THE POSITIVE SCIENCE OF MORALS

THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE WEST

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THE POSITIVE SCIENCE OF MORALS

ITS OPPORTUNENESS, ITS OUTLINES, AND ITS CHIEF APPLICATIONS

BY THE LATE

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In revolutionary times the difficulty is not to do our duty, but rather to know what is our duty.—*Tacitus.*

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TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE

This little book contains the first survey, from the Positive point of view, of the whole field of Moral Science. As is well known, Auguste Comte did not live to write his projected treatise on this subject. But his chief disciple, Pierre Laffitte, imbued by personal intercourse with the Master's ideas, and guided by the indications given in his later writings, devoted many years to the scientific study of Ethics, and to the construction of a synthesis of moral truths resting upon Sociology as its basis. His two courses of lectures, one on Theoretical Morals, and the other on Practical Morals, were published in the *Revue Occidentale* during the years 1885 to 1887. But the first sketch of the result of his labours was made public in the form of a lecture delivered at Havre some years previously, which was published, with additions, in 1881. It is this initial outline of the highest and most complex of the abstract sciences that is now presented in an English version. An introduction to the French original, giving an account of Laffitte's life and labours, from the pen of his friend and disciple the late Émile Antoine, has since been republished as a separate work.

Human Nature, the subject of theoretical morals, and Education, the concern of practical morals, have been treated from the Positivist standpoint in two works, based respectively on Comte's and Laffitte's writings, by

the late Dr. John Kells Ingram, formerly Regius Professor of Greek and Vice-Provost in Trinity College, Dublin. From the exposition of Positive doctrine therein given it can be seen how decisively the scientific spirit has shown its competence to enter into possession of a domain which was once the special province of Theology, and is now the favourite playground of metaphysicians. In bringing M. Laffitte's own earlier summary of moral science to the notice of English readers, my hope is that it will help to strengthen in some minds, and to implant in others, the conviction that the phenomena of conduct, individual, civic, and national, are subject to natural laws, which, to an even greater extent than other natural laws, are susceptible of modification; and that, consequently, the methodical study of moral science by adequately trained intellects, whose function it shall be to teach and apply it, is now the main requisite for the systematic improvement of moral practice, and leads inevitably to the acceptance of scientific religion—Comte's crowning discovery—as the only rational substitute for the various types of supernatural religion which have heretofore prevailed amongst mankind.

My best thanks are due to my friend Mr. Henry Ellis for his careful revision of the MS., and for seeing the work through the press.

J. Carey Hall.

PART I.

A POSITIVE ETHIC NOW NEEDED

CHAPTER I.

THE PRESENT STATE OF AFFAIRS AS VIEWED FROM THE STANDPOINT OF MORALS

Object of this lecture.—A Positive system of morals, scientific in its foundation, its aim, and its means of realisation, has become *indispensable* owing to the growth of free thought, and the establishment of the Republic. It has also been rendered *inevitable* by the scientific evolution, of which Positivism is the culmination.

A SYSTEM of Positive morals was bound of necessity to make its appearance. The state of affairs in France, the fact that the Republic is in being, and the whole series of antecedents, render the advent of such a system both indispensable and inevitable. Positivism has for its aim and end the establishment and propagation of that system. It already exists; but it will have to be improved upon as time may require, so that it may win its way by the free acceptance of citizens whom it will gradually convince. I have no intention of setting it before you now as a completed whole. It is far too large for that. I shall content myself with pointing out briefly its general spirit, its essential foundations, and its main bearings on practice.

What do we understand by a "system of morals"? I understand the term to mean a body of universal rules by the observance whereof Humanity directs and improves individual, family, and social life. I take social life in its widest sense—that is to say, I conceive of man's existence

as connected not only with some particular fatherland, but also with all other nations, whose intercourse with one another is daily growing in extent and complexity, and tending to embrace, in the long run, the whole of our planet.

In order to have such a universal range, a system of morals must rest upon a general doctrine, at once real and serviceable, and so thoroughly consistent and compact as to provide a solution for all moral problems. Everyone should, in every set of circumstances, know exactly what he ought to think and do, so that his fellow-citizens, accepting the same principles, may give him their approval. For all questions that may arise between us and the Turks, the Hindoos, or the Chinese, precise and demonstrable solutions are needed. Vague considerations, such as *justice*, *brotherhood*, *love one another*, are not to the point. To love one another is very noble, and does no harm. We share those brotherly feelings, but that is not enough. It is in the name of humane sentiments that so many victims have been made in Bulgaria.[1] What we need is to know to what extent, and in what manner, the claims of good feeling and unselfishness should be satisfied, in conformity with a morality able to indicate in all cases the line of conduct which governments should take. That is the want which has not yet been supplied; that is the problem which must be worked out from the *data* of a real knowledge of our nature and of the situation in which we are placed. It is only the scientific spirit which is able to achieve this end, for it is the prerogative of that spirit to clear away what is vague, indefinite, and arbitrary.

What is the general spirit of a system of Positive morals? It is this: It consists of purely human rules, forming a morality exclusively scientific in its foundations, in its aim, and in its means of realisation.

"Scientific in its foundations" means that it never bases

[1] Russo-Turkish War, 1877-78.

moral rules upon anything but observation of the world in which we live, of human nature, and of the social evolution to which we belong. It discards, consequently, as illusory all solutions into which Humanity does not enter as an intermediary between the world and man, whether their connection be denied, or be transformed into identity. The sources from which it draws its proofs are the observations of poets, moralists, and historians, the interpreters of ordinary common sense. Such a morality having reference to nothing but what is possible, its rules remain always capable of being proved, and may, therefore, be accepted by everyone who has reached the years of discretion.

"Scientific in its aim" means that in everything it sets before itself a purely earthly object, an object which is perceptible and verifiable, and that it never allows the interference of any considerations about a hypothetical future life.

We therefore abandon all conceptions which are not in keeping with our various needs, whether moral, intellectual, or physical. We are citizens of the Earth, and have no interests in anything which lies outside of it and of the life of our race on this planet. As for those who concern themselves with other things, and regard themselves as citizens of Heaven—so long as they think about their salvation only after having fulfilled their earthly duties, they are free to do so: the Positive spirit is relative. Nevertheless, we can only come to an understanding with them through considerations relating to this life to which they are necessarily subject. To go beyond that would be to enter upon endless discussions. Nobody has any acquaintance with the goal at which they are aiming; and, as to the means of reaching it, there is a multiplicity of possible solutions, upon no one of which can we rely with any certainty.

When a man wants to go to China, he can discuss the various solutions of the problem, for his proposed object

is clearly defined: there is a real possibility. And so, likewise, when the question of constructing a railway between Paris and Dieppe arose, numerous as were the possible solutions of the problem, the line was not made to pass through Russia, for between the two fixed points there are limits determined by the requirements of the population of the various places, and by the configuration and the nature of the ground—that is to say, by conditions that are capable of being verified. And the same principle holds good in Positive morals; our reasons are always real and capable of proof, apart altogether from academic lucubrations. There is only one science—namely, Morals; and every study which is unconnected, by either its method or its doctrine, with the existence and the development of Humanity is, so far as we are concerned, without value. What we want is a system of morals, having for its avowed object the government of the West and of the world; a morality for citizens whose range of view takes in the whole situation, which shall enable every person to understand how his life is connected with the lives of the other inhabitants of our planet, and in what manner and degree his vote may exercise an influence, favourable or the reverse, on the march of civilisation.

"Scientific in its means of realisation" signifies that it must never employ as a sanction any but purely human persuasives—that is to say, in no case does it appeal to supernatural hopes or fears.

We do not obtrude our views upon those who make use of other means of persuasion, and regulate their conduct by other principles; we leave them alone in peace. If they have need of a staff to lean upon, we are not at all disposed to take it away from them; that is a private and personal fact, and everyone acknowledges its importance. Theological believers may settle among themselves how they propose to get to heaven. We admit our incompetence as to the ways and means, and if there be any such means we cannot take cognizance of them. A more

pious, a more urgent, duty keeps us on the earth. We know what we want, and how to reach it; and, in order to make vice, ignorance, and misery disappear, we are resolved to modify, so far as is possible, things that admit of modification, and not to abandon our endeavours except in presence of the impossible. That is why we, neither fearing nor expecting help from any supernatural power, rely only upon ourselves for getting the direction of terrestrial affairs entrusted exclusively to those whose interests are bound up in them, and for getting rid of all others from the directorate.

Is it possible, in morals, to ignore any supernatural considerations whatsoever, and to attain so complete an emancipation? Yes, now that the human mind has come to its full maturity.

As a matter of fact, there are everywhere, especially in France, a great many minds not only indifferent, but even hostile, to all theological morality. That is admitted by those who deplore the growing disregard for things theological. They complain that society is going further and further away from God; and they attribute this forsaking of him to the corruptness of human nature. That is childish. Since they profess their ability to convince men, let them win people to their views. If the police have to be called upon to compel us to follow them, not only they but the police become useless; for more police would be required to protect them Moreover, this complete emancipation is a consequence of the past. If we have become unbelievers, it is because our predecessors have made us so; we cannot help it.

There have always been some such emancipated minds; but their number has been constantly increasing for the last two centuries. In the eighteenth-century *salons* some superior minds disdained theology for themselves; and we see at that epoch men of high account, the Diderots and the Fredericks, directing their lives mainly in disregard of the supernatural. Their example was

imitated by those governing elsewhere, who, in spite of the contempt they professed for the beliefs of the masses, were enabled to rule by making use of those beliefs. But, although they no longer wanted any theological religion for themselves, they still considered it good enough for the people.

This mode of governing would be illusory nowadays; the intellectual conditions have been very greatly modified, and the relations between rulers and ruled are now very different. So long as the emancipated were but few in number, they might imagine that theological morality was made, not for them, but for others; nowadays, this attitude deceives nobody. Unbelief has won the day all along the line; intellect, capital, labour, the people itself, have all become indifferent or hostile to theology. The old governing classes in France, driven to despair, have found no other way of reviving faith but to sacrifice themselves by ceasing to be Voltairians and becoming Catholics. But, in thus allowing themselves to sink so grievously below the mental requirements of the times in which they live, they have shut themselves out from governing. How can Catholicism, which could not, in its palmy days, hinder the march of the revolutionary spirit, hope to discipline minds which neither fear its hell nor desire its paradise; which refuse to believe any longer in the dogmas of blind faith; and reject for themselves its theological morality as an objectionable bore? They are perhaps wrong, but the fact is undeniable; the jesuitical trap no longer catches anybody.

Unbelief, which has grown more and more in France and the West, tends to become universal. In the East there have at all times been people emancipated from any belief in God. Most extraordinary instances of this have appeared among the Arabs and the Turks. At the present day, the higher classes and superior minds among Moslems, Hindoos, Japanese, and Chinese have reached that stage. They regard theological conceptions merely as puerilities,

fit, at best, only for the lower orders. In fact, the need of a Positive system of morals is a matter that concerns statesmen and the nobler spirits throughout the world.

In France the question has been awaiting settlement ever since 1789. The want of a Positive morality is assuredly felt here deeply everywhere, and the definitive establishment of the Republic gives this want a character of urgency which is obvious to all. Under the monarchical dictatorship, those who disbelieved in theology used to mask the true substance of their thoughts under theological phraseology; and the actual state of affairs was kept, officially at least, hidden from view—among the upper classes, contempt; among the lower, belief. Now that the Republic has come, the system of hypocrisy has to be given up in favour of a system of toleration. There is no longer any need to profess beliefs one does not share, for there is no longer the excuse that such a device saves the rulers from behaving badly. Republican France possesses, at the head of the movement, an active mass which has vigorously discarded all theology; it is the great majority of France—that is to say, the people as a whole, the most numerous and the least instructed classes; in fact, the electors. They have taken up their work in earnest, and they mean to make more and more use of their power. The Republic, by its sweeping away of all illusion, raises, in a very clear way, the problem of the need for a new moral guidance.

Once more, we do not offer this guidance to those who already have a solution, and are accustomed to follow a procedure of a different order. There might be drawbacks in the giving up of old-established moral habits; and, if such persons choose to be present at our lectures, which are always open to the public, the responsibility must rest with themselves. No, it is not they whom we address, but those who, practically emancipated, require a purely human morality; those, in fact, whom theology proclaims to be outside of the pale

of salvation, incapable of subordination and of voluntary government. Where the priest of God has failed, we, ministers of Humanity, aspire to obtain the free acceptance of Positivist guidance and of the new spiritual power.

We say to this growing mass of minds who have voluntarily abandoned Catholicism and other forms of theology, that they ought not to, and cannot, remain without systematic moral guidance. They can, of course, do without theological morality; but what morality will they put in its place? For some substitute they must have if they want to do their duty, and not to be everlastingly inquiring what that duty is. Children have to be educated. What prejudices must we teach them? We cannot rest satisfied with the degrading example of the unbelieving father who causes his children to be brought up as Christians. It is inconsistent for the head of a family to jeer at theology all his life, and to avail himself, in all important vicissitudes, of the sacraments of the Church.

In inquiring what the position and the duties of woman ought to be, are we to settle the questions arising out of her different functions as mother, wife, and friend by the theological solution, which rests only on an anatomical basis? Are we to justify her subordination by her production from a spare rib of man, extracted by some sort of surgical operation? The supposition is simply ridiculous; there is nothing to be got from that kind of discussion.

For the grave questions now agitating society Biblical narratives no longer suffice; the Republic wants citizens. In this case, as in the case of education, precise rules are required to govern the use of property, and the mutual relations between rich and poor. In the strife between capitalists and workmen, can we regard as sufficient the Catholic solution—namely, charity—when the claimants object to receive as alms the money which they have earned? And the argument is even stronger in the field of international policy.

A republican people requires a very different sort of handling. Man is an animal intelligent enough and honest enough to accept Positive solutions of such problems when they are properly explained to him. The dignity of woman and of the workman rebels against the perpetuation of this old theological reasoning. They both want to have reasons given them, not childish stories to which even our children no longer listen with any pleasure. This theological morality, which claims to govern, is insufficient in two ways: it has no longer any influence over the active mass—that which governs, and which, therefore, has itself the most need of discipline—and it is incomplete, inasmuch as it finds itself confronted with conflicts it did not foresee, and to which it cannot adapt itself.

The morality which is to take its place must, in order to fulfil the requirements of the situation, embrace the whole range of human affairs, so as to inaugurate a truly universal system of policy. This means that it must rest upon science, for it is science that brings agreement in its train; and, besides, as a result of the belief which it inspires, there is a general demand for a scientific morality. Positivism comes forward to satisfy this general desire for the co-operation of all active minds; and I deem that the time has come for setting before them that system of morals, which has been slowly and gradually elaborated. The advent of Positive morals, with Humanity for its foundation, its object, and its sanction, is the crowning-point of the evolution of our race. That system exists; its conception was due to a man of genius; and we have now reached the stage of popularising and applying it. We need not go in search of it. We are not affixing a label to an empty box. The case is already full; it is not something we have to do, it is something done.

