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## P R E F A C E.

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A THIRD series of Essays, in great measure corresponding with this, was issued a year and a half since in the United States; but a reason then in force deterred me from issuing it here. That reason no longer holding, I have prepared this volume, differing from its counterpart by some omissions and some additions. One essay added to the American Edition, I exclude because a volume of Essays already published here, contains it; and another, on "Morals and Moral Sentiments," which first appeared in the *Fortnightly Review* for April, 1871, I exclude because I have embodied the essential parts of it in certain closing chapters of the *Principles of Psychology*, and I have no wish to perpetuate its controversial and personal parts.

One of the included essays—that entitled "Specialized Administration"—though in a measure controversial, I reproduce; because it contains facts and arguments which are, I think, of more than ephemeral interest, and because permanence having been given to the question it deals with, the reply may fitly have a permanent form. Not only do I reciprocate most cordially the utterance of kind feeling with which Prof. Huxley prefaces the republication of his "Administrative Nihilism;" and not



only do I rejoice that divergence of opinion is not likely to weaken a long-established, and highly-valued friendship; but I may add the expression of my great regret that I should be obliged still to differ from one whose agreement, more than that of any other friend, confirms me in any conclusion I have drawn. I fear, however, that, holding though we do so many beliefs in common, there remains respecting this sociological question no alternative but amicable opposition.

On the brief rejoinder to my arguments which Prof. Huxley makes in the preface to his *Critiques and Addresses*, I may here say a few words. The reasons he gives for still thinking that the name "Administrative Nihilism" fitly indicates the system which I have described as "negatively regulative," are, I think, adequately met by asking whether "Ethical Nihilism" would fitly describe the remnant of the decalogue, were all its positive injunctions omitted. If the eight commandments which, substantially or literally, come under the form "thou shalt not," constitute by themselves a set of rules which can scarcely be called nihilistic; I do not see how an administrative system limited to the enforcement of such rules can be called nihilistic: especially if to the punishment of murder, adultery, stealing, and false-witness, it adds the punishment of assault, breach of contract, and all minor aggressions, down to the annoyance of neighbours by nuisances. Respecting the second and essential question, whether limitation of the internal functions of government to those which are negatively regulative, is consistent with that theory of the social organism and its controlling

agencies held by me, I may say that the insufficiency of my reply has not, I think, been shown. I was tacitly asked how the analogy I have drawn between those governmental structures by which the parts of the body politic have their actions regulated and those nervous structures which regulate the organic actions of the individual living body, is to be reconciled with my belief that social activities will in the main adjust themselves. My answer was this. I recognized as essential the positively-regulative functions of the State in respect to the offensive and defensive appliances needful for national self-preservation, during the predatory phase of social evolution; and I not only admitted the importance of its negatively-regulative functions in respect to the internal social activities, but insisted that these should be carried out much more efficiently than now. Assuming always, however, that the internal social activities continue subject to that restraining action of the State which consists in preventing aggressions, direct and indirect, I contended that the co-ordination of these internal social activities is effected by other structures of a different kind. I aimed to show that my two beliefs are not inconsistent, by pointing out that in the individual organism, also, those vital activities which parallel the activities constituting national life, are regulated by a substantially-independent nervous system. Prof. Huxley does, indeed, remind me that recent researches show increasingly the influence of the cerebro-spinal nervous system over the processes of organic life; against which, however, has to be set the growing evidence of

the power exercised by the visceral nervous system over the cerebro-spinal. But, recognizing the influence he names (which, indeed, corresponds to that governmental influence I regard as necessary); I think the consistency of my positions is maintainable so long as it is manifest that the viscera, under the control of their own nervous system, can carry on the vital actions when the control of the cerebro-spinal system is substantially arrested by sleep, or by anæsthetics, or by other causes of insensibility; and while it is shown that a considerable degree of co-ordination may exist among the organs of a creature which has no nervous system at all.

