's also affords an excellent illustration of another point in connexion with the sonnet. If we trace the history and the development of the sonnet from Pier delle Vigne to Rossetti we shall find that the poet's quest from the very first has been to write a poem in fourteen verses so arranged that they should, better than any other number and arrangement of verses, produce a certain melodic effect upon the ear, and an effect, moreover, that should bear iteration and reiteration in other poems similarly constructed. Now if we ask ourselves whether, beautiful as is this poem, "Work without Hope," taken as a single and original metrical arrangement, we should get out of a series of poems modelled line for line upon it that pleasure of iteration which we get out of a series of Petrarchan sonnets, we shall easily see why the regular sonnet of octave and sestet on the one hand, and what is called the Shakespearean sonnet on the other, have survived all other competing forms.

In modern Europe the sonnet has always had a peculiar fascination for poets of the first class—poets, that is, in whom what we have called poetic energy (see POETRY) and plastic power are equally combined. It would seem that the very fact that the sonnet is a recognized structure suggestive of mere art—suggestive in some measure, indeed, of what Schiller would call "sport" in art—has drawn some of the most passionate poets in the world to the sonnet as the medium of their sincerest utterances. Without being coldly artificial, like the *rondeau*, the *sestina*, the *ballade*, the *villanelle*, &c., the sonnet is yet so artistic in structure, its form is so universally known, recognized, and adopted as being artistic, that the too fervid spontaneity and reality of the poet's emotion may be in a certain degree veiled, and the poet can whisper, as from behind a mask, those deepest secrets of the heart which could otherwise only find expression in purely dramatic forms.

That the sonnet was invented, not in Provence, as French critics pretend, but in Italy in the 13th century, is pretty clear, but by whom is still perhaps an open question. Mr S. Waddington (*Sonnets of Living Writers*) and several other contemporary critics attribute to Fra Guittone the honour of having invented the form. But Mr J. A. Symonds has reminded us that the sonnet beginning *Però ch' amore*, attributed to Pier delle Vigne, secretary of state in the Sicilian court of Frederick, has claims which no student of early Italian poetry can ignore.

As regards English sonnets, whether the Petrarchan and the Shakespearean are really the best of all possible forms we need not inquire. But, inasmuch as they have become so vital and so dominant over other sonnet forms that whenever we begin to read the first verse of an English sonnet we expect to find one or other of these recognized rhyme-arrangements, any departure from these two arrangements, even though the result be such a magnificent poem as Shelley's "Ozymandias," disappoints the expectation, baffles the ear, and brings with it that sense of the fragmentary and the inchoate to which we have before alluded. If, however, some writer should arise with sufficient originality of metrical endowment and sufficient poetic power to do what Keats, in a famous experiment of his tried to do and failed,—impress the public ear with a new sonnet structure, impress the public ear so powerfully that a new kind of expectance is created the moment the first verse of a sonnet is recited,—then there will be three kinds of English sonnets instead of two.

With regard to the Petrarchan sonnet, all critics are perhaps now agreed that, while the form of the octave is invariable, the form of the sestet is absolutely free, save that the emotions should govern the arrangement of the verses. But as regards the division between octave and sestet, Mr Mark Pattison says, with great boldness, but perhaps with truth, that by blending octave with sestet Milton missed the very object and end of the Petrarchan scheme. Another critic, however, Mr Hall Caine, in his preface to *Sonnets of Three Centuries*, contends that by making "octave flow into sestet without break of music or thought" Milton consciously or unconsciously invented a new form of sonnet; that is to say, Milton, in his use of the Petrarchan octave and sestet for the embodiment of intellectual substance incapable of that partial disintegration which Petrarch himself always or mostly sought, invented a species of sonnet which is English in impetus, but Italian, or partially Italian, in structure. Hence this critic, like Mr William Sharp (*Sonnets of this Century*), divides all English sonnets into four groups:—(1) sonnets of Shakespearean structure; (2) sonnets of octave and sestet of Miltonic structure; (3) sonnets of contemporary structure, i.e., all sonnets on the Petrarchan model in which the metrical and intellectual "wave of flow and

ebb" (as originally formulated by the present writer in a sonnet on the sonnet, which has appeared in most of the recent anthologies) is strictly observed, and in which, while the rhyme-arrangement of the octave is invariable, that of the sestet is free; (4) sonnets of miscellaneous structure.