Like every other great political or religious construction, the system of Positive morals, built up of materials furnished by past ages, was developed slowly. It took fifty years to form. The object of Auguste Comte's life

was the foundation of a system of theoretical and practical morals, and of a new spiritual power. In this task he was absorbed from the outset. At twenty-two years of age he wrote :—

> So long as morals remain based solely on religious[1] beliefs, the general direction of education must inevitably belong, in ultimate analysis, to a theological body. The men who are nowadays so keen in their opposition to the Jesuits, to missionaries, and to other religious bodies, ought to recognise clearly that the only way to destroy what influence still remains to those societies is to base morals on the observation of facts. Until a work of that sort be done, all their opposition will have little effect, because it is in the main misdirected.[2]

Auguste Comte never ceased in his endeavours to perfect a system of Positive morals. At first, he considered it only from the practical point of view, as the outcome of the application of Positive theories, and as requiring the preliminary construction of the *System of Positive Philosophy* (1830–42). That fundamental work completed, he came to see that practical morals require Positive theories of a special kind, which must consequently be constructed before they are applied to practice ; and in 1848 he prescribed Moral Science as the subject of study during the final year of Positivist education.[3] After developing its principal features in the *System of Positive Polity*

[1] In this passage Comte employs the two expressions, *theology* and *religion*, as if they meant the same thing. Later on, he observed that there is a religion wherever there is a faith that regulates both individual and collective activity, and that, in this respect, religion is a fundamental institution of Humanity, subject, like all other institutions, to the law of its development ; theology representing its initial and imaginative phase. In Comte's writings, however, this ambiguity is to be found only in the words ; there was none in his conceptions. As the quotation indicates, he never applied the term "theological" to that Positive faith which it was the object of his whole life to found, and from which, necessarily, the supernatural is entirely eliminated.

[2] "Sommaire Appréciation de l'Ensemble du Passé moderne." *Politique Positive*, iv., App. p. 34. "A brief Estimate of Modern History." *Positive Polity*, iv. 518 (note).

[3] *General View of Positivism*, chap. iii.

(1851–54), he fixed the general outline of it in 1856. After five-and-thirty years of preparation, he was on the point of writing the *Treatise on Positive Morals*, when death put an end to that noble career (24 Gutenberg 69—5 September, 1857). I have since constructed that system of morals, taking as my foundation the plan and the elements which the founder of Positivism left behind him.

Such a construction deserves attention. Positivist solutions are not perfect; but they are good. Perfection is not obtained by a first attempt; and, indeed, if they were perfect, they would be absurd. Our situation and our nature alike preclude the possibility of the construction being free from drawbacks and imperfections which we might, and do, point out; we do not pretend to make angels, but men. What we assert is that this system is, at the present moment, the most complete and the best in existence. It is the only one which, without turning round against its own objects (as has happened to Catholic morality since the close of the Middle Ages, and to democratic morality since the Revolution of 1789), can furnish a bond of union for superior minds, and give to their activity a common aim. It is the only one which, capable of obtaining from all a real and well-grounded adhesion, allows, at length, of the substitution of a real providence for the imaginary providences that directed the earlier ages of our race. In short, we invite men to take up, under Positivist guidance, the rational government of their own affairs.

CHAPTER II.

OF THE SHARES TAKEN RESPECTIVELY BY THE POSITIVE SPIRIT AND THE THEOLOGICAL SPIRIT IN THE EMPIRICAL FORMATION OF MORAL RULES

The foundation of Positive morals rendered necessary by the Past; wherein the theological spirit is seen co-ordinating and consecrating the discoveries made by the Positive spirit, not only in spiritual government (for it was to the Romish priesthood, not to the Gospel, that Catholicism owed its greatness), but in temporal government (as, for instance, in the management of the Roman armies).

An examination of the existing situation leads us to analyse briefly the way in which it was formed. This can be done only by connecting it with history. It is the Past which has rendered necessary the construction of a system of Positive morals. We are our fathers' sons in everything. We have received from them an indelible moral and physiological stamp, and the sum of the moral and political rules which guide us is due to them. To revolt against their irreversible and tutelary sway is to put ourselves outside the human race; and, indeed, the attempt could be made only in language which they created. To acknowledge morally and mentally this our origin is the characteristic of entire emancipation and of real superiority. It is good for man not to suppose that he was born yesterday; good for him to know that the work of ages has not to be done over again; that everything necessary is prepared to our hand; that our ancestors are our governors. Hatred of the past is a puerile consequence of conflict; it is the weak side of the revolutionary party, which is too prone to forget its beginnings, and

has not that respect for its predecessors which it justly owes them.

It is not hard to perceive that, if our fathers had been imbeciles, as the revolutionary theorists maintain, we should not be people of distinction, as we profess to be. A species does not transform itself to such an extent as that; a lobster will not produce an elephant. We are entirely our fathers' sons; we are living on their moral capital, which is immense; and, if we get rid of a part of it, we keep more than is commonly believed. We are, before everything, conservatives. If the moral inheritance has become insufficient to guide our conduct, that result is due, chiefly, to the imperfection of its constitution; and that is why, in this very delicate task of elimination, our special purpose has been to construct a homogeneous moral system. The problem is, how to generalise and co-ordinate the moral rules which are already in existence in such a way that the duties pertaining to the Family shall be in sympathy with those that belong to the Fatherland and to Humanity, and, inversely, that the latter shall not clash with the family duties. The past, by throwing light on our present situation, will enable us to understand how the previous evolution of the human race has rendered the advent of this system of morals at once inevitable and indispensable; how, in fact, it was elaborating the means of constructing it while, at the same time, ruining the foundations and the sanction of the old co-ordination.

Like all of Humanity's creations, general morality has passed successively through the three stages—theological or fictitious, metaphysical or abstract, scientific or positive. Morality was at first theological; but, before explaining why it necessarily was so, we must define what part in the formation of it was due to fiction—that is to say, to theologism purely—and what part of it was the outcome of common sense—that is to say, of the spontaneous Positive spirit. I have signalised the parts played respec-

tively by the theological and by the Positive spirit, in the establishment of every moral rule, in the following fundamental theorem :—

It is always the Positive spirit which discovers; the theological spirit can only co-ordinate and sanction, without ever discovering.

The most thoroughgoing theologian may be safely challenged to name a single scientific proposition, of any kind, which was revealed. Revelations have always dealt with matters lying beyond the range of our powers of investigation, and about which nothing can be known. When it comes to dealing with propositions of geometry, that is another affair, for they have to be proved; and that is just the difficulty. Now, there is no danger that God will ever reveal any; for he understands nothing about them. If, however, general rules, suitable for the guidance of man and of societies, owe their discovery to observation of the world and of human nature, it is by means of theology that they have been sanctioned and co-ordinated. That is how theologism came to play a leading part in the career of Humanity: it gave to moral dogmas the necessary stability by consecrating, in the name of a Superior Will, the discoveries of the Positive spirit. Evidence of this is furnished by Bossuet when he appreciates, on a different principle from that which he employs in the case of his own creed, the supernatural religions which existed prior to Catholicism. In doing this, he adopts the habitual method of all theologists, each of whom regards his own particular fable as free from illusion. Theologism has, moreover, given a solidarity to the scattered rules of morality by connecting them with a common source; for each was made to partake of the strength of all the others by means of such a co-ordination, the supreme consistency of which was reached with monotheism.

In order to establish the fundamental conviction that it was always the Positive spirit which presided over the great constructions of Humanity, we will examine two of

them. We will consider, in the temporal order, the organisation of the Roman armies; and, in the spiritual order, the organisation of that masterpiece of human wisdom—the Catholic Church.

Moses, learned in the wisdom of the Egyptians, has transmitted to us in the Decalogue the elements of their great moral rules, which have thus furnished the basis of the morality of all the Christian peoples. A skilful engineer, M. Le Play, taking up the thesis of J. J. Rousseau, has asserted that all human morality is to be found contained therein. It would be absurd to believe that such remarkable rules, resulting from so complicated an analysis, could possibly have been discovered and formulated among a nomadic people still under the sway of fetishist conceptions, as the Israelites were. But more than that; it is absolutely impossible that even so eminent a man as Moses could have been able to discover the entire truth in the most complicated of all the sciences at a time when geometry, the starting-point of the whole scientific development needed as a preparation for the normal state, was not yet born—a science which, originating with Thales and Pythagoras, has only recently received its last finishing touches, after the labours of four-and-twenty centuries. In such a situation it was only by a supernatural revelation that moral perfection could have been directly attained. But it is clear, as befits absolute wills, that if it was God who really revealed to Moses the Ten Commandments which bear his name, he would have said to Moses at the outset all that there was to be said upon the subject, and so the Decalogue would have become the absolute rule. Now, St. Paul, in his Epistles, in which he has set forth all the essential principles of Catholicism, asserts that the law of Moses was not sufficient. "It brought nothing to its perfection," he says; and he proceeds to rectify and complete it by what he calls the ministry of the Gospel. The Romish priesthood, construing his dictum strictly, remedied the imperfection of God's commandments by

adding to them the commandments of the Church. It was, therefore, not the first revelation that was the best. St. Paul had proclaimed the superiority of the law of Jesus to the law of Moses, thus introducing, for the first time, the notion of progress in morality, which, up till then, had been looked upon as unchangeable. But St. Paul's law was, in its turn, found to be insufficient. We see, at the end of the Middle Ages, John of Parma, Joachim of Floris, and the followers of the Everlasting Gospel substituting, for the two primitive and imperfect laws of Moses and Jesus, a higher and definitive law—that of the Spirit. Their movement was a failure; but it is beyond doubt that it is to the Catholic priesthood that we owe the notion of progress, so characteristic of the influence of Humanity, according to which every new order results from the development of the order which preceded it.

In order to leave no room for misapprehension as to the drift of our criticism, and to preclude the possibility of our being confounded with those who, like Rousseau, go into ecstasies over the majesty of the Gospels and fulminate anathemas against the anti-Christian Papacy, let us clearly avow that what we find to praise in Catholicism is only the incomparable wisdom of its priesthood. So far from being inferior to their doctrine, it was nothing but the remarkable weakness of the doctrine that afforded scope for all the ridicule which has hampered the legitimate activity of the Church. Not the Gospels, but their aim, deserves to be called sublime. What we admire in the Catholic clergy—by which I mean the Romish clergy, for there is only one Catholicism—is that social devotedness which, for thirteen centuries, made the majority of its members so many citizens of the Earth. What they attempted for their time we Positivists propose to do for ours; in a far more complicated condition of affairs, it is true, but with more powerful resources; for we—thanks partly to our Catholic predecessors—shall have for our support, instead of a population of slaves,

a mass of working people, and women at once purer and more tender than those of the period of Rome's decline. The Christian doctrine is suitable only for a religion of monks. It can institute nothing; it cannot found a society; it sets small store by this earth of ours.

Common sense and Rome's antecedents happily overcame this tendency. In the Christian East, where the dogma got the upper hand, the epithet "Byzantine" recalls to us what was the outcome of the true Christian spirit in the field of intellect, of society, and of morality. The Church, no doubt, refused to acknowledge her filiation from pagan Rome, and always maintained the view that the precepts enjoining us to devote to our neighbours all the resources of our love and knowledge and power were established by the Gospel alone. But, in doing so, she was consecrating ingratitude, and a day was destined to come when she in her turn would be judged with like injustice.

Long before Catholicism, Greece, in her lofty flight of abstract speculation, had, apart from any question of their practical application, conceived theories about man and society, and had proposed to change them in order to improve them. Thence arose, among the populations impregnated by the Greek spirit, that special readiness to admit innovations without which Catholicism could not have arisen in the Roman Empire. It was Greece who had propagated by her poetic types (Prometheus and Hercules, Penelope and Antigone) the great moral notions arrived at by the antecedent theocracies—the Chaldean, and more particularly the Egyptian; and it was Rome who, having founded political unity, and thereby universalised Greek civilisation, had furnished applications of those moral notions for ages to come. If Catholicism has been great, it is because it has been Roman. Nowhere except in the Roman West was that mediæval civilisation developed whose characteristics were the abolition of serfdom, the emancipation of woman,

feudalism, and the separation of the Church from the State. The Papacy found ready to hand a high social organisation, instituted by a people which had conquered the world, produced many great things, and transmitted to her its admirable genius and its system of government. She became its heir, when, according to Dante's expression, Constantine made himself a Greek in order to yield Rome to the Pope. St. Paul is a Roman citizen, and his pontifical successors have continued the social work of Rome modified by religious action. What are the first Popes? Statesmen, defenders and protectors of the city, Romans. It was not, then, in accordance with, but in spite of, the Gospel that the Papacy consecrated, with so much wisdom, all the great creations of polytheism and fetishism which in evolution play the part of ballast in a ship. The Catholic priesthood's title to glory is that it did not hesitate to override Christian prejudices, based upon the Gospel, whenever there was a question of modifying a given condition of affairs for the good of Humanity.

It could not have acted in that way without having a deep and real knowledge of our nature. Man's brain is not so completely modified, men are not governed during so many generations, unless positive precepts respecting human nature have been formulated and taught; precepts gathered from observation of the actual consequences resulting from our different modes of action. The rules so discovered the priesthood declared to have been revealed by the Gospel—the vagueness of that work being such that anything we like can be found in it; but in reality they were not perceived there until after they had been discovered elsewhere. Take, for instance, the *Catechism of Montpellier*. We find in it a collection of valuable notions about human nature, obtained, for the most part, from the confessional. It condenses a wide range of observations into rules, full of wisdom, relating to various lines of conduct, in part with a view to right action, in part with a view to avoiding disagreeable consequences. It gives

the human reasons first of all and above all; then God is brought in, by way of making the Positive sanction complete.

In his treatise *Of the Pope* (1819), which is a masterpiece, and of which, as I do not belong to Catholicism, I can form an unbiassed judgment, De Maistre, referring to the confessional, has characterised that institution with his wonted accuracy and frankness:—

> On this as on all other points, what did Christianity do? It revealed man to man; took possession of his passions, of his eternal and universal beliefs; laid bare those ancient substructures; cleansed them of all impurity and all foreign admixture; honoured them with the divine stamp; and upon these natural foundations established its supernatural theory of penance and sacramental confession. What I say of penance I might say of all the other dogmas of Catholic Christianity; but one example is enough.

In fact, Roman Catholicism employed scientific processes, and taught precepts of Positive morality. If it dressed them up in theological formulas, it was not till after it had discovered the Positive interpretation of them. In its moral system, what is supernatural is not the precepts, but the source and the sanction assigned to them.