A few words are needed respecting the additions which this volume contains. An illustration which seemed worth adding, occupies two pages at the close of the article on "Specialized Administration." To the essay entitled "What is Electricity?" I have, somewhat rashly perhaps, put a postscript, carrying further the view originally set forth: thinking that in the absence of an established theory, an hypothesis having some verisimilitude might be worth consideration. The addition of chief importance, however, is that with which the volume closes—"Replies to Criticisms." This, first published in the *Fortnightly Reviews* for last November and December, with the intention of forthwith including it here, I had originally meant to reproduce just as it stood. One of my critics, however, a writer in the *British Quarterly Review*, to whom, in the closing pages of these "Replies to Criticisms," I had given a brief answer, that was mild considering the character of his attack, has seen fit, in the last number of

the *British Quarterly Review*, to reiterate certain assertions I had not space to notice. Moved chiefly by the fact that he brings against me the authorities of Prof. Tait and Sir William Thomson, I have thought well to extend the article, that I might meet his injurious misstatements. Those who read these rejoinders, will perhaps agree with me in thinking that it would have been better had he let the matter stand as my first reply left it.

LONDON, *February*, 1874.

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I.

*THE CLASSIFICATION OF THE SCIENCES.*

# PREFACE

TO THE THIRD EDITION.

---

IN the preface to the second edition, I have described myself as resisting the temptation to amplify, which the occasion raised. Reasons have since arisen for yielding to the desire which I then felt to add justifications of the scheme set forth.

The immediate cause for this change of resolve, has been the publication of several objections by Prof. Bain in his *Logic*. Permanently embodied, as these objections are, in a work intended for the use of students, they demand more attention than such as have been made in the course of ordinary criticism; since, if they remain unanswered, their prejudicial effects will be more continuous.

While to dispose of these I seize the opportunity afforded by a break in my ordinary work, I have thought it well at the same time to strengthen my own argument, by a re-statement from a changed point of view.

*Feb.*, 1871.

## PREFACE

### TO THE SECOND EDITION.

---

THE first edition of this Essay is not yet out of print. But a proposal to translate it into French having been made by Professor Réthoré, I have decided to prepare a new édition free from the imperfections which criticism and further thought have disclosed, rather than allow these imperfections to be reproduced.

The occasion has almost tempted me into some amplification. Further arguments against the classification of M. Comte, and further arguments in support of the classification here set forth, have pleaded for utterance. But reconsideration has convinced me that it is both needless and useless to say more—needless because those who are not committed will think the case sufficiently strong as it stands, and useless because to those who are committed additional reasons will seem as inadequate as the original ones.

This last conclusion is thrust on me by seeing how little M. Littré, the leading expositor of M. Comte, is influenced by fundamental objections the force of which he admits. After quoting one of these, he



says, with a candour equally rare and admirable, that he has vainly searched M. Comte's works and his own mind for an answer. Nevertheless, he adds—*"j'ai réussi, je crois, à écarter l'attaque de M. Herbert Spencer, et à sauver le fond par des sacrifices indispensables mais accessoires."* The sacrifices are these. He abandons M. Comte's division of Inorganic Science into Celestial Physics and Terrestrial Physics—a division which, in M. Comte's scheme, takes precedence of all the rest; and he admits that neither logically nor historically does Astronomy come before Physics, as M. Comte alleges. After making these sacrifices, which most will think too lightly described as *"sacrifices indispensables mais accessoires,"* M. Littré proceeds to rehabilitate the Comtean classification in a way which he considers satisfactory, but which I do not understand. In short, the proof of these incongruities affects his faith in the Positivist theory of the sciences, no more than the faith of a Christian is affected by proof that the Gospels contradict one another.

Here in England I have seen no attempt to meet the criticisms with which M. Littré thus deals. There has been no reply to the allegation, based on examples, that the several sciences do not develop in the order of their decreasing generality; nor to the allegation, based on M. Comte's own admissions, that within each science the progress is not, as he says it is, from the general to the special; nor to

the allegation that the seeming historical precedence of Astronomy over Physics in M. Comte's pages, is based on a verbal ambiguity—a mere sleight of words; nor to the allegation, abundantly illustrated, that a progression in an order the reverse of that asserted by M. Comte may be as well substantiated; nor to various minor allegations equally irreconcilable with his scheme. I have met with nothing more than iteration of the statement that the sciences *do* conform, logically and historically, to the order in which M. Comte places them; regardless of the assigned evidence that they *do not*.