With regard to what is called the contemporary form,—a Petrarchan arrangement with the sestet divided very sharply from the octave,—the crowning difficulty and the crowning triumph of the sonnet writer has always been to so handle the rhythm of the prescribed structure as to make it seem in each individual sonnet the inevitable and natural rhythm demanded by the emotion which gives the individual sonnet birth, and this can perhaps only be achieved when the richness and apparent complexity of the rhyme-arrangement is balanced by that perfect lucidity and simplicity of syntax which is the special quest of the "sonnet of flow and ebb."

The wave theory has found acceptance with most recent students of the sonnet, such as Rossetti and the late Mark Pattison, Mr J. A. Symonds, Mr Hall Caine, and Mr William Sharp. Mr Symonds, indeed, seems to hint that the very name given by the Italians to the two tercets, the *volta* or *turn*, indicates the metrical meaning of the form. "The striking metaphorical symbol," says he, "drawn from the observation of the swelling and declining wave can even in some examples be applied to sonnets on the Shakespearean model; for, as a wave may fall gradually or abruptly, so the sonnet may sink with stately volume or with precipitate subsidence to its close. Rossetti furnishes incomparable examples of the former and more desirable conclusion; Sydney Dobell, in *Home in War Time*, yields an extreme specimen of the latter."

And now as to the Shakespearean sonnet. Some very acute critics have spoken as if this form were merely a lawless succession of three quatrains clinched by a couplet, and as if the number of the quatrains might just as well have been two or four as the present prescribed number of three. If this were so, it would unquestionably be a serious impeachment of the Shakespearean sonnet, for save in the poetry of ingenuity no metric arrangement is otherwise than bad unless it be the result of a deep metrical necessity.

If the prescriptive arrangement of three quatrains clinched by a couplet is not a metrical necessity, if it is not demanded in order to prevent the couplet from losing its power, such an arrangement is idle and worse than idle; just as, in the case of the Petrarchan sonnet, if it can be shown that the solid unity of the outflowing wave can be maintained as completely upon three rhymes as upon two, then the restriction of the octave to two rhymes is simple pedantry. But he who would test the metrical necessity of the arrangement in the Shakespearean sonnet has only to make the experiment of writing a poem of two quatrains with a couplet, and then another poem of four quatrains with a couplet, in order to see how inevitable is the metrical necessity of the Shakespearean number and arrangement for the achievement of the metrical effect which Shakespeare, Drayton, and others sought. While in the poem of two quatrains the expected couplet has the sharp epigrammatic effect of the couplet in ordinary stanzas (such as that of *ottava rima*, and as that of the *Venus and Adonis* stanza), destroying that pensive sweetness which is the characteristic of the Shakespearean sonnet, the poem of four quatrains is just sufficiently long for the expected pleasure of the couplet to be dispersed and wasted.

The quest of the Shakespearean sonnet is not, like that of the sonnet of octave and sestet, sonority, and, so to speak, metrical counterpoint, but sweetness; and the sweetest of

all possible arrangements in English versification is a succession of decasyllabic quatrains in alternate rhymes knit together and clinched by a couplet—a couplet coming not so far from the initial verse as to lose its binding power, and yet not so near the initial verse that the ring of epigram disturbs the "linked sweetness long drawn out" of this movement, but sufficiently near to shed its influence over the poem back to the initial verse. A chief part of the pleasure of the Shakespearean sonnet is the expectance of the climacteric rest of the couplet at the end (just as a chief part of the pleasure of the sonnet of octave and sestet is the expectance of the answering ebb of the sestet when the close of the octave has been reached); and this expectance is gratified too early if it comes after two quatrains, while, if it comes after a greater number of quatrains than three, it is dispersed and wasted altogether.

The French sonnet has a regular Petrarchan octave with a sestet of three rhymes beginning with a couplet. The Spanish sonnet is also based on the pure Italian type, and is extremely graceful and airy. The same may be said of the Portuguese sonnet—a form of which the illustrious Camoens has left nearly three hundred examples. (T. W.)