If, now, we analyse the rules according to which Rome gradually worked out the proper principles for organising her armies, we shall find that theology no longer reveals suitable means of winning battles, though it sanctions and co-ordinates the special commands of military activity. What a long series of observations, what subtle tracing of consequences, due partly to human nature, partly to the special situation of Rome, must have been required for the construction of the military code which led that great people to such an exalted destiny. Those rules were not inspired by the revelations of Mars or Jupiter—although it was then believed that they were—but based on human reasons, as we now do not

doubt. If it was imperative to march in good order, if the over-bold was punished in like manner with the coward, if the rules as to courage, caution, and endurance were so stringently enforced, it was because experience had taught that only such a discipline could assure to each the co-operation of all, and to Rome the empire of the world. Terrible examples were made of those whose zeal led them beyond the limits prescribed by the god-consecrated generals; even a victory acquired at the price of such individual daring was powerless to arrest the arm of military severity, so intently did the chiefs watch over the maintenance of law and discipline. And yet divine intervention had to be called in. There are times when the reasons for acting are not communicable; when it is necessary, for instance, to decide whether to move to the right or to the left, or at what instant to give battle. As the problem is often difficult and complicated, and the general cannot always, unless he be a Cæsar, be quite sure as to the grounds of his action, the decision in such cases has to be made by mere military intuition, or what artisans call the "knack of the trade." Under such circumstances, in order to justify his choice and dispense with explanation, the general appealed to the god by consulting the sacred chickens. The elasticity of the process enabled him to justify whatever he wanted to do, and, at the same time, strengthened the veneration of the soldiers for their commander. To be sure, as the theological spirit cannot be relative without becoming arbitrary, the plan must have had its drawbacks; and there came a time, too, when these practices were regarded as superstitions, and when many of the superior minds thought, like Flaminius, that no omens were acceptable but those which were useful to the welfare of the Republic. But when belief in these religious practices died away among the soldiers themselves, the sacred chickens were relegated to limbo. They are no longer consulted before giving battle; and, if a general does not communicate his reasons, everybody knows that

neither Mars nor any other god will ensure him success, but that he must trust to positive views based on a practical and complete analysis of the situation and of his resources.

In fact, all the rules suited to the management of an army, like those suited to the organisation of Catholicism, were discovered by observation—or, rather, by a combination, more or less complicated, of inductions and deductions; partly by consideration of the consequences actually resulting from our various modes of action, partly by inferences from the knowledge of our situation previously acquired.

In order to substantiate this view, we must examine how, under the double impulsion of the Positive spirit—as yet empirical—and the fictions of theology, the general rules of morality were gradually formed.

CHAPTER III.

THE GENERAL RULES OF MORALITY WERE EVOLVED SPONTANEOUSLY, BY PROCESSES THAT WERE POSITIVE, THOUGH EMPIRICAL

The art of morals was at first empirical. Man, at the outset, owing to the lack of special organs of discipline, knows nothing of self-restraint. The formation of capital gives rise to such organs in the persons of old men, of women, and especially of the theocratic caste, which, after the difficult labour of centuries, discovers the rules of morality and, thanks to the triple support of the said special organs, causes such rules to prevail in spite of man's dominant instincts. Moses is the type of this evolution. Importance of moral statistics.

Humanity has arrived at the conception of a science of morals, and can now mark out the foundations of it as the outcome of a more or less empirical, spontaneous evolution. We are now going to trace that gradual development, no longer dealing with special points, but with the more general rules which have been deduced, by the genius of priests, poets, and philosophers, from long and profound observation of human nature.

Man, at the outset of his career, has no rule but the whim of the moment, which entirely masters him; he eats when he feels hungry, drinks when he feels thirsty, sleeps when he feels drowsy. He acts under the simple impulsion of his desires, without any other check than what the exigencies of his situation impose upon him. Human society is then hardly superior to societies of animals, of which that is the normal state. In this initial period of Humanity, moral precepts are not to be looked for; man has not yet learned to know himself; he has neither a regular plan of conduct, nor fixity of habit, nor system of reacting upon himself. There still exist on the earth

peoples who manifest traces of this stage; and the child always spontaneously reproduces it. It is in this phase of his existence that man is truly king-like and god-like; he smashes his plate because such is his good pleasure; he acknowledges neither duty nor restraint; he refers everything to his imperious inclinations; he is the only person in the world.

This condition of the human race lasted for long ages. At the end of a period of time varying with their situation and their antecedents we see societies developing, and covering a wider area; we see languages formed and wealth accumulated; and it is then that certain empirical rules arise spontaneously. Capital—a word admirably adapted to express, in the sense of eminence, instruments in general, since it led to a growing division of material labour, and finally to the separation of the two powers—has for its chief function to create leisure, to allow of the speculative life, and, by consequence, of the development of civilisation, which is its fundamental product. When, to appease his hunger, man is no longer obliged to consider how to procure his bread from day to day; when a little money suffices to provide him with food that others have produced; then it becomes possible to maintain some few who spontaneously devote themselves to contemplation and meditation. It was thus that Humanity established old men, and gave to woman her position. These are the two classes who, naturally led to reflect upon moral facts, gathered and transmitted the first series of moral ideas.

But the starting-point of the construction of human morality—namely, the establishment of abstract formulas—was firmly secured when capital, accumulated in sufficient quantity, furnished leisure to the governing class—that is to say, to the higher military grades—and allowed a certain number of individuals to study the processes of government without any intention of immediately applying them to practice. The caste which is to furnish the first

co-ordination of morality then makes its appearance on the earth, and, with the theocratic priesthood, a new phase of life commences for Humanity. The priests who thus instituted all the various social aggregates were not lazy parasites, but social functionaries who, placed at the head of governments at once temporal and spiritual, made the rules, suitable for the guidance of their societies, the constant object of their meditations. It was under these favourable conditions that powerful geniuses formulated, tersely and clearly, in accordance with prior testimonies and their own observations, abstract moral maxims which, thanks to the sacerdotal preponderance of one out of the immense variety of languages which characterised the earlier ages of our race, were capable of being popularised.

These moral adages or formulas constitute discoveries of incomparable value. They were formed very slowly and it was very difficult to establish them, for they imply an effort of abstraction all the more remarkable as it was accomplished in the most complicated of all subjects, and without that invaluable logical preparation which could be furnished only by the study of the various abstract sciences; sciences whose full development was destined necessarily to follow, not precede, the theocratic ages. The problem, in fact, was this: Given the immense variety of human actions, to find in them a fundamental common attribute, so as to discover some stable relation to each distinct group of human relations. The theocrats had, in the midst of acts inevitably prompted by selfishness, to consider what evil might be prevented, and what good could be obtained, by the application of precepts thus formulated. Remembering what little pleasure man finds in meditation, we can understand what efforts they must have made in order to judge of propensities, not by the emotions they evoke, but by their social consequences. It was only after an innumerable multitude of observations and centuries of effort that they perceived the utility, both for the individual and society,

of conquering natural inclinations, the value of cleanliness, the necessity of not stealing, of truthfulness. It was thus that the theocrats arrived at such formulas as these : *Thou shalt not kill ; thou shalt not steal ; thou shalt not commit adultery ; never do to anyone what thou wouldst not be willing that he should do to thee.*

These famous formulas are the mark of a highly developed society. Not only was it impossible to discipline human nature before its spontaneous manifestations had been carefully noted, but it was necessary to train it to habits opposed to its dominant impulses. The maxim, *Thou shalt honour thy father and mother*, was formulated for a race whose primeval practice was not to honour its parents, but to eat them when it was hungry. The rule, *Thou shalt not steal*, is opposed to the spontaneous tendency of man to take possession of whatever excites his desire—a tendency which is very perceptible in children and among primitive populations. Man, like the animals, is a born thief. It is evidence of extraordinary progress for a hungry man to be able to pass a pastrycook's shop without going in to carry off some of the cakes. A child would not have so much hesitation in the matter, for he does not perceive the consequences of his action ; he has no prejudices. That two millions of Parisians should wait for the dinner-hour in order to satisfy their hunger ; that in the severe winter of 1794 the Paris workmen, though armed and all-powerful, should have accepted the Civic Lent, and allowed themselves to die of hunger by the thousand for the welfare of their country—an heroic example followed by their successors during the siege of Paris of 1870—all that is an astonishing result of the power of Humanity. However little attention we may be disposed to give the subject, we cannot fail to recognise what a prodigious succession of power, perseverance, and genius was needed to instil these moral formulas into men's brains, and to obtain their submission to them.

But what properties of these formulas allowed of such

results being attained? By marking out with precision the end aimed at, they give to everyone the means of reacting upon himself and others, and lay the foundation of conscience and public opinion. The first use of the formulation is to constitute the moral capital of Humanity, and thus ensure continuity; to furnish the guidance which human nature requires for its government. Announcing great things in a few words, in order that they may be easily remembered, it renders transmissible the results of the experience of the past, and enables all men to participate freely in that moral inheritance. The second advantage is that it furnishes a basis for conscience; it enables man to react upon himself and to discipline himself, while reconciling subordination with dignity; for, when he voluntarily submits to moral precepts, he ceases to be the slave of man. It forms a motive for self-conquest and self-improvement. The remembrance of the formula acts as a counterpoise to the blind impulse which urges us to satisfy our desires. Thanks to the purchase it gives us, the reaction, instead of immediately following the impulse, forestalls it through being foreseen.

Finally, the formula is of incomparable utility in the relations of men with each other, and in the conflicts to which those relations give rise. When moral principles are accepted by all in the same sense, they constitute a common standing-ground, a fixed starting-point for discussion and mutual action. It is thus that every moral rule benefits the weak by protecting them against the violence of the strong, whose conduct it serves to test, to judge, and to rectify. Such is its power—and the importance of those maxims was formerly so vividly felt that they were ascribed to gods—that a single being can condense all wills into his own by invoking the common formula in order to react against all those who infringe it. That is the most valuable consequence of the formulation; since, by securing the concurrence of wills, it forms the basis of public opinion, the true queen of the world, the most formidable

of all social powers, for against it the most solid combinations are irretrievably shattered. This threefold utility of moral formulas may be summed up in the growing substitution of moral ascendency for material force.

Those grand moral rules which still govern the Western world are the most important of the legacies left by the Egyptian theocracy, which has exercised such great influence over civilisation. It was from it that the Jewish theocracy borrowed the formulas of the Decalogue, which Catholicism incorporated into its moral system. It was on good grounds, therefore, that Auguste Comte suggested, as a permanent duty, that of commemorating publicly the services rendered by that small number of eminent minds, without whom the human race would never have raised itself much above the level of the societies of great apes. History has not preserved to us the names of the priests of Memphis or Thebes who discovered those various formulas ; and, for that reason, Auguste Comte had to represent, in the *Positivist Calendar*, that all-important phase of civilisation by the best-known type of the theocrats, Moses. That is the name which must sum up for us this fundamental evolution of morality ; only we must never forget that, in this case as in others, the individual was merely the servant of Humanity, and that it was she alone who created, and has gradually improved, those moral rules, for them to be employed in her service.

There is a work of great utility which might be undertaken in connection with this subject—namely, to compile the statistics of moral rules in various countries, with their respective differences and shades of variance ; to write the history of their slow and gradual evolution, and of the ways in which they sprung up among the different peoples. We should thus catch, as it were, in action, the positive or scientific processes of investigation by which Humanity gradually constructed, under the provisional protection of theologism, the general precepts of common wisdom suitable for the guidance of the nature of man.

CHAPTER IV.

OF THEOLOGICAL MORALITY

Theological morality has been useful. For the stability of moral rules a Great Being is indispensable. and, at the outset, such a being could not be other than imaginary. St. Paul and Mohammed were sincere. They were not able to analyse their mental operations, and therefore referred them to God. This fiction was inevitable. The same necessity inspired the anterior creation of polytheism. In theology, fictitious beings sanction moral rules—at first on earth, then in heaven. Roman Catholicism was the highest manifestation of theological morality; and to acknowledge the fact is a sign of full emancipation. Theological morality has been a means of safeguarding moral progress.

THEOLOGICAL morality, as we have said, had no reality other than that given to it by the positive observations and relations which it incorporated into its systems, and was never able to demonstrate any real and certain intervention of revelation. Having thus assigned to the Positive spirit its share in those discoveries, we must now dwell more particularly on the conditions which necessitated a theological system of morals—that is to say, a doctrine which regards moral phenomena as the result of continuous supernatural intervention.

In order that moral formulas may fulfil, for man and society, the whole of the conditions of action and reaction above enunciated, they must be stable—that is to say, permanent and homogeneous. If the rules were susceptible of too frequent modifications, it is clear that the morality answering to them would be tainted with doubtfulness, and become powerless to restrain energetic passions that are always at work. It is likewise essential that those rules should not be a discordant jumble, but should support one another, and conduce towards one and the same end.

Now, these two conditions make it necessary that morality should have its source in a superior authority ; otherwise there could be no duties. The formula would not meet with general acceptance if it emanated from an individual similar to other individuals ; for he who had made it might claim for himself the right to modify it, or to unmake it, as he pleased. Moreover, everybody else would be ready to claim for himself the same privilege ; and such a claim would appear plausible, for, in view of the complexity of social arrangements, there is no good without its drawbacks, and no evil without its advantages ; and arguments might be urged in favour of almost any change. In order, therefore, that the rules may be ratified by those who have to submit to them, as well as by the framers of them, it is not enough to say that they were discovered by Mr. So-and-So. They must, in the first place, be believed to have emanated from a superior power—anterior to the individual—who ordains, consecrates, and sanctions them. It is also needful that the successive steps of the doctrine should be joined together in such a way that each leads up to the one that follows it, and is in turn strengthened by it, and that the lives of individuals should not be out of unison with that of the Great Being who controls them.

Where, at the outset, were they to find this supreme power, necessary for the establishing of morality? We know, through Auguste Comte, that the co-ordination and consecration of morality do not acquire the plenitude and stability of which they are capable until our lives, and the fixed external order that rules us, are brought into relation with Humanity. It was not till comparatively recent times that abstract science revealed in her the general and real source and destination to which all affections, all ideas, and all efforts, ought to be referred. But, in the beginning, scientific theories, though always real, could not attain to universality of view ; and the scientific spirit, at work in scattered areas, lacked

generality in its principles and generosity in its applications. Hence the supreme existence, as yet insufficiently defined in outline, could neither be discovered nor known. But, while the real being remains still unknown, the heart ceases not to adore, or to dread, a power whose existence is attested by so many proofs, and whom reason regards as indispensable to the moral constitution of the human race. The Supreme Being was represented by imaginary beings —fetishes or gods—whose wills were regarded as establishing the principles of morality. As the formulated rules lacked the support of demonstration, precepts defended by merely human reasons would not have been accepted. Those supernatural wills were conceived as being absolute, and the rules were necessarily believed to have been framed by a Supreme Being whose irresistible power rendered altogether useless the endless discussions that must have arisen out of the contradictions which are inevitable in every empirical code of morals. Consequently, moral perfection was added to the attributes of the omnipotent Godhead. By this arbitrary method of smoothing over difficulties, imperfections were represented as being incompatible with the nature of the Supreme Being, and became merely apparent contradictions due to our mental inferiority—mysteries, whose meaning would some day be clearly revealed to the elect. Still, it was only by the creation of a single god that the theological spirit, having acquired its full generality, was able to satisfy these systematic requirements. Thenceforward, all rules concerning man and the world are conceived as coming from one, for one, and by one and the same god. The theological spirit furnished, therefore, the only procedure capable of co-ordinating and prescribing a collection of duties that were, in their spontaneous origin, positive but empirical. That is why, in spite of its provisional character, it has remained without a rival until the advent of Positivism.