Under these circumstances it is unnecessary for me to say more; and I think I am warranted in continuing to hold that the Comtean classification of the sciences is demonstrably untenable.

While, however, I have not entered further into the controversy, as I thought of doing, I have added at the close an already-published discussion, no longer easily accessible, which indirectly enforces the general argument.

LONDON, 23RD APRIL, 1869.

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### EXTRACT FROM THE PROVISIONAL PREFACE.

Something to introduce the work of which an instalment is annexed, seems useful, in anticipation of the time when completion of a volume will give occasion for a Permanent Preface.

In preparation for *The Principles of Sociology*, requiring as bases of induction large accumulations of data, fitly arranged for comparison, I, some twelve years ago, commenced, by proxy, the collection and organization of facts presented by societies of different types, past and present; being fortunate enough to secure the services of gentlemen competent to carry on the process in the way I wished. Though this classified compilation of materials was entered upon solely to facilitate my own work; yet, after having brought the mode of classification to a satisfactory form, and after having had some of the Tables filled up, I decided to have the undertaking executed with a view to publication; the facts collected and arranged for easy reference and convenient study of their relations, being so presented, apart from hypothesis, as to aid all students of Social Science in testing such conclusions as they have drawn and in drawing others.

The Work consists of three large Divisions. Each comprises a set of Tables exhibiting the facts as abstracted and classified, and a mass of quotations and abridged abstracts otherwise classified, on which the statements contained in the Tables are based. The condensed statements, arranged after a uniform manner, give, in each Table or succession of Tables, the phenomena of all orders which each society presents—constitute an account of its morphology, its physiology, and (if a society having a known history) its development. On the other hand, the collected Extracts, serving as authorities for the statements in the Tables, are (or, rather will be, when the Work is complete) classified primarily according to the kinds of phenomena to which they refer, and secondarily according to the societies exhibiting these phenomena; so that each kind of phenomenon as it is displayed in all societies, may be separately studied with convenience.

In further explanation I may say that the classified compilations and digests of materials to be thus brought together under the title of *Descriptive Sociology*, are intended to supply the student of Social Science with data, standing towards his conclusions in a relation like that in which accounts of the structures and functions of different types of animals stand to the conclusions of the biologist. Until there had been such systematic descriptions of different kinds of organisms, as made it possible to compare the connexions, and forms, and actions, and modes of origin, of their parts, the Science of Life could make no progress. And in like manner, before there can be reached in Sociology, generalizations having a certainty

making them worthy to be called scientific, there must be definite accounts of the institutions and actions of societies of various types, and in various stages of evolution, so arranged as to furnish the means of readily ascertaining what social phenomena are habitually associated.

Respecting the tabulation, devised for the purpose of exhibiting social phenomena in a convenient way, I may explain that the primary aim has been so to present them that their relations of simultaneity and succession may be seen at one view. As used for delineating uncivilized societies, concerning which we have no records, the tabular form serves only to display the various social traits as they are found to co-exist. But as used for delineating societies having known histories, the tabular form is so employed as to exhibit not only the connexions of phenomena existing at the same time, but also the connexions of phenomena that succeed one another. By reading horizontally across a Table at any period, there may be gained a knowledge of the traits of all orders displayed by the society at that period; while by reading down each column, there may be gained a knowledge of the modifications which each trait, structural or functional, underwent during successive periods.

Of course, the tabular form fulfils these purposes but approximately. To preserve complete simultaneity in the statements of facts, as read from side to side of the Tables, has proved impracticable; here much had to be inserted, and there little; so that complete correspondence in time could not be maintained. Moreover, it has not been possible to carry out the mode of classification in a theoretically-complete manner, by increasing the number of columns as the classes of facts multiply in the course of Civilization. To represent truly the progress of things, each column should divide and sub-divide in successive ages, so as to indicate the successive differentiations of the phenomena. But typographical difficulties have negated this: a great deal has had to be left in a form which must be accepted simply as the least unsatisfactory.

The three Divisions constituting the entire work, comprehend three groups of societies:— (1) *Uncivilized Societies*; (2) *Civilized Societies—Extinct or Decayed*; (3) *Civilized Societies—Recent or Still Flourishing*. These divisions have at present reached the following stages:—

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