SOPHIA DOROTHEA (1666–1726), the daughter and heiress of Duke George William of Brunswick-Lüneburg-Celle, was born on September 15, 1666. On November 21, 1682, she was married to Prince George Louis of Hanover, afterwards George I. of England, to whom she bore in 1683 a son, afterwards King George II., and in 1687 a daughter, Sophia Dorothea, afterwards the wife of Frederick William I. of Prussia and the mother of Frederick the Great. For her illicit relations with Count Philip Christopher von Königsmark (see vol. x. p. 420) Sophia Dorothea was divorced from her husband the elector in December 1694, and the remainder of her life was spent in a dignified captivity under a military guard at her ancestral seat of Ahlden. She died on November 13, 1726. Her correspondence with Königsmark was discovered at Lund by Prof. Palmblad, and published by him in 1847; see also the Count von Schulenburg's *Herzogin von Ahlden* (Leipzig, 1852).

SOPHISTS. Sophist, or "man of wisdom," was the name given by the Greeks about the middle of the 5th century B.C. to certain teachers of a superior grade who, distinguishing themselves from philosophers on the one hand and from artists and craftsmen on the other, claimed to prepare their pupils, not for any particular study or profession, but for civic life. For nearly a hundred years the sophists held almost a monopoly of general or liberal education. Yet, within the limits of the profession, there was considerable diversity both of theory and of practice. Four principal varieties are distinguishable, and may be described as the sophistries of culture, of rhetoric, of politics, and of eristic or disputation. Each of these predominated in its turn, though not to the exclusion of others, the sophistry of culture beginning about 447, and leading to the sophistry of eristic, and the sophistry of rhetoric taking root in central Greece about 427, and merging in the sophistry of politics. Further, since Socrates and the Socratics were educators, they too might be, and in general were, regarded as sophists; but, as they conceived truth—so far as truth was attainable—rather than success in life, in the law court, in the assembly, or in debate, to be the right end of intellectual effort, they were at variance with their rivals, and are commonly ranked by historians, not with the sophists, who confessedly despaired of knowledge, but with the philosophers, who, however unavailingly, continued to seek it. With the establishment of the great philosophical schools—first, of

the Academy, next of the Lyceum—the philosophers took the place of the sophists as the educators of Greece.

The sophistical movement was then primarily an attempt to provide a general or liberal education which should supplement the customary instruction in reading, writing, gymnastic, and music. But, as the sophists of the first period chose for their instruments grammar, style, literature, and oratory, while those of the second and third developments were professed rhetoricians, sophistry exercised an important influence upon literature. Then again, as the movement, taking its rise in the philosophical agnosticism which grew out of the early physical systems, was itself persistently sceptical, sophistry may be regarded as an interlude in the history of philosophy. Finally, the practice of rhetoric and eristic, which presently became prominent in sophistical teaching, had, or at any rate seemed to have, a mischievous effect upon conduct; and the charge of seeking, whether in exposition or in debate, not truth but victory—which charge was impressively urged against the sophists by Plato—grew into an accusation of holding and teaching immoral and unsound doctrines, and in our own day has been the subject of eager controversy. In the present article the matters above indicated will be dealt with under the following heads:—(1) the genesis and development of sophistry; (2) the relations of sophistry to education, literature, and philosophy; (3) the theory of Grote.

(1) *Genesis and Development of Sophistry.*—Sophistry arose out of a crisis in philosophy. The earlier Ionian physicists,—Thales, Anaximander, and Anaximenes,—in their attempts to trace the multiplicity of things to a single material element, had been troubled by no misgivings about the possibility of knowledge. But, when Heraclitus to the assumption of fire as the single material cause added the doctrine that all things are in perpetual flux, he found himself obliged to admit that things cannot be known. Thus, though, in so far as he asserted his fundamental doctrine without doubt or qualification, he was a dogmatist, in all else he was a sceptic. Again, the Eleatic Parmenides, deriving from the theologian Xenophanes the distinction between *ἐπιστήμη* and *δόξα*, conceived that, whilst the One exists, and is the object of knowledge, the multiplicity of things becomes, and is the object of opinion; but, when his successor Zeno provided the system with a logic, the consistent application of that logic resolved the fundamental doctrine into the single proposition "One is One," or, more exactly, into the single identity "One One." Thus Eleaticism, though professedly dogmatic, was inconsistent in its theory of the One and its attributes, and openly sceptical in regard to the world of nature. Lastly, the philosophers of the second physical succession,—Empedocles and Anaxagoras,—not directly attacking the great mystery of the One and the Many, but in virtue of a scientific instinct approaching it through the investigation of phenomena, were brought by their study of sensation to perceive and to proclaim the inadequacy of the organs of sense. Thus they too, despite their air of dogmatism, were in effect sceptics. In short, from different standpoints, the three philosophical successions had devised systems which were in reality sceptical, though they had none of them recognized the sceptical inference.