This mode of judging the theological spirit takes us a

long way from Voltaire's unjust and irrational criticisms of Catholicism and Islam. Did St. Paul and Mohammed conceal the truth, or did they believe in the reality of the revelations whose results they set forth? For my part, I cannot suppose that those religious founders were otherwise than sincere. The alternative supposition might be true in the case of ministers of a decaying religion, but not so at its outset; and if we know beyond a doubt, since they took the trouble to tell us, that Cæsar and Frederick did not believe in God, so, on the other hand, the founders and first apostles of every great religious construction must assuredly have been animated by faith. In our view, St. Paul and Mohammed were of necessity men of their own times; they were sincerely convinced of the reality of divine intervention. Science at that time had nothing to offer but concrete facts. St. Paul and Mohammed could think and theorise only through the intermediary of the theological spirit, which, being naturally synthetic, alone could furnish them with the general methods of reasoning suitable for conceiving and introducing the comprehensive reforms they had in view. But, if their sincerity is to us unquestionable, we deem it to be equally incontestable that their action upon their contemporaries and succeeding generations was so successful only because they held, on the subject of human nature, positive notions, which—need we say it?—are for ever beyond the reach of a chimerical Divinity.

Belief in revelation, then, was inevitable; the brain-work which precedes or accompanies discovery, especially in relation to such grave and complicated questions as those arising out of morals and politics, acquires such an intensity that, in the solitary seclusion needed for such lofty meditations, in the midst of such a world of thoughts and feelings, hallucinations can hardly be avoided. At such moments superior minds are so carried away by exaltation, the visual and auditory impressions become so vivid, that they are confounded with the objects themselves;

imagination takes body, becomes a reality, and the thinker believes in the real presence of the superior being who is the overmastering object of his faith. He is then on the verge of madness, and reason may be overturned; but, when the exaltation passes off without having injured the fabric of the brain, convictions issue from such a crisis confirmed and irrevocable. St. Paul and Mohammed experienced these hallucinations; but, not being acquainted with the positive theory of them, they explained their raptures by the intervention of a God who thus revealed to them his designs.

This God to whom they attributed the result of their meditations was none other than St. Paul and Mohammed under the influence of a vivid, passing, moral excitement. We know that it was so, since we have nowadays everywhere replaced the notion of supernatural will by that of positive law.

This theological conception was all the more inevitable in that, the further back we go towards the first ages of our race, the more we find men exhibiting a certain mental and moral equality. Inequalities of mind and of sociability have grown considerably with the lapse of centuries. The vast conceptions which so prodigiously illumined the brain of a St. Paul, or a Mohammed, made those great men, as it were, almost strangers to themselves. They were so superior to the ordinary notions of the times, so far transcended them, that, in the opinion of their contemporaries, such singularity could be explained only by the theory of a divine origin. How, in fact, could the latter have comprehended the positive reasons of those religious transformations when, in the absence of a preliminary analysis—at that time impossible—demonstration was beyond the powers even of their own authors.

Christians who boast, very wrongly, that they alone have, and have had, a complete and perfect system of morality, are too prone to forget that they are not the first comers; before them there were polytheists, of whose

labours they have been the ungrateful heirs. The theocratic organisation had reared the fundamental morality of Humanity on the bases laid by fetishism, which is the original religion of the human race. Then progressive or Græco-Roman polytheism had improved upon that morality, instituted abstract science, and founded the political unity of the West.

With as much sincerity, and on as good social grounds as their Catholic successors, the polytheists had faith in their own deities. When St. Augustine wrote *The City of God* he was able, at small cost, to be very witty, and to make fun of the religion of his forefathers. He could scoff at their superstitious confidence in the protection of the geese of the Capitol, notwithstanding their powerlessness against the Barbarians; or in the door-gods, who were useless even to save the expense of a porter. In spite, however, of the silly conceit of the doctors of Catholicism, it is not to be doubted that for many centuries the Romans were the most pious people on earth; that it was their firm conviction that success in battle, and the empire of the world, depended on the will of the gods. The great Cæsar, who did not share that belief, did not disdain to write a treatise on the law relating to Augurs, and to seek the office of Grand Pontiff of Vesta; and he would have been very careful not to parade his unbelief before his legions. He treated their belief with respect, without himself sharing it. The Consul Claudius Pulcher, a Voltairian of his time, had felt the ill effects of being a sceptic, for, by his impiety, he lost the great naval battle of Drepanum. Having thought proper to order the sacred chickens to be thrown into the sea with the view of compelling them at least to drink, as they refused to eat, he weakened the courage of his men, who regarded themselves as abandoned by their gods whom he had thus outraged. The Romans, in fact, were convinced that what contributed most to the safety and power of Rome was not the wisdom and capacity of their generals,

but their scrupulous and exemplary submission to the gods.

St. Augustine's gibes were at once unjust and irrational. Too much influenced in his estimate of the past by the revolutionary spirit, and considering the value of the doctrine alone in a civilisation where everything had been dominated by the noblest social activity, he fulfilled, with reference to polytheism, the *rôle* which Voltaire played later towards Catholicism. That is the Nemesis of the critical spirit : we fail to receive, at our children's hands, the respect we forbore to pay to our own forefathers. The jests of St. Augustine and Voltaire were successful because the religions at which they scoffed were already outworn. Ridicule, it is said, kills. Yes ; but it is only the dying that it kills—it has no effect on the living. We may confidently affirm, for instance, that ridicule will never hinder the progress of science. When it sticks, it is a sure sign of approaching death.

Those same superior wills which appeared to prescribe the rules of morality, also dictated their sanction in the shape of rewards and punishments—a sanction which every divinely constituted society supposes to be as certain and irresistible as fate. It is the god who commands ; it is the god who punishes. While man is still an utter slave to his own personal interests, the only obstacle to their gratification with which he has to reckon is the theological check, which drives him to virtue by terror ; a method of procedure renewed in recent times by Robespierre. Men, lacking the necessary power, call on the gods to punish, during this life and in the persons of their descendants, bad sons, traitors, and rebels who have violated the prescriptions of the divinity.

The most ancient religious legislators of Humanity—Manu, Moses, Confucius—confine reward and punishment to this earth ; the sanction is everywhere direct, and extends from father to children, from prince to subjects. Such a sanction, though—being bound up with theological dogma

—it is always precarious, is yet effectual when thorough faith prevails everywhere. We observed that the confidence which the gods inspired during the period of military civilisation contributed to the winning of victories by exciting enthusiasm in the souls of the soldiers, and an absolute respect for their chiefs, who were regarded by them as the interpreters and agents of the divinity. Prediction, in those days, had a way of fulfilling itself. If the general gave battle before consulting the sacred chickens, defeat was regarded as the consequence of his failure in reverence for the gods.

Although the purely earthly sanction is acceptable so long as faith continues unflagging, it becomes insufficient as soon as beliefs are shaken by the growing divergence between facts and the divine rules. "If you do good," said the law, "your life will be happy and long, and God will bless your posterity to the third generation." But very often, on the contrary, to the no small scandal of human reason, sinners were seen to be exalted, the good persecuted, the blessings and misfortunes of life distributed blindly, irrespective of deserts. In order to strengthen the just and control the wicked, something had to be sought for different from this purely earthly sanction, which sad experience showed to be insufficient and disappointing in its working. The sanction was removed from earth and transferred to heaven, to have effect in an imaginary and eternal future life. Thenceforward, the law is an emanation from a Supreme and Infallible Being, with whom there is no arguing, who himself watches over the observance of his commands, and sanctions them by ordinances as unchangeable and irresistible as fate : either here or in another life, man will be inevitably, and for ever, rewarded or punished. Whether this final state be the Buddhist Nirvana, the bodily resurrection of the Jews, or the abstract immortality of the Greeks, this arrangement permits man to cherish the illusion that everyone will some day obtain in person the justice he has deserved.

Wisely, indeed, was the theological sanction used by the various priesthoods; but the most astonishing *régime* it has ever consecrated, that which has produced the most decisive results, is Catholicism. By combining the immortality of the soul with the resurrection of the body, the future life could be systematised in such a way as to guarantee the independence of the Romish priesthood, and, as a consequence, the separation of the two powers, which, until then, had been united in the hands of the State. Speaking in the name of a divinity whose decrees always needed to be surmised or interpreted, the priest threatened the powerful with hell, or held out to them the hope of heaven; but to these supernatural warnings he added a host of human reasons, and it was these which gave to Catholicism its strength. St. Paul stated the problem of human nature, and its mental and moral conditions were studied and analysed with incomparable wisdom by the priesthood which he instituted. The education of the priesthood, severe and systematic, tended to limit the vague and arbitrary elements in its dogma. The Catholic system leaves nothing undetermined; from the most commonplace to the most exalted matters everything is in it provided for, and combined in such a way as to guide man from birth to death, and to attach him irrevocably, notwithstanding passing variations, to the process that has formed him. The fact that this system has lasted for so many centuries bears witness to the intrinsic value of this masterpiece of the human mind. This organisation of a spiritual power independent of the temporal power, which it was its mission to enlighten, to regulate, and to consecrate, was the first systematic attempt to reconcile religious liberty with civic dependence.

It behoves us, children of Humanity, in every attempt at estimating the past, to rise superior to the feelings evoked by the controversies of the present. This bold project of basing the distinction of the two powers respectively upon theology and war miscarried, it is true,

in the end ; but it brought to light the conditions which are necessary for the stability of that separation which now forms the foundation of the republican *régime*. Thanks to that first essay, we have been led to recognise that the separation of State and Church can be durable only when it is instituted between an industrial society and a scientific priesthood. It cannot be disputed that, in spite of the personal virtues of a great many of its chiefs, the Catholic clergy stooped to authorise and justify the acts—however wicked—of all those who associated themselves with its work, especially when such personages were powerful. But we must not forget that, in trying to infuse relativity into a theological morality which is now exhausted, this priesthood has enabled us the better to understand that there are no absolute rules, and that it is under the exclusive guidance of the scientific spirit that we must search for notions that are at once inflexible in principle, yet modifiable, without capriciousness, in their application. Finally, it would be unjust merely to see in its work a sort of theological deposit which has been instrumental in preserving the many precious results which will remain for all time the title to glory of mediæval Catholicism. As emancipated citizens let us respect and admire those fine priestly characters who knew how to bridle selfishness, to give scope to altruism, and to make, out of barbarous races and a people demoralised by the absence of any social aim, honest men, devoted to and worthy of modern liberty.

Such has been, in the moral moulding of Humanity, the part played by theologism. It discovered nothing, but it incorporated into itself, by a provisional co-ordination and sanction, the special and empirical discoveries of the positive spirit. It thus gave the various elements of scientific morality time to develop and accumulate, until the day when Auguste Comte grasped, amid their immense variety, the principle of their definitive systematisation.

CHAPTER V.

OF METAPHYSICAL OR DEMOCRATIC MORALITY

The steady decline of theological morality, shown by the rise of the Reformers, and of the Freethinkers—of whom the Templars were the forerunners—necessitated a critical operation, of which Metaphysics was the organ. The metaphysical system of morality has conscience for its principle, and rights for its sanction. This democratic doctrine, the dangers of which are exemplified in the life of Rousseau, is not only false, but inconsistent and anarchical —*false*, for conscience is the result of education, not its guide; *inconsistent*, for, though it rejects the consequences of theology, it incorporates all its essential doctrines; and *anarchical*, for the absence of government is its normal result. The growing supremacy of Science must in the end eliminate the metaphysical treatment of morals.

The human race could not remain for ever under the guidance of a morality resting upon revelation. The value of a theological moral system depends on the worth of the priesthood. So long as the latter was guided by positive reasons in dealing with political and moral questions, it could be, and had necessarily to be, the director of men; but, when it lost touch of Science, there was an end to its supremacy. The resources of a purely theological doctrine are confined to mere fictions and an increasingly powerless empiricism; and, when this is discovered, its competence and its authority begin to be discussed, and it ceases to govern.

When the Catholic Church became incapable of maintaining its lead of the intellectual and moral movement, it lost its hold over one-half of the inhabitants of the West, who were carried away by the revolutionary current of which the Reformation was one of the secondary products. Now, Catholics and Protestants are very much alike—there is no

difference between them visible to the naked eye. The conduct of Protestants, generally speaking, is not worse than that of Catholics; and, like the latter, they have counted in their ranks superior men in every profession—moralists, poets, philosophers, scholars, and statesmen. Catholics had maintained that there was no morality outside their own system, and that its efficacy arose solely from the immutability which characterises every divine institution. But, in spite of this claim, experience—which is decisive—showed that it was possible to be an honest man and a great citizen, without possessing any very rigid theological convictions. A breach was thus made in the absolute mode of regarding religion. Now, the existence of God not being demonstrable, when faith is shaken there is nothing more to be done, and his elimination then became merely a question of time. The result, in fact, was that more powerful minds than the Protestant reformers came forward, who, in spite of dangers and insults, perceived that, if the theological absolute had, in several instances, been got rid of without incurring serious moral disadvantages, it might, without further inconvenience, be banished altogether. That is what happened as the sequel of the comparisons and reflections which resulted from the contacts between believers in dissimilar creeds.

The social reaction of such contacts accounts for an historical phenomenon which, in view of its precocity, would remain inexplicable if we shared the opinion of those who attribute to Protestantism the initiative of a reform of which it was only the effect—I refer to the mental emancipation of the Templars. Auguste Comte remarked that from the contact of the two antagonistic religions sprang the first infidels; and it is with good reason that, in his romance of *Ivanhoe*, that wonderful genius Walter Scott makes an atheist of the Templar Brian de Bois-Guilbert, who is, indeed, the only life-like character in the story. In the struggles which, from the seventh till the sixteenth century, led to more frequent intercourse between the

Christians and the Mussulmans, the most eminent men of the West, who, from the theological point of view, regarded the Saracens as so many pagans doomed to eternal damnation, esteemed them, from the human point of view, as noble and generous adversaries, skilful warriors, refined artists, daring and profound scholars, and statesmen animated by constant social devotedness.

Two irreconcilable beliefs being thus capable of producing such striking personalities, both sides began to ask which was the better religion, and even, at last, whether either of them was necessary. From these circumstances were born, in succession, toleration, deism, and atheism. Jesus Christ and Mahomet were put in the same basket. In the best minds no distinction was made between Mussulmans and Christians ; and in both camps was seen the emergence of that astonishing class of leaders who aspired, irrespectively of God or King, to the government of the Earth.