Towards the middle of the 5th century, however, Protagoras of Abdera, taking account of the teaching of the first, and possibly of the second, of the physical successions, and Gorgias of Leontini, starting from the teaching of the metaphysical succession of Elea, drew that sceptical inference from which the philosophers had shrunk. If, argued Protagoras in a treatise entitled *Truth*, all things are in flux, so that sensation is subjective, it

follows that "Man is the measure of all things, of what is, that it is, and of what is not, that it is not"; in other words, there is no such thing as objective truth. Similarly, Gorgias, in a work *On Nature, or on the Nonent*, maintained (a) that nothing is, (b) that, if anything is, it cannot be known, (c) that, if anything is and can be known, it cannot be expressed in speech; and the summaries which have been preserved by Sextus Empiricus (*Adv. Math.*, vii. 65–87) and by the author of the *De Melisso, &c.* (cc. 5, 6), show that, in defending these propositions, Gorgias availed himself of the arguments which Zeno had used to discredit the popular belief in the existence of the Many; in other words, that Gorgias turned the destructive logic of Zeno against the constructive ontology of Parmenides, thereby not only reducing Eleaticism to nothingness, but also, until such time as a better logic than that of Zeno should be provided, precluding all philosophical inquiry whatsoever. Thus, whereas the representatives of the three successions had continued to regard themselves as philosophers or seekers after truth, Protagoras and Gorgias, plainly acknowledging their defeat, withdrew from the ungrateful struggle.

Meagre as were the results which the earlier thinkers had obtained, the extinction of philosophy just at the time when the liberal arts became more technical, and consequently less available as employments of leisure, threatened to leave a blank in Hellenic life. Accordingly Protagoras, while with the one hand he put away philosophy, with the other offered a substitute. Emphasizing the function of the teacher, which with the philosophers had been subordinate, and proclaiming the right end of intellectual endeavour to be, not "truth" (*ἀλήθεια*) or "wisdom" (*σοφία*), which was unattainable, but "virtue" or "excellence" (*ἀρετή*), he sought to communicate, not a theory of the universe, but an aptitude for civic life. "The lesson which I have to teach," Plato makes him say (*Prot.*, 318 E), "is prudence or good counsel, both in respect of domestic matters, that the man may manage his household aright, and in respect of public affairs, that he may be thoroughly qualified to take part, both by deed and by word, in the business of the state. In other words, I profess to make men good citizens." As instruments of education Protagoras used grammar, style, poetry, and oratory. Thus, whereas hitherto the young Greek, having completed his elementary training in the schools of the *γραμματιστής*, the *κιθαριστής*, and the *παιδοτρέβης*, was left to prepare himself for his life's work as best he might, by philosophical speculation, by artistic practice, or otherwise, one who passed from the elementary schools to the lecture-room of Protagoras received from him a "higher education." The programme was exclusively literary, but for the moment it enabled Protagoras to satisfy the demand which he had discovered and evoked. Wherever he went, his lecture-room was crowded with admiring pupils, whose homage filled his purse and enhanced his reputation.

After Protagoras the most prominent of the literary sophists was Prodicus of Ceos. Establishing himself at Athens, he taught "virtue" or "excellence," in the sense attached to the word by Protagoras, partly by means of literary subjects, partly in discourses upon practical ethics. It is plain that Prodicus was an affected pedant. Yet his simple conventional morality found favour, and Plato (*Rep.*, 600 C) couples him with Protagoras in his testimony to the popularity of the sophists and their teaching.

At Athens, the centre of the intellectual life of Greece, there was soon to be found a host of sophists: some of them strangers, others citizens; some of them bred under Protagoras and Prodicus, others self-taught. In the teaching of the sophists of this younger generation

two points are observable. First, their independence of philosophy and the arts being assured, though they continued to regard "civic excellence" as their aim, it was no longer necessary for them to make the assertion of its claims a principal element in their exposition. Secondly, for the sake of novelty they extended their range, including scientific and technical subjects, but handling them, and teaching their pupils to handle them, in a popular way. In this stage of sophistry then, the sophist, though not a specialist, trenched upon the provinces of specialists; and accordingly Plato (*Prot.*, 318 E) makes Protagoras pointedly refer to sophists who, "when young men have made their escape from the arts, plunge them once more into technical study, and teach them such subjects as arithmetic, astronomy, geometry, and music." The sophist of whom the Platonic Protagoras is here thinking was Hippias of Elis, who gave popular lectures, not only upon the four subjects just mentioned, but also upon grammar, mythology, family history, archaeology, Homerology, and the education of youth. In this polymath we see at once the degradation of the sophistry of culture and the link which connects Protagoras and Prodicus with the eristics, who at a later period taught, not, like Hippias, all branches of learning, but a universally applicable method of disputation.

Meanwhile, Gorgias of Leontini, who, as has been seen, had studied and rejected the philosophy of western Greece, gave to sophistry a new direction by bringing to the mother country the technical study of rhetoric,—especially forensic rhetoric (Plato, *Gorg.*, 454 B; cf. Aristotle, *Rhet.*, 1354 b 26),—which study had begun in Sicily with Corax and Tisias nearly forty years before. Gorgias was already advanced in years and rich in honours when, in 427, he visited Athens as the head of an embassy sent to solicit aid against Syracuse. Received with acclamation, he spent the rest of his long life in central Greece, winning applause by the display of his oratorical gifts and acquiring wealth by the teaching of rhetoric. There is no evidence to show that at any period of his life he called himself a sophist; and, as Plato (*Gorg.*, 449 A) makes him describe himself as a *ρήτωρ*, it is reasonable to suppose that he preferred that title. That he should do so was only natural, since his position as a teacher of rhetoric was already secure when Protagoras made his first appearance in the character of a sophist; and, as Protagoras, Prodicus, and the rest of the sophists of culture offered a comprehensive education, of which oratory formed only a part, whilst Gorgias made no pretence of teaching "civic excellence" (Plato, *Meno*, 95 C), and found a substitute for philosophy, not in literature generally, but in the professional study of rhetoric alone, it would have been convenient if the distinction between sophistry and rhetoric had been maintained. But, though, as will be seen hereafter, these two sorts of education were sometimes distinguished, Gorgias and those who succeeded him as teachers of rhetoric, such as Thrasymachus of Chalcedon and Polus of Agrigentum, were commonly called by the title which Protagoras had assumed and brought into familiar use.

Rhetorical sophistry, as taught by Gorgias with special reference to the requirements of the law courts, led by an easy transition to political sophistry. During the century which had elapsed since the expulsion of the Pisistratids and the establishment of the democracy, the Athenian constitution had developed with a rapidity which produced an oligarchical reaction, and the discussion of constitutional principles and precedents, always familiar to the citizen of Athens, was thus abnormally stimulated. The Peloponnesian War too not only added a deeper interest to ordinary questions of policy, but also caused the

relations of dissident parties, of allied and belligerent states, of citizens and aliens, of bond and free, of Greeks and barbarians, to be eagerly debated in the light of present experience. It was only natural then that some of those who professed to prepare young Athenians for public life should give to their teaching a distinctively political direction; and accordingly we find Isocrates recognizing teachers of politics, and discriminating them at once from those earlier sophists who gave popular instruction in the arts and from the contemporary eristics. To this class, that of the political sophists, may be assigned Lycophron, Alcidas, and Isocrates himself. For, though that celebrated personage would have liked to be called, not "sophist," but "political philosopher," and tried to fasten the name of "sophist" upon his opponents the Socratics, it is clear from his own statement that he was commonly ranked with the sophists, and that he had no claim, except on the score of superior popularity and success, to be dissociated from the other teachers of political rhetoric. It is true that he was not a political sophist of the vulgar type, that as a theorist he was honest and patriotic, and that, in addition to his fame as a teacher, he had a distinct reputation as a man of letters; but he was a professor of political rhetoric, and, as such, in the phraseology of the day, a sophist. He had already reached the height of his fame when Plato opened a rival school at the Academy, and pointedly attacked him in the *Gorgias*, the *Phaedrus*, and the *Republic*. Thenceforward there was a perpetual controversy between the rhetorician and the philosopher, and the struggle of educational systems continued until, in the next generation, the philosophers were left in possession of the field.