It was thenceforward necessary to look outside of these two religions for the solution of the problem of the unity of the human race ; for, whilst they both spoke in the name of a single God, they were alike incapable of achieving supremacy, and of enduring for ever. It was all the more imperative that a substitute for Catholicism should be found, in that, by reason of the growing deficiencies of the priesthood, the disturbance was spreading from theological faith to moral truths themselves; so that, for the preservation of the latter, there was needed a new coordination and a new sanction. And not only was Catholicism thus going to pieces of itself, but the new activity of industry, and the development of the positive spirit, were helping on the dissolution. As the positive spirit is progressive, whilst the theological spirit is stationary, the discrepancies between the general doctrine, which kept its absolute character, and special inquiries, which were scientific, went on increasing. It is evident that, in such a state of affairs, the human mind would not continue to

believe in the reality and usefulness of the old spiritual guidance ; also that the development of the positive spirit would necessarily reach its culmination, and that it would at last become capable of taking everywhere the place of theology by means of a positive system of morals, more complete, and more rigorously followed, than the old one.

But, so long as the positive spirit did not attain to the generality which alone could enable it to found the Science of Society, the working-out of this new moral legislation, which was going to render theological commands useless, had to remain an unperceived movement. On the other hand, theology, by its shackles, threatened still further to retard this attainment of generality, for which many materials and methodical views were still lacking. Consequently there was need for a certain preliminary work of demolition. Now, the scientific spirit, which proceeds only by demonstrable assertions and continual substitutions, was not, by itself, in a position to do this work. It was not yet sufficiently prepared to add to its mathematical and astronomical conquests the fields of social and moral phenomena ; and, further, the critical spirit, in which it is weak, though of secondary value, is indispensable to every work of destruction. A transitional doctrine, therefore, was what now suited the needs of the situation.

This doctrine had, under the impulsion of science, already made its appearance amidst the vicissitudes which, in the past, had marked the development of the human mind. Metaphysics had done duty as the instrument of the Greek theorists who, from Thales to Aristotle, had taken away from the gods the explanation of the phenomena of celestial and terrestrial physics. The Aristotelians of the Middle Ages restored it again to honour, as a logical process ; and, subsequently, with an increasing energy, the various Protestant reformers, from Luther to Socinus, extended its sway to morality itself. Ethical notions of all sorts, metaphysically conceived, were systematised in the seventeenth century by Hobbes and

Spinoza, the most eminent of the fathers of the Church of Democracy. In this way arose the metaphysical system of morality, which served as an instrument of pure destruction, by drawing negative and revolutionary conclusions from the organic emancipation due to the gradual development of the positive spirit.

The metaphysical ethic conceives moral phenomena as the effects, otherwise incomprehensible, of an abstract entity possessed by every man—*i.e.*, conscience; which, in its turn, is considered as the direct organ of a higher will—Nature. According to this doctrine, it is conscience which prompts, explains, and justifies all the acts of the individual. In the most complicated as well as in the simplest questions, it teaches us, by inspiration and without previous inquiry or analysis, what ought to be our conduct, what prejudices and what habits ought to prevail. In order to become perfect, all that man need do is to obey his conscience, and act, under all circumstances, and wherever he may be, so that his conduct may agree with what his interest, properly understood, prescribes. All the conditions necessary for individual independence were formulated in the theory of rights, anterior and superior to all else, inalienable and imprescriptible.

Such was the conception which made up for the evident theoretical incompetence of the public, and enabled it to struggle against abuses which had become unbearable. The struggle was maintained all the more easily that, judging the social situation which then existed by means of a direct comparison with an imaginary primitive condition called a state of nature, the public was able to shake itself free from all tradition, the appeal to which had furnished the most powerful argument in favour of the retention of an oppressive system. If theological morality and royal authority command us to perform acts which are repugnant to our feelings or our reason, we must appeal to our rights, and obey only our consciences. The readiness and the convenience of this procedure showed its value as

an instrument of combat and demolition; and, in this respect, it served its turn so well that the various nations of the West adopted and employed it.

In itself this doctrine is childish, and incapable of furnishing any real solutions. It could not suffice for all time; its capricious nature allowed of theology being overthrown only at the expense of the establishment of anarchy; while it was so inconsistent as to be tainted with all the incongruities of theology. Had it been destined to endure, it would have been worse than Catholicism. J. J. Rousseau, the best known of the popularisers of the revolutionary doctrine, affords an example of the dangers of this conception of human nature. In the *Profession of Faith of a Savoyard Vicar* he thus sets forth its principle, with all the contradictions which beset it:—

> Conscience! Conscience! divine instinct, immortal and heavenly voice; sure guide of an ignorant and narrow-minded, but intelligent and free, being; infallible judge of good and evil, who renderest man like unto God! It is thou to whom the excellence of his nature, and the morality of his conduct, are due. Without thee I am conscious of nothing within me that can elevate me above the brutes, except the sad privilege of wandering from error to error by the aid of an understanding without rule, and a judgment without principle.

Under this inspiration he sent his five children to the Foundling Hospital, and traduced the greatest men of his time, who had been his friends and benefactors. He was, on the whole, a very bad character, and carried his principles into practice.

If everything we ought to think and do were inspired by conscience, there would be nobody anywhere but honest people; and, if they were not honest, it would not be their fault. But this is not the case. Conscience is not absolute, but is relative to times and places. There is nothing arbitrary in it. At the outset it is quite a natural action for man to eat his fellows, roasted, or even raw. There is no symptom as yet of his having the notion either of justice or injustice.

He has wants which he satisfies, if need be, at the expense of his neighbours, and with a tranquillity of conscience which revolts the consciences of his posterity. But, when Paris was besieged and starving, we did not eat our fellow-citizens; we did not even dream of such a thing. In the West, so intense is the repugnance to such an idea that, from being merely moral, it has become downright physiological, and our very stomachs would turn at such a nutriment.

What, then, is conscience? As a complex result of cerebral activity modified by civilisation, conscience stands for the sum-total of the moral prejudices or dispositions that have become habitual; and, being a product of Humanity, it varies in accordance with the very laws of Humanity's evolution. Consequently, so far from being the inspirer of our conduct, and our educator-in-chief, conscience has to be built up; and the grand aim of education is to develop it. The main duty of the father and mother is to impress the rules of morality on the child under the form of primordial and predominating habits; so that, whenever it violates one of such habits, it may experience a feeling of remorse. It is by the number of the prejudices which guide them that we judge of the moral elevation of individuals and of their social worth; for the more civilised man becomes, the more prejudices he acquires. The negro has scarcely any; the wild beast has none at all. By prejudices are here to be understood habits susceptible of demonstrative proof; that is to say, there are prejudices and prejudices. It is, for instance, a progressist prejudice not to eat the flesh of a man, a horse, or a dog; on the other hand, it is a retrograde prejudice to think that morality depends on theological belief, or that civic ceremonies ought to be performed under theological auspices. To distinguish the one sort of prejudices from the other is the office of moral science, and to give progressist prejudices the upper hand is the office of education.

Metaphysical morality is neither more nor less than a debased stage of theology, which it ruins by the very fact

of increasing its inconsistency. It transfers from the Pope to each conscience the privileges of revelation and infallibility, thus opposing individual authority to the Catholic institution of the Papacy, which had been the interpreter of a superior will, personal in theory, but collective and general in point of fact. Under theology, God's representative alone had rights, the supernatural origin of which released him from the claims of both affection and reason. This monopoly the metaphysical ethic extended to everyone. Thanks to those rights and privileges, each individual, being transformed into a pope-king, became—without having learned anything—competent to deal with every subject, and the equal of all other men. Every Catholic had a guardian angel, who, by a private revelation, impelled him towards good and turned him away from evil. The metaphysical ethic retains the function; but so far spiritualises the organ as to transform it into an entity—conscience. This latter being in direct connection with the divinity, any sacerdotal hierarchy becomes useless; and, although this metaphysic continues to speak in the name of God, and, in principle, suppresses the priesthood which mitigated its moral and social dangers, it nevertheless retains State religions, whose ministers it enslaves. They had previously been its judges; but now, in exchange for their daily bread, they become its agents. It upholds the belief in a supernatural future life, because it is not worth while doing one's duty if there is nothing to be gained by it. But, while retaining future rewards, it suppresses future punishments—an arrangement which is, no doubt, very pleasant for people who do not wish to die. Like theology, it teaches that man, developed by civilisation, is a degenerate being, fallen from a primitive state of nature (the substitute for an earthly paradise), in which all men were free and equal. Perfection would consist in returning to that state. In the absence of a few impostors, who, in that state of nature, took the place of the Tempter—the serpent—superstition, corruption, and evil would

never have come into the world. From these few doctrines all the rest may be judged. Metaphysical or democratic morality is a truly childish caricature of theological morality.

The metaphysical solution, by its inability to supply guidance, is fraught with great dangers now that it is no longer kept in subordination to the social enthusiasm which gave rise to the French Revolution. By allowing everything to be discussed, and lacking both the scientific spirit and social aims, it opens the road to demoralisation. It puts everybody in a state of revolt against all prejudices whatsoever; these being viewed with suspicion owing to their original connection with theology. What conscience dictates being strict reason, everything obnoxious thereto is prejudice. Veneration is prejudice! Moral cultivation is prejudice! But to be emancipated from all domination is not necessarily a virtue. Such liberation may be needful before the problem can be stated, but it is not competent to solve it; and, if continued too long, it puts man in a condition of anarchy. How inferior is this morality to that of the Catholicism of the Middle Ages, when, in spite of the doctrine, social feeling maintained unity amidst variety! Here, on the contrary, the absence of any preponderating principle of union produces the strangest divergences. All moral rules are subjected to discussion; everyone frames a special theory for himself; mutual agreement becomes utterly impossible; individualism is everywhere rampant. Puerile as a theory, a mass of discordances incapable of furnishing any two individuals with a common ground of agreement, how could such a moral doctrine provide guidance, or institute government? It sanctioned all crimes, authorised all sorts of base actions, consecrated the government of every adventurer, and finally resulted, in skilful hands, in mystifying an honest, but too confiding, public. It went so far as to reconcile unbelief with participation in the sacraments of theology—the most revolutionary opposition with a

government of the most retrograde type. These moral gymnastics were at length reduced to a system, and attained their final glorification in the philosophy of Cousin.

We must not forget that Science, when isolated and dispersive—of which Academism is the type—may end in the same moral aberrations as this adulterated theology. Under the plea of public health, its teachers are already beginning to cause the dead to be removed for burial to a distance of some leagues from the capital ; and they will soon be proposing that, for demonstrable chemical reasons, we should use them for feeding purposes, as a kind of fertiliser. What a lame, one-sided science is this jumble of special doctrines, which are controlled by no moral considerations! What false and make-believe teachers are they who invoke the liberty which they owe to Humanity only in order to isolate themselves from the questions of their time, and who fail in the most sacred of duties, that of devoting intellectual effort to a social end!

To what can conscience lead, in such a chaos, with a morality which fails to recognise either the method or the doctrine of science? How is it to know what it ought to allow and what it ought to forbid, in the absence of a superior power capable of imparting such knowledge? The Revolution is simply a crisis brought on by the unequal rate at which the destruction of the old prejudices has taken place, as compared with that of the rational co-ordination of new ones ; and it will not be brought to a close, nor the metaphysical solution be eliminated, except by the free growth of a republican priesthood, which will furnish organs competent to be the interpreters of a morality that shall be at once real and susceptible of scientific demonstration.

CHAPTER VI.

OF THE SPONTANEOUS TENDENCY TOWARDS A POSITIVE MORALITY

Moral habits, believed originally to be of divine institution, are finally consecrated in the name of Humanity. This evolution has taken place in all departments of life—personal (hygiene), domestic (cult of the tomb, marriage), civic (respect for law, defence of fatherland), and religious (cult of great men). This purely human character manifests itself alike among the moralists (Madame de Lambert, Vauvenargues, Duclos) and among the romance-writers (Madame de Lafayette, Le Sage, and Fielding). Positive morality has more and more liberated itself from connection with theology.

Will man accept a morality which does not rest upon God? In the absence of any hope or fear of a future life, what motive will induce him to be sober, chaste, loyal, brave, and devoted? The feebleness of metaphysical morals, and the indifference to the subject shown by academic science, have led many strong minds and noble hearts to regard theological morality as an arbitrary sort of procedure, but one which was necessary to ensure the prevalence of positive habits. Indeed, if it were proved that a purely scientific morality is, I will not say impossible to construct—because, as a fact, it exists—but incapable of establishing earnest convictions, then it would inevitably be necessary to go back to Catholicism. By Catholicism I mean ultramontanism; for it would be altogether too absurd to rely on individual initiative, and to offer us, as a solution of the moral problem, a twelve-hundred-millionth interpretation of the four Gospels, every man having an equal right to formulate and to follow his own.

It has now to be shown what answer was given by

experience before it became possible to institute any systematic teaching of positive morality; and in what fashion the positive spirit gradually made its way into all the domains accessible to human wisdom, and showed its growing aptitude to substitute, as regards the rules it unfolded, the positive sanction for a supernatural future life. Whether the precepts under consideration relate to health, to family duties, to military or industrial regulations, or to questions of worship, the correlation of the two movements may be expressed thus :—*Moral rules, at first regarded as being of divine institution, are finally hallowed and perpetuated in the name of Humanity alone.* Such are the starting-point and the final goal of the evolution of morality, which are connected intermediately by the metaphysical phase, during which the theological character of the evolution becomes more and more indistinct, although its positive character remains still unperceived. What, in relation to God, manifests itself as a growing unbelief, represents, in relation to Humanity, an increase of devotedness, knowledge, and energy—that is to say, of religion in the full and true acceptation of the word.

Let us, first of all, verify this proposition as regards personal morality. The earliest moral rules, which are very simple, are concerned almost exclusively with the nutritive and sexual instincts. If reference be made to the texts themselves, in which the details of the legislation of Manu, of Moses, or of Mahomet are set forth, it will be seen to what a great extent hygienic precepts are mingled, on every page, with moral rules properly so called, and with mysteries of doctrine, which, in fact, occupy only a secondary place. It was the same in the other great theocracies; everywhere we find antiquity prescribing, in the name of supernatural authority, simple regulations relating to cleanliness and health. What efforts have not legislators been obliged to make, in order to arrive at the result which now appears to us so

simple—that man should wash his face every day! It was, in fact, not an easy matter, because, if there are any animals that are of spontaneously clean habits, man is not among them; and, to bring him up to that stage, all the supernatural powers, both infernal and celestial, had to be invoked. But French people do it now without any need for the intervention of the gods. Nay, more; the peoples who are cleanly for theological reasons are inferior in this respect to peoples that are emancipated. The natives of the Catholic provinces are less cleanly than the Parisians, who have thrown off all theologism; and the theocratic East is less cleanly than the revolutionary West. The case is the same as regards the regulating of the nutritive instinct. Here, again, it is no longer supernatural considerations which determine either the kind or the quantity of our food, but purely human reasons, deduced from our own nature and from our social and material situation, and creating a stronger opinion than theological arguments of any kind could inspire. The first result, therefore, of Western civilisation is clear and certain. In primitive times, all that concerned health, whether private or public, was regulated in the name of the gods; in our time, similar precepts no longer depend on any but human considerations. That is something gained.

Let us now pass to a characteristic institution of Humanity, which is also one of the greatest, since it ensures the perpetuity of the human family—namely, the worship of the tomb. The poets of antiquity, from Homer to Virgil, tell us repeatedly by what dreadful chastisements the gods punished the violation of the sacred duty which enjoins us to bury our dead. With what a lofty spirit does Sophocles teach this great principle in his *Antigone*—the masterpiece of ancient drama! Polynices, slain in besieging his native city, is to be thrown to the dogs: such is the order of King Creon. Faithful to those laws of the Immortals "which are unwritten, which are for all time, and which cannot be violated," Antigone buries her brother.

Death is the reward of her rebellion against the wishes of the impious king, whom not even the intervention of the prophet Tiresias could turn from his resolve. The expiation soon follows. The son and the wife of Creon kill themselves in despair; the neighbouring peoples threaten to rise in arms against him; and the Furies, the instruments of the vengeance of the god of the dead, cease not to pursue the criminal until he suffers in his turn the fate of Polynices. Inspired by the same theological spirit, the Athenian law condemned to capital punishment anyone who deprived the dead of sepulture. For having failed in their duty in this respect, the accomplishment of which had been prevented by a tempest, the ten generals who had just done honour to their country by winning the victory of the Arginusian Islands were condemned to death; and, in spite of the generous intercession of Socrates, not one of them was spared; so absolute still was the dominion of theology over men's minds. In antiquity, therefore, the worship of the dead was founded upon fear of the gods.

In our own time—at least in France—it is no longer necessary to issue theological regulations on the subject of this sacred institution. In reality, the worship of the tomb is modern. It was instituted at Paris at the beginning of this century (the nineteenth), and gradually spread to the provinces, where it made rapid progress, especially in the towns. It is not to Gospel morality that these pious attentions owe their inspiration. On the contrary, this worship, so profoundly human in its character, becomes emphasised and developed with the general increasing emancipation from theologism. It is, in fact, when men are quite persuaded that death is definitive, that they attach most value to the remains of the beings who have disappeared. This attachment to their final resting-place is a powerful means of strengthening the remembrance of them, and of consolidating their precious moral reaction upon the living. The most human city of the planet,

Paris, is also the town in which the memory of ancestors and friends is most cultivated. It was she who first understood that the worthiest way of winding up the old, and ushering in the new, year is to hold festival in honour of the dead; and who gave, as it were by an instinctive impulse, the preference to the last day of the year over the theological date of the festival—the second of November. Auguste Comte has given these antecedents a systematic embodiment in the Positivist Calendar. That precious institution (the Calendar), which also was at first founded on theology, is now, therefore, equally released from connection with God.

The consecration of marriage is an analogous case. In primitive times, the idea of incest did not exist, and alliances were made within the same family. The accounts of travellers who have explored our planet confirm what the Bible and the laws of the theocracies had told us. What efforts it required to get the notion established! We see, in the *King Œdipus*,[1] by what terrible sanction the poet supports, in the name of the gods, the rule, at that time new, of the punishment of incest. Œdipus is condemned for having committed, although unconsciously, and after having done his utmost to avoid it, that crime which fate had decreed that he should commit. Human reasons for the rule would not at that time have had so striking an effect as its institution by the gods, and yet it is the former which to-day are spontaneously and generally accepted. It is the same as regards the consecration of monogamy. The attacks made, by the partisans of divorce, on that form of marriage are fully repulsed only by those who are really emancipated, for they alone are sufficiently undisturbed by the inconsistencies of theology.

What is true of marriage is also true as regards the public respect for law. At the present time, the citizen rejects from law the element of the divine absolute, and

[1] Also by Sophocles.—*Trans.*

requires positive reasons; he no longer submits to it without conditions. When the Catholic reaction wanted to have a law passed for the observance of Sunday rest, the proposal was not advocated by its theological supporters on the ground of the practice having been instituted by God, but on account of its moral and social advantages. In like fashion, it is no longer in order to expiate an original transgression that man has to labour, but to provide, in the only way compatible with the modern spirit, for the needs of family life; and it is just this transformation of industrial activity—which, having once been servile, has now become civic—which forms the most distinctive feature of republican policy.

War, also, which demands courage and devotedness, and in which, as the example of the incomparable Roman armies testifies, the intervention of the gods was needed for so long a period, has freed itself from theological considerations. (A war minister, who had missed his way and strayed into the nineteenth century, still pretended, some years ago, that no man could be brave unless he had a belief in God.)

Previous to the heroic defence of Paris by declared atheists, the armies of the Republic had shown to what a pitch of obedience, abnegation, and heroism men could attain under emancipated leaders and governors. In order to animate those civic legions, the Republican dictators did not, like the common run of kings, appeal to the lust for conquests, which are invariably consecrated by the Lord of Hosts; but they raised their souls by merely invoking their love of country, and the necessity of safeguarding the Republic. It was this lofty sentiment of duty that enabled them to surmount the most formidable dangers, and to maintain with such majesty the integrity of France that, in 1796, in his *Considerations* on the Revolution—which he described as satanic in its essence—De Maistre has nothing but praise for the French armies and the Committee of Public Safety, to whose determination alone

the continued winning of battles was due. In the French army of to-day the soldiers are mindful of their civic obligations, however much their theological beliefs may have deteriorated.

The same transformation has taken place in respect of the honouring of great men. Originally, a public consecration was due to them only after they had, by an apotheosis, been assimilated to the gods. Subsequently, in order to gain such a distinction, it was necessary to have served God and become a saint. It is said that a single polytheist—Trajan—did, through the prayers of Saint Gregory, obtain the favour of being allowed to go to heaven; but to ask God to amend a judgment admitting of no appeal would have been an offence; and, further, that pontiff never allowed himself to manifest such an excess of zeal as he would have condemned in others. At the present day, in order to merit public honours, it is sufficient for a man to have served Humanity, whether he has or has not striven to please God. Hence the various peoples of the West commemorate Michael Angelo and Boieldieu, Petrarch and Shakespeare, Spinoza and Voltaire; thus spontaneously instituting the public observances which Positivism has, since 1848, systematised under the name of the worship of great men.

A very curious but indisputable phenomenon illustrates and confirms, from another point of view, this emancipation of the mass of society from theological beliefs. Nothing, in fact, especially during the last two centuries, furnishes better evidence of the ascendancy which the positive spirit has gradually acquired than the complete absence of supernatural considerations from the collections of moral maxims by various authors which, from time to time, have been published, and from the admirable pictures of human life which the chief writers of fiction have given us. This, for instance, is the case with the reflections of the Marchioness de Lambert, published in 1728. That distinguished woman, by whom the first of the great philosophic

salons was opened, was then the widow of a governor of Luxemburg, and in a position which rendered her desirous of avoiding any display of peculiarity. Her counsels were, moreover, printed without her knowledge. In her *Advice to Her Son*, who became a lieutenant-general, there is hardly any mention made of God; and, speaking generally, there is no more reference to him than if a belief in him had never existed. She gives her son for his model—not the life of Jesus, but the example of his ancestors; and for his aim, not heaven, but glory.

> Always forget what you are when humanity requires it of you.....Understand that the first laws you ought to obey are those of humanity. Remember that you are a man.

She expresses this maxim more exactly in her *Advice to Her Daughter*, who afterwards married the Marquis de Saint-Aulaire :—

> To be a Christian [she tells her] you must believe blindly; to be wise you must evidently be able to see.....Choose from among great men the man who may seem to you most worthy of respect; do nothing which you would not do in his presence; account to him in spirit for all your actions.

As for God, she mentions him only once, casually, and does not again allude to him. Fénélon thought this proceeding rather venturesome; but the eminent Marchioness, obliged to use the only language that was then listened to, answered him thus :—

> The habits of young people of the present day reduce us to the necessity of giving them, not what is the best advice, but that which causes them the least inconvenience.

Like Madame de Lambert, the noble and tender Vauvenargues, in his *Thoughts*, regards glory and the promptings of the heart as the most powerful inspirers of the intellect and activity. Like her, he speaks to man a language which his reason accepts and understands in its principle and its aim. If we open the *Considerations upon Manners* of Duclos, we find him regarding, as the first of all obligations, that of being a citizen, and aspiring, as early

as 1751, to establish a general and uniform system of education intended to form Frenchmen, after having first made men of them. He calls the attention of his contemporaries to the necessity of taking advantage of the enthusiasm of the age, in order to found and disseminate universally a morality "which has for its subject," he says, "men considered in relation to humanity and to fatherland." Nowhere in that fine book is there the least allusion to the prevailing theological system, although the author is obviously desirous of seeing it replaced by something better.

The leading types of the romance of manners reveal, under another form, the advent of a positive morality. The first in date, *The Princess of Cleves*, which appeared in 1678, had an immense success in the high society of that time; and posterity has confirmed the judgment. In that masterpiece, in which the sentiment is at once so chivalrous and so pure, Madame de Lafayette has depicted the life of a young woman of much distinction of character, who triumphs over the troubles of a passion against which she strives solely by the aid of the feeling of duty, without appealing to any theological consideration whatever. This attitude is maintained and emphasised in the two great romances of the eighteenth century—the *Gil Blas* of Le Sage (1715–1735) and the *Tom Jones* of Fielding (1750), which set before us the life of man from birth till marriage in clearly defined, though somewhat exceptional, circumstances. Whatever be the consequences of the actions of the two heroes, which are sometimes reasonable, sometimes imprudent, at one time good, at another evil, these poets[1] urge none but positive reasons in justification of either recompense or punishment. These able observers, acquainted as they were with human nature, have

[1] All authors of works of imagination, even painters, sculptors, and musicians, are classified by Comte as "poets." Although, he says, in the highest kind of poetry versification is necessary, it is a mistake to regard poetry in general as confined to verse-making.—*Trans.*

bequeathed to us what their penetrating minds saw and analysed. What they depict for us is the French and English society in the midst of which they lived, and which still lives in their works. It is their profoundly human character which explains the powerful attraction exercised over all ages by those two poems, which will never cease to be read and read again.

It is, therefore, quite evident that, in the civil as in the moral life of the West, purely human motives have had the principal share in the perpetuation of rules for which, in preceding ages, an appeal to the theological spirit was thought to be necessary.

CHAPTER VII.

ON THE GROWING INSUFFICIENCY OF THEOLOGICAL GUIDANCE IN MORAL MATTERS

Whenever and wherever the human mind makes an advance, theology falls back. Monotheistic morality, not being of a social nature, grows more and more inadequate for the regulating of civic, Western, and world-wide relations. Hence, in their ordinary practice, statesmen have been necessarily more and more inspired by the positive spirit.

Paris, the supreme type of the city, exemplifies, in both its organic and critical aspects, the double movement of the modern past.

We saw how, in the case of many individuals, the guidance afforded by theology has reached the stage of an imaginary solution ; that is to say, that, for them, the moral influence of that God who at first was omnipotent, even in the domain of matter, has dwindled away to such a point that, in the present day, everything goes on as if he were not believed to exist. The morality of Humanity, in fact, as we shall see later, is completely independent of him. I have still to show how that guidance must eventually cease to be sought after by those who are now believers in theology ; for whom it is, in reality, merely a more or less intense complement of a real guidance, which is openly taking into its hands the government of society.

Where positive law appears, supernatural cause vanishes. God was the guardian who had to watch over the general interests of the human race until the day when science should have attained its full growth. What remains to him for his share, now that the scientific spirit is at length capable of completely replacing theological morality? The continuous extension of positive logic has rendered men's

brains less and less adapted for belief in theological conceptions ; the reign of natural law in mechanics, in physics, and in biology has gradually become recognised. Whether in industrial or pathological matters, the most determined believer in theology acts in no way differently from the most atheistical man of science. It is in positive laws that they both seek for the rule which is to lead them to their goal. This is the mental attitude of the whole people, both men and women, owing to the very fact of the progressive tendencies which Positivism merely co-ordinates and crowns. It is impossible to keep perpetually dividing oneself in two; and the normal state, towards which we are advancing, has for its distinctive feature the reign of the scientific spirit, to the entire exclusion of the theological spirit. Progress is measured by the growing preponderance of the former over the latter in public and private conduct.

This continual encroachment of the positive spirit is, in fact, but the opposite aspect of that increasing mental and social decay of theological government which is due to the opinion, now strengthened into a prejudice, that in ordinary matters we ought not to trust to any guidance other than that furnished by science. It was science which, by the indirect and obscure support it lent to tradition, enabled us to make up for the ever-loosening hold of the dominant theology. But what most of all brought the old set of doctrines into discredit was the necessity of seeking elsewhere for a guidance capable of soothing and solving social conflicts, in presence of which the inadequacy and impotence of such doctrines came out into clearer and clearer light. The reason of this incapacity, due to an essential defect in theory, must be explained before I have done with this part of the subject.

Christian morality, being necessarily of a personal character, was never able to include the civic point of view ; and that is why sociability was never expressly appealed to by the Catholic priesthood. Continuing the Jewish tradition, which owns no other fatherland than the

heavenly Jerusalem, that morality prescribed, as the chief end of man, not the service of his country, but the salvation of his own soul. It educated him for paradise, and taught him to despise the earth. God requires saints in order to people his heaven—he has no need for citizens. Again, the theological spirit cannot be brought into harmony with the spirit of the modern world, which is a product of the combination of science with industry. It can, therefore, offer none but illusory solutions for the social questions of the present day—such, for example, as the origin and proper use of wealth, the relations between the new temporal and spiritual social elements, and the origin and object of mental labour. It has never even tried to deal with the last-named problem, which is one of the utmost importance. It is the revolt of the intellect against obsolete moral habits and against the preponderating claim upon it of society, which has engendered the present revolutionary condition. The priesthood deplores this condition after having provoked it; but, so far from curing, it has since only aggravated it.

From the standpoint of Western Europe, the powerlessness of theology is clearly to be seen. The modern revolution, which dates from the fourteenth century, began its work by breaking up that European monarchy which had been founded, regulated, and governed by the Papacy. Diplomacy was the expedient made use of to fill up the void thus left, until such time as a new spiritual organisation should systematically reconstitute the Republic of the West. The international power of the Popes has never since been re-established; and, when the Holy Alliance of Sovereigns undertook to restore a sort of European equilibrium, it was a schismatic pontiff, the Tsar, who was placed at the head of that Council, in which other Protestant princes had seats, but from which the Pope was excluded.