While the sophistry of rhetoric led to the sophistry of politics, the sophistry of culture led to the sophistry of disputation. It has been seen that the range of subjects recognized by Protagoras and Prodicus gradually extended itself, until Hippias professed himself a teacher of all branches of learning, including in his list subjects taught by artists and professional men, but handling them from a popular or non-professional point of view. The successors of the polymath claimed to possess and to communicate, not the knowledge of all branches of learning, but an aptitude for dealing with all subjects, which aptitude should make the knowledge of any subject superfluous. In other words, they cultivated skill in disputation. Now skill in disputation is plainly a valuable accomplishment; and, as the Aristotelian logic grew out of the regulated discussions of the eristics and their pupils, the disputant sophistry of the 4th century deserves more attention and more respect than it usually receives from historians of Greek thought. But when men set themselves to cultivate skill in disputation, irrespective of the matter debated,—when men regard the matter discussed, not as a serious issue, but as a thesis upon which to practise their powers of controversy,—they learn to pursue, not truth, but victory; and, their criterion of excellence having been thus perverted, they presently prefer ingenious fallacy to solid reasoning, and the applause of bystanders to the consciousness of honest effort. Indeed, the sophists generally had a predisposition to error of this sort, not only because sophistry was from the beginning a substitute for the pursuit of truth, but also because the successful professor, travelling from city to city, or settling abroad, could take no part in public affairs, and thus was not at every step reminded of the importance of the "material" element of exposition and reasoning. Paradox, however, soon becomes stale, and fallacy wearisome. Hence, despite its original popularity, eristical sophistry could not hold its ground. The man of the world who had cultivated it in his youth regarded it in riper years as a

foolish pedantry, or at best as a propædæutic exercise; while the serious student, necessarily preferring that form of disputation which recognized truth as the end of this as of other intellectual processes, betook himself to one or other of the philosophies of the revival.

In order to complete this sketch of the development of sophistry in the latter half of the 5th century and the earlier half of the 4th, it is necessary next to take account of Socrates and the Socratics. A foe to philosophy and a renegade from art, Socrates took his departure from the same point as Protagoras, and moved in the same direction, that of the education of youth. Finding in the cultivation of "virtue" or "excellence" a substitute for the pursuit of scientific truth, and in disputation the sole means by which "virtue" or "excellence" could be attained, he resembled at once the sophists of culture and the sophists of eristic. But, inasmuch as the "virtue" or "excellence" which he sought was that of the man rather than that of the official, while the disputation which he practised had for its aim, not victory, but the elimination of error, the differences which separated him from the sophists of culture and the sophists of eristic were only less considerable than the resemblances which he bore to both; and further, though his whole time and attention were bestowed upon the education of young Athenians, his theory of the relations of teacher and pupil differed from that of the recognized professors of education, inasmuch as the taking of fees seemed to him to entail a base surrender of the teacher's independence. The principal characteristics of Socrates's theory of education were accepted, *mutatis mutandis*, by the leading Socratics. With these resemblances to the contemporary professors of education, and with these differences, were Socrates and the Socratics sophists or not? To this question there is no simple answer, yes or no. It is certain that Socrates's contemporaries regarded him as a sophist; and it was only reasonable that they should so regard him, because in opposition to the physicists of the past and the artists of the present he asserted the claims of higher education. But, though according to the phraseology of the time he was a sophist, he was not a typical sophist,—his principle that, while scientific truth is unattainable by man, right opinion is the only basis of right action, clearly differentiating him from all the other professors of "virtue." Again, as the Socratics—Plato himself, when he established himself at the Academy, being no exception—were, like their master, educators rather than philosophers, and in their teaching laid especial stress upon discussion, they too were doubtless regarded as sophists, not by Isocrates only, but by their contemporaries in general; and it may be conjectured that the disputatious tendencies of the Megarian school made it all the more difficult for Plato and others to secure a proper appreciation of the difference between dialectic, or discussion with a view to the discovery of truth, and eristic, or discussion with a view to victory. Changing circumstances, however, carry with them changes in the meaning and application of words. Whereas, so long as philosophy was in abeyance Socrates and the Socratics were regarded as sophists of an abnormal sort, as soon as philosophy revived it was dimly perceived that, in so far as Socrates and the Socratics dissented from sophistry, they preserved the philosophical tradition. This being so, it was found convenient to revise the terminology of the past, and to include in the philosophical succession those who, though not philosophers, had cherished the sacred spark. As for Socrates, he ranked himself neither with the philosophers, who professed to know, nor with the sophists, who professed to teach; and, if he sometimes described himself as a φιλόσοφος, he was careful to indicate that he pretended to no other knowledge than that of his own limitations.