Lastly, the theological system of morality is incapable of embracing and regulating the widest class of social connections—namely, the relations of the West with the

rest of the world—save by the chimerical resource of a universal conversion to Christianity. But how can the Church furnish any rule for the East, when, in spite of such a remarkable priestly organisation, it has not been able to fulfil the requirements of the West, where, since the end of the Middle Ages, the centuries may be reckoned by the checks given to its predominance? Can theologism supply guidance for the relations of Europeans with Mussulmans, whose belief it regards as abominable, and whom it declares to be unfit to associate, or to intermingle on terms of equality, with ourselves? "As soon as the Christian and the Mussulman come into contact," says De Maistre, "one of them must submit to the other or perish." Is there any hope of more success with the Hindus? A bishop has declared that his own servants were the only persons on whom he could ever make any impression. And it is scarcely necessary to add that their conversion lasted only so long as they remained in his service. What has Catholicism to offer them? Mysteries? They make gods every day. Miracles? When the divine Krishna wishes to shelter his fair lady from the rays of the sun, he makes a mountain into a parasol. Accustomed to such prodigies, it is no wonder that the Christian miracles astonish them only by their simplicity. There is no way of convincing the Hindus by theological arguments, and the hope of converting them will have to be given up—as, indeed, has been very well shown by the Abbé J. A. Dubois, a missionary in Mysore, a most honourable man, and a distinguished Indian scholar. As for the Chinese, it is useless to dream of converting them. They know nothing about God; they have never felt the want of him; and yet that does not prevent them from being the only people among whom the family is treated, even on the stage, with respect; so strongly established there is that fundamental institution. It is conceivable that polytheists might be converted to belief in a new god, either Christian or Mussulman; for, after all, that only means

that they adore one additional god. But it is a different matter when you have to deal with people who do not want more than the one they have, or do not admit the existence of any god whatever.

And yet it is not possible to exterminate the believers in those various creeds, whether monotheists, polytheists, or fetichists. Politically, the enterprise would scarcely succeed, for the peoples concerned would not be at all disposed to submit to the operation. It is estimated that there are a hundred millions of Mussulmans, a hundred and eighty millions of Hindus, and about four hundred millions of Chinese; and that constitutes a majority of the population of the earth. It is not, then, by the help of theology that we shall be able to enter on closer diplomatic relations with the East. To be emancipated, like Voltaire, would help us even less; and, as to applying Rousseau's doctrine, it is enough to remark that, if the affairs of the planet were to be dealt with by universal suffrage, we, the peoples of the West, should be governed by the Chinese. Moreover, both Voltaire and Rousseau were believers in God. In such a matter as this, the metaphysical system of morality is not worth any consideration.

There is no longer any guidance possible, except that furnished by Science. In opposition to the theological spirit, which solves the problem of unity only by the conversion, or the destruction, of the heterodox nations, the positive spirit, while securing the lead for itself, makes allowance for each of the conflicting creeds, and so proves its incontestable superiority. True statesmen promoted human progress by causing positive notions to prevail more and more over theological conceptions. They were eminent only because, in political matters, they acted as if they never had known God. Richelieu was a noteworthy specimen of such men. Positive before everything, he always preferred his country to heaven, Humanity to God. He was a true statesman, a great citizen, to whom theology appeared as a means to be utilised. Although

a Catholic, he supported the Protestants; although a cardinal, he declared war against the Pope; and, although a Christian, he preferred the Turks to his *good friends* the Spaniards, who were at that time the organs in the West of the Catholic resistance. Such an attitude must, no doubt, have passed for criminal in the sight of God; but Richelieu had provided for that awkward circumstance, and equipped himself beforehand with a blank general absolution. To substitute positive reasons for the vague conventionalities of his theological or revolutionary surroundings is the sign of a true political genius. That is the spirit which ought to prevail in the regulating of Eastern affairs, as in all other cases. We ought, in all social relations, to substitute for the law of Jesus positive morality, which alone ministers to the general interest of the Earth and Humanity. That is what Positivism, resting upon history for its support, comes forward clearly to prove.

It would not be so easy for me in another country to express what I say here this evening. France is the most emancipated nation in the West. It is, at present, governed without God. Its capital has been the principal seat of the double movement, constructive and critical, which, for more than five centuries, has been the characteristic feature of Western civilisation. No city has shaken off so quickly, or so boldly, the yoke of theology; none has fraternised more cordially with the other peoples; none has more steadily devoted herself to securing for France, for the West, and for the world, the independence and co-operation which she herself was already enjoying. Paris remains in modern times, as she was in the Middle Ages, the leading city; no other has yet superseded her in her initiating function; and, in spite of the tempest raised by savage blasphemies, this glorious vessel has pursued her course, carrying Humanity and its fortunes. To the superior minds of the West, Paris remains the common centre of all activities, all thoughts, and all affections—The City.

PART II.

THE LEADING CHARACTERISTICS OF POSITIVE MORALITY

CHAPTER I.

ON THE GENERAL SPIRIT OF POSITIVE MORALITY

Auguste Comte fulfilled the requirements of the occasion. Positive morality is founded and taught. Its general spirit consists in taking the existing state of affairs as its starting-point, and proceeding to modify it by way of substitution—by transforming the revolutionary movement into a continuous moral effort. A reform so radical cannot be immediate.

I HAVE just pointed out how the long course of anterior preparations led up, of necessity, to positive morality. This result was rendered as indispensable by the decline of theology as it was inevitable by the accumulation of empirical rules established by the wisdom of centuries. The way was so well cleared for the work, the reconstruction of morality was so urgently needed, that the profoundest thinker of the conservative school, de Maistre, wrote at the beginning of this (the nineteenth) century :—

> Wait till the natural affinity of religion and science brings them together in the head of a single man of genius. The appearance of such a man cannot be very far off, and it may be that he is even now alive. He will become famous, and will put an end to the eighteenth century, which has lasted too long. Everything points to a great unity of some sort or other, towards which we are advancing with long strides.

He who was destined to discover that great unity was born at the time de Maistre was penning that prophecy. Auguste Comte, by referring everything to Humanity, gave to moral rules the generalisation and the co-ordination they lacked. By him was founded the system of demonstrable morality, capable of regulating the whole body of human relations "by substituting the peaceful elaboration of duties for the stormy discussion of rights" (*General View of Positivism*, 1848).

As Positivism has for its aim the bringing of that system of morality into universal use, I have met this urgent need by beginning to teach it. I am, at the present time, delivering at Paris a course of twenty lectures on theoretic morals, instituting the knowledge of human nature, taken in all its fulness at the adult and normal stage, keeping in view, at the same time, the relations between the physical and the moral elements, and not forgetting to examine the disturbances incident thereto. Next year I shall complete this preparatory study by twenty more lectures devoted to practical morals. This second part combines the abstract theory of morals with the various phases of life, from conception to death, with a view to the improving of human nature. The mere mention of the above facts will be enough to suggest how impossible it would be for me to attempt, at a single sitting, to work out the development of such a system. After setting forth the fundamental characteristics of positive morality, I shall indicate in a summary way its leading applications. Let us begin by examining its general spirit.

The man of science, whatever be the positive study he wants to pursue, sets out from the point already reached, and follows the direction traced for him by the labours of previous students. The theologian, on the contrary, and still more the metaphysician, on whose abuse of his speculative powers the infallibility of the Pope no longer places a limit, take themselves for their starting-point in

every question they approach, regarding all that has been done before them as though it were not. The *Discourse on Method* is an incomparable example of the radical difference, both in processes and results, which separates the positive spirit from the theologico-metaphysical spirit. As metaphysician, Descartes draws everything from himself; as man of science, he takes up geometry where his Greek predecessors had left it, and continues their work. The same rule holds for political and moral science as for geometry. All durable artificial order—in other words, all radical reform—must rest on a pre-existing order, the spontaneous product of the past, developed in accordance with ascertainable laws. Every institution, whether theoretical or practical, which does not respect this natural foundation is bound to be chimerical and short-lived; for, in such a case, the present, no longer acknowledging itself under obligation to its predecessors—with whom, in the long run, the final victory rests—puts itself in opposition to the only moral power which can protect it against anarchy, and so lays itself open to derangements of every sort.

Following Descartes' scientific precept, we take, then, as our starting-point, the existing state of things, the average morality in the lump, as practised by people of common sense. We accept those habits and those prejudices which were derived from the long line of our ancestors, and which have been of real use in the upbringing of innumerable generations. We take a pride in preserving, as well as increasing, this moral inheritance, which is our rarest and most precious treasure. Respect for continuity, especially when introducing innovations, being the fundamental requirement, the moral problem reduces itself essentially to this: how to co-ordinate, while developing them, the body of existing rules, empirically established by universal common sense.

But, after allowing to tradition its justly preponderating share, we must acknowledge that moral prejudices need

to be revised by a competent authority. If we attempted to overhaul them completely without such guidance, we should be in danger of overthrowing habits that it is necessary to retain. The task of reforming morality requires fixed principles and exceptional ability. It is necessary to know how to recognise the cumulative influence of successive generations, which, bringing into harmonious co-operation impulsions ever more and more various in their nature, establishes duties resting on motives of continually-increasing complexity. Every situation which, like our own, has recently undergone profound modification, requires special rules; hence the need for formulating, and securing the general fulfilment of, new obligations. It is no less necessary to clear away a certain number of current prejudices. In a positive system of morality there is no room for anarchical rights sanctioned by a conscience in revolt against its own creators; nor for duties towards a fictitious divine providence, now that the real human providence has at length been made known.

In this work of renovation we never proceed otherwise than by SUBSTITUTION; respecting all moral rules until we have others to put in their place. A profound saying of the great Danton admirably expresses this aspect of scientific method: *You destroy nothing except what you replace.* It would be only too easy to disturb everything on the secondary excuse of getting rid of an abuse, or on the pretext of progress. There are no perfect things; all have their good and their bad sides. We ourselves are imperfect bipeds; and that is a better definition than that given by Plato. We distrust those critical minds whose tendency is towards unsettling political and industrial institutions, and whose noisy activity amounts, in the net result, to doing more harm than their predecessors, without accomplishing as much good. When the outcome of a method is to transform the whole of life into a series of unsuccessful experiments, what contribution can it make either to

happiness or the public wellfare? We do not approve of the criticism of institutions and prejudices merely because of their drawbacks. The practice is allowable only when we have positive grounds for it, and genuine remedies to apply. Besides, the scientific spirit has its own way of reproving what is faulty, arbitrary, and selfish; and that is by making beings, whether individual or collective, honourable, reasonable, and devoted.

We do not, in fact, wish to change the existing state of affairs in a single day. Society, happily, goes on of its own accord for good as well as for ill. What we seek to do is to modify it slowly and continuously in accordance with demonstrable scientific views, while rejecting all turbulent agitation, which succeeds only in reviving, in institutions and in minds, a retrograde tendency which is no longer to be found in manners. In a task so hard and full of risks—for man is an animal far more difficult to transform than is generally believed—sudden shocks are to be avoided, for they waste precious forces. In morals as in politics we are averse from all that is extreme and violent. Further, the necessary suppressions of abuses being once accomplished, we ask for the maintenance of the political *status quo*.

A reform so radical does not mean an immediate general amelioration, for the evident reason that, in every change in the social system, the transformation of opinions and manners ought to come before, not after, that of institutions. Even good things cannot escape this necessity. Although the collective reason may be in favour of them, they must submit to the test of time. The doctrine may, at first sight, seem absurd or questionable, and then loyalty forbids our submission to it. Besides, how can any principle whatever be effectively applied unless it has been first thoroughly and familiarly comprehended? The truths, then, which are finally to become the common stock of human beliefs, must be open to examination:

there can be no worthy and certain progress unless in association with the liberty of the individual.

Our aim is immense. It is the function of theory to point out the conditions under which it will be possible to realise the ideal state towards which the activity of our race is tending; a function for which practice is not adapted, since it can conceive nothing beyond that which already exists. If we are bold, it is in the conclusions we draw, and which we state clearly; for we need to know whither we are going. But, in the application of principles, conciliation is our rule; and we wish to go slowly and safely to our end. *Chi va piano, va sano; chi va sano, va lontano.* We are advancing to the peaceful conversion of minds and hearts, sustained by a powerful doctrine, and enjoying, even now, a foretaste of that assured future, the dawn of which inspired Condorcet with the sublime prayer which closes his *Sketch of the Progress of the Human Mind.*

CHAPTER II.

ON THE FOUNDATIONS OF POSITIVE MORALITY

Positive morality rests upon human nature, the knowledge of which implies scientific acquaintance with man's environment, both planetary and social. Gall, by instituting the positive study of the functions of the brain, annihilated the metaphysical idea of man's unity. David Hume, George Leroy, Cabanis, and Bichat were his most noteworthy precursors. It was in consequence of the new departure made by Gall that Auguste Comte was enabled to construct the systematic theory of the soul, to point out the importance of the part played by veneration in the organisation of society, and to found positive morality.

Positive morality rests upon the reality of things; but as, in the ascending series of the sciences, it forms the highest stage, towards which all the others converge, an effective knowledge of our moral nature presupposes a knowledge of our planetary and sociological situation and circumstances. The World, Society, and Man—these are the verifiable and demonstrable foundations which give to human morality a coherence and logical consistency such as theological morality never possessed.

Positive morality depends, first of all, on our cosmological circumstances, since it would have to be modified if the earth were different from what it is—for instance, it would vary with the dimensions of the planet. If the surface occupied by water were so great as to reduce the extent of habitable land to about the size of Ireland, many of the rules relating to the supply of food and to property would resemble those of primitive communism. If such surface were about equal to that of Western Europe, military civilisation would have accomplished the unification of the human race. Lastly, if the extent of habitable land were greatly in excess of that occupied by water—and this would

be the reverse of the present proportion, for, oddly enough, our planet is made for fishes rather than for men—or, still more, if the earth's dimensions had equalled those of Jupiter, the human race might, perhaps, never have attained to universal association, the indispensable condition of moral unity.

Positive morality is likewise subject to biological conditions. If wheat could be obtained as easily and plentifully as air, or if the various kinds of food were found prepared and ready for consumption, without any greater exertion than that of breathing, many moral precepts would become superfluous. Nobody steals air, which is relatively inexhaustible. Why is no one permitted to take arbitrary possession of any of the products of human labour? Why is it wicked to squander the various materials and provisions with which the planet supplies us, and a duty to exercise, individually and collectively, a certain economy in our use of them? It is because these common possessions are both difficult to produce, and of limited amount in proportion to the population; and because they have been, and continue to be, the foundation upon which civilisation rests, and ought to be preserved for the needs of those who are to come after us. It is the necessity of procuring daily bread that gives rise to our greatest social difficulties and to the majority of human institutions. Moral rules, therefore, cannot be framed without taking our biological requirements and surroundings into account.