It would seem then, (1) that popular nomenclature included under the term "sophist" all teachers—whether professors, or, like Socrates, amateurs—who communicated, not artistic skill, nor philosophical theory, but a general or liberal education; (2) that, of those who were commonly accounted sophists, some professed culture, some forensic rhetoric, some political rhetoric, some eristic, some (*i.e.*, the Socratics) dialectic; (3) that the differences between the different groups of sophists were not inconsiderable, and that in particular the teaching of the rhetoricians was distinct in origin, and, in so far as its aim was success in a special walk of life, distinct in character, from the more general teaching of the sophists of culture, the eristics, and the dialecticians, while the teaching of the dialecticians was discriminated from that of the rest, in so far as the aim of the dialecticians was truth, or at least the bettering of opinion; and, consequently, (4) that, in awarding praise and blame to sophistry and its representatives, the distinctive characteristics of the groups above enumerated must be studiously kept in view.

Lapse of time and change of circumstances brought with them, not merely changes in the subjects taught, but also changes in the popular estimate of sophistry and sophists. The first and most obvious sentiment which sophistry evoked was an enthusiastic and admiring interest. The sophist seemed to his youthful hearers to open a new field of intellectual activity and thereby to add a fresh zest to existence. But in proportion to the fascination which he exercised upon the young was the distrust which he inspired in their less pliable elders. Not only were they dismayed by the novelty of the sophistical teaching, but also they vaguely perceived that it was subversive of authority, of the authority of the parent over the child as well as of the authority of the state over the citizen. Of the two conflicting sentiments, the favour of the young, gaining as years passed away, naturally prevailed; sophistry ceased to be novel, and attendance in the lecture-rooms of the sophists came to be thought not less necessary for the youth than attendance in the elementary schools for the boy. The lively enthusiasm and the furious opposition which greeted Protagoras had now burnt themselves out, and before long the sophist was treated by the man of the world as a harmless, necessary pedagogue.

That sophistry must be studied in its historical development was clearly seen by Plato, whose dialogue called the *Sophist* contains a formal review of the changing phases and aspects of sophistical teaching. The subject which is discussed in that dialogue and its successor the *Statesman* being the question "Are sophist, statesman, and philosopher identical or different?" the Eleate who acts as protagonist seeks a definition of the term "sophist" by means of a series of divisions or dichotomies. In this way he is led to regard the sophist successively—(1) as a practitioner of that branch of mercenary persuasion in private which professes to impart "virtue" and exacts payment in the shape of a fee, in opposition to the flatterer who offers pleasure, asking for sustenance in return; (2) as a practitioner of that branch of mental trading which purveys from city to city discourses and lessons about "virtue," in opposition to the artist who similarly purveys discourses and lessons about the arts; (3) and (4) as a practitioner of those branches of mental trading, retail and wholesale, which purvey discourses and lessons about "virtue" within a city, in opposition to the artists who similarly purvey discourses and lessons about the arts; (5) as a practitioner of that branch of eristic which brings to the professor pecuniary emolument, eristic being the systematic form of antilogic, and dealing with justice, injustice, and other abstractions, and antilogic being that form of disputation which uses question and answer in private, in opposition to forensic, which uses continuous discourse in the law-courts; (6) as a practitioner of that branch of education which purges away the vain conceit of wisdom by means of cross-examination, in opposition to the traditional method of reproof or admonition. These definitions being thus various, the Eleate notes that the sophist, in consideration of a fee, disputes, and teaches others to dispute, about things divine, cosmical, metaphysical, legal, political, technical,—in fact, about everything

—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 δημολογικός, 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 eristic 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, δικανική or forensic rhetoric being its proximate rival. The seventh definition represents the first half of the 4th century, when sophistry was eristic 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,