It is also impossible not to take into consideration our sociological conditions, for our present moral situation is the outcome of others anterior to it. Each generation leaves results; it bequeaths, consequently, to the one which follows it, a state of affairs differing more or less from that which itself inherited from its predecessor, and being merely the development of the latter. This bequest leads to certain modifications in thoughts, in actions, and in feelings. For a moral rule to be positive, therefore, it is not enough for it to be such as is suitable to our

situation ; it must likewise be opportune—that is to say, in keeping with the degree of civilisation then attained. When the towns of Harfleur and Montivilliers made war upon each other, in a period analogous to that in which Rome's wars were waged within five or six miles of the city, their relations with each other could not have been regulated by the same moral laws as in our own time, when they are both included in the same department. Still less can we judge them, in that warlike age, by the moral rules applicable to them at the present day, when they form part of a hard-working nation which carries within itself the religious destinies of the human race. Positive morality, then, takes account of man as developed by social evolution.

But these various influences, however necessary they may be, play a merely subordinate and modifying part in man's life. There is a predominating phenomenon that overrides them, manifesting itself, amidst their varied play, according to constant laws, which are in themselves the elemental principles of the positive theory of human nature. The foundation of all morals is, really, to be sought in the fact that man is naturally and spontaneously moral. Further back than that we cannot go. Let us dwell upon this doctrine, and bring it out into clearer light.

From the positive point of view, man is not only an intelligent animal, but is endowed with organic qualities, in virtue of which he displays the disposition, noticeable in all nations, and under all religions, to behave in a spontaneously sociable way, apart from all precept or system whatever. The demonstration of the existence of innate benevolent sentiments in man is the greatest scientific discovery of the nineteenth century, and the most important that has been made in moral science since the law discovered by St. Paul. We are indebted for it to F. J. Gall. Not that the existence of kindly feelings was ever directly denied ; it is, indeed, confirmed by words of everyday use that are the results of

universal observation. But, if ordinary common sense has always admitted goodwill to be spontaneous, the hypotheses framed to account for it had, until Gall's time, remained mere fictions or abstractions; so that everyday language and practice were at variance with palpably inferior theories. Gall, by establishing the plurality of organs in the brain, demolished the metaphysical theory of man's unity. That theory was nothing more than an abstraction, as untrue as any that ever was framed. It reduced the soul to mere intelligence, commanding the passions and instincts, and established a complete separation between the human and the animal in man; thereby flying in the face of obvious facts and scientific truth. So far from being a simple unity, man displays the most many-sided and changing aspect of any animal, not only in respect of egoism, but also of intelligence. Animated by more or less divergent instincts, he is very rarely self-consistent: to-day he is swayed by self-love, to-morrow by the instinct of destruction; at one moment by veneration, at another by the promptings of hunger; yesterday his intelligence was keen, to-day he has a cold in the head, and is dull-witted. "My countenance has five hundred changes of expression in a day," said Diderot. To recognise in man, thus pulled and pushed in the most varied and opposite directions, a preponderating entity or instinct, is to create a fictitious being that has never had any real existence. When J. J. Rousseau and Helvetius, confounding ambition with sociability, wrote that man is governed by self-love, that meant only that there was a great deal of that feeling in Rousseau and Helvetius.

The way had been prepared for Gall's discovery and demonstration by the thinkers of the eighteenth century, especially by David Hume, George Leroy, Cabanis, and Bichat. Descartes had, as a temporary concession, surrendered the study of human nature to the theologico-metaphysical spirit; for the positive study of it in the seventeenth century would have been premature. The

school of the *Encyclopædia*, taking their cue from Francis Bacon's works, attempted, in the following century, to frame a purely positive system of morals. Hume, who was the principal philosophic fore-runner of Auguste Comte, undertook, in 1739, to found the theory of human nature on observation and facts; but, feeling that the ground was not yet sufficiently cleared for the construction of such a system, he confined himself to setting forth his special views in various *Philosophical Essays*. In the treatise which he devoted to *An Inquiry concerning the Principles of Morals* (1752), Hume takes universal common sense as his starting-point for refuting the fanciful theory of self-interest properly understood. He shows that mankind's collective observation, the interpreter of spontaneous morality, has acknowledged the existence of benevolent inclinations—of the feelings of compassion and gratitude. Ordinary language, he says, has put its stamp upon all these ideas, and drawn a distinction between them and the self-regarding passions. When we find even animals capable of disinterested actions, are we to suppose that they are so through refined deductions of self-interest? And why deny to ourselves a quality we are constrained to concede to them? Just as there are in us primary wants, primary feelings of self-interest and ambition, so, in like manner, as we may readily conceive, there are in us good-will and friendliness towards others. That is at once the simpler and the more natural hypothesis. Against the suggested principle of self-love Hume sets the principle of humanity :—

> Though this affection of humanity may not generally be esteemed so strong as vanity or ambition, yet, being common to all men, it can alone be the foundation of morals, or of any general system of blame or praise. (Section ix, Conclusion.)

George Leroy confirms and developes David Hume's thesis in his *Letters on Animals and Man* (1781). No one understood better the moral and intellectual nature of

animals than this great observer, who was the King's ranger of the park and forest at Versailles. It is to him we owe the important first step taken in the scientific observation and comparison of the higher functions in man and in animals ; for it is in the latter that the manifestations of the elementary faculties can be most easily observed, as they are not then complicated by the modifications introduced, in our case, by the state of civilisation. On this basis George Leroy demonstrates the inborn kindliness of man, which he traces to an elementary instinct—compassion :—

> It is the true foundation of sociability, morality, and all natural virtue, and by it man is placed at an infinite distance above the other animals—much more even than by the superiority of his intelligence.....This precious and holy disposition acquires strength in us by exercise and habit..... It is, no doubt, often impaired by the louder calls of self-interest ; but it makes itself heard when these are silent, and habitual exercise sometimes renders its action predominant.

Lastly, Cabanis, trying to find in physiology the solution of the same question, drew attention to the necessity for comprehensiveness of view—for all merely partial views of human nature are unreal—in his work on the *Relations between the Physical and Moral Nature of Man* (1802). In that celebrated work, which made Cabanis the immediate fore-runner of Gall, the close connection that exists between the moral and intellectual functions on the one hand, and the vegetal and animal functions on the other, is submitted to careful study for the first time ; the reaction of the moral upon the physical faculties is pointed out, and the true process to be followed in the endeavour to improve human nature thus indicated.

Notwithstanding their great merits, these invaluable first essays were inadequate. The general views of those thinkers were, unconsciously to themselves, still infected with metaphysics and lacking in determinate certainty.

What was needed was that those vague principles of humanity, compassion, and sympathy, should be rendered precise ; that those complex faculties should be subjected to a positive analysis, and their existence rendered henceforth indubitable by tracing their distinct connection with so many organs in the brain. This, however, could not be done until the positive theories of organic and animal life had been wrought into a coherent system ; in other words, until the science of biology had been founded. This was achieved by the works of Bichat, physician to the great hospital of Humanity (l'Hôtel Dieu) in Paris, who died in 1802 at the age of thirty-one. His *Physiological Researches on Life and Death* appeared in 1800, and his *General Anatomy* in 1801. Then, and not till then, did it become possible to extend the positive method to the study of cerebral life.

Gall was the first thinker who essayed this new departure. At the outset he had to face the hostility of Bonaparte and of the Academy of Sciences ; and, finally, by a discreditable piece of trickery, the attempt was made to reduce a scientific reform, with which that effected by Galileo can alone be compared, to the knowledge of the internal state of the brain obtained merely by observation of the configuration and dimensions of the skull. These attacks were ineffectual in the face of the discoveries made by Gall, who, besides, took care to disseminate a knowledge of them by courses of lectures and by his writings, the most important of which he re-published, with minor anatomical developments, from 1822 to 1825, in his treatise *On the Functions of the Brain.* He scientifically demonstrated these two principles : (1) The soul is an abstract term, representing a set or aggregate of various moral and intellectual functions, which no analysis can identify with, or resolve into, one another. (2) Each of these functions has its seat in a particular ascertainable portion of the grey matter of the brain. The latter of these was a conception of decisive importance, for it

furnished moral science with a potent logical instrument, by fixing its foundation and starting-point, once for all, in human nature itself. Thenceforth the brain was looked upon, not as a simple organ, but as an assemblage of organs, of which the three principal groups correspond to the intellect, the character, and, lastly, the heart, which rules over the whole apparatus.

The problem of resolving the soul into its constituent elements was stated by Gall; but, excepting in his analysis of the good feelings, he failed to work it out, especially in his attempts at the decomposition of the intellectual faculties. Furthermore, he made too little allowance for the connection of the brain with the vegetal organs, and with the nervous system as a whole. This non-success was mainly due to a defect in his method. Like all his predecessors, Gall, in his study of man, omitted to take into account Humanity. The solution of the ultimate problem was achieved by Auguste Comte. Having created sociology, he was able to construct the true theory of the brain, and, upon that systematic basis, to found moral science. It was he who gave precision to the positive conception of the soul, by reducing it to the abstract general theory of the simple and compound functions of the brain, internal as well as external, the latter being considered under their twofold mode of working, active and passive. Henceforward the brain is seen to be the apparatus that connects the body with the world, the medium through which their mutual interactions, of every kind, take place.

It is only since Gall's time that we have known for certain that man is as naturally capable of attachment, veneration, and kindness as he is spontaneously selfish and ambitious. It is to the demonstration of the existence of innate benevolent feelings we owe it that Positivism has been able to lay its finger upon that urgent want of our time—namely, the development of the feeling of respect, so sorely stifled in our present revolutionary

atmosphere. Without veneration there can be no moral subordination of rank to rank; no dignified dependence of man upon man; no submission of the individual will; and, consequently, no progress towards a better social state. If man were not a venerating animal, there would be neither priesthood, nor government, nor society; and, of course, there would be no morality. Why, in spite of his higher intelligence, is the life of the ape so far inferior, socially speaking, to that of the dog? It is because he lacks veneration. For the same reason the advocates of mere destruction, the born enemies of all superiority, are the most backward of men, and their claim to be partisans of progress is an utter delusion. To love one's superiors is the beginning of full emancipation and of true moral progress, itself the source and fountain of all other kinds of progress. One of the most notable men of this century, Broussais, who was the founder of positive pathology, a daring investigator, and possessed of an energetic spirit, was filled with veneration for the great Bichat, "his master" as he called him; and he gloried in the feeling. There was the mark that stamps the lofty soul.

Respect is a faculty which Positivist education will cultivate and develop in a very special way. There are some things that ought to be despised, and for which we ought to have, like Molière's Alceste,

> Those vigorous hatreds
> Which vice should raise in virtuous souls.

But veneration is the foundation of all voluntary society; it constitutes the difference between the submission of the citizen and the abject submissiveness of the subject. In it lies the superiority of Western over all other types of civilisation, and by it Paris takes her place as the leader of human progress. The Parisians have two apparently contradictory qualities: they are very vain, as all citizens are; but they have, furthermore, the feeling of veneration very highly developed, and that is what has made them, of

all peoples, the most progressive and, at the same time, the easiest to govern. It is in order to strengthen this, the pre-eminently social, feeling, that the first public cult to be established along with the Republic is that of great men, irrespective of their epoch or their nationality. It is due to them that we are what we are.

Gall was the immediate scientific fore-runner of Auguste Comte. Thanks to his grand discovery, spontaneous, unsystematic morality, which, by evolution, had been gradually approximating more and more to that which will prevail in the normal state, has been irrevocably incorporated into the science of Humanity; and, for the first time, and permanently, the rules of morality—an unceasing subject of concern from the earliest times—have become fully homogeneous and relative, without being arbitrary. Science having taken possession of its whole domain, and having at length resulted in a philosophy and a religion that could be demonstrate d, the most systematic abstract thinker that ever lived was enabled completely to satisfy the ingrained tendencies of universal common sense, and the deepest affections of the human heart. Auguste Comte, taking man as he is and in the gross, extended the precepts of positive morality to every aspect of that complex, fluctuating, and many-sided nature. In order to resist the revolts and encroachments of our animal passions, he rested morality on the common action of the two attributes of Humanity—reason and sociability. Thanks to Gall, he was able to strengthen the two pivots of all civic organisation—the veneration of the weak for the strong, and the devotion of the strong to the weak—and, thereby, give force to the ideal commandment of morality: Do good for its own sake.

To those who would throw doubt on the reality of its morality, Positivism boldly answers, by the organ of its priesthood: the existence and the continuance of positive morality are inseparable from those of the human race itself. Together they were born, and only together will

they disappear. Whatever may be the nature of the Supreme Being, either imaginary or real, presented to man's reason, by the spectacle of the outer world, as the worthy object of his affection, it is by either the spontaneous or the systematic working of his brain, apart from any consideration of self-interest, that he loves and respects his fellows, and devotes himself to the common good Natural laws do not date their beginnings merely from the day they happen to be discovered. They have been in operation from the most distant ages, and Humanity, therefore, taking possession of her wealth wherever it is found, claims as her own all unselfish aims and devoted actions which, from the remotest past, have done honour to human kind.

CHAPTER III.

ON THE SANCTION OF POSITIVE MORALITY

Positive morals useful as well as real. The human sanction at all times employed, even by theologians themselves, and always successful in its conflicts with procedures appealing to the supernatural. Its three degrees—of which public opinion is the most powerful. TO LIVE AGAIN IN OTHERS its principal reward. The positive spirit trusted; admission and illustration of the fact by de Maistre. The art of morals seemed to be beyond its power, but this exception merely temporary, and due to the order in which the several grades of human knowledge followed one another. Now no longer an exception for vigorous minds. Applications of natural laws are acts of positive FAITH, since they flow from voluntary submission of the individual reason to the knowledge possessed by Humanity. By its relative character this new faith precludes all possibility of scientific tyranny; it is the source of such unchangeable convictions as can alone secure the universal and irresistible sway of public opinion.

IT would be futile for positive moral science, real as it undeniably is, to claim for itself universal supremacy, unless it fulfilled the second requirement of every governing doctrine—namely, utility—by furnishing, for all its rules, a sanction and a warrant of unexceptionable validity. To make headway, in fact, the science must do more than convince cultivated minds; it must be able so to inspire confidence as to influence the wills of the people. I have, therefore, to show what are its general methods of rule; and how faith, which such methods always imply, has grown up along with the positive spirit, and constitutes a new moral authority, competent to secure the universal acceptance and practice of the truths it teaches.

Before doing so, however, it will be well to bestow some attention on the theological sanction, and ascertain its actual value. That sanction simply amounts to this: it

separates the good from the wicked, and sends the former, either straightway or after a sojourn in purgatory, to paradise, and the latter, at once, to hell ; the fate decreed being, in either case, eternal and unchangeable. Believers in theology aver that a moral system which does not rest upon a life to come lacks a sanction ; but they fail to observe that the system, on the excellence of which they pride themselves, is adapted only for natures of inferior stamp. To compare duty to an investment at high interest is, surely, to stain with selfish motives every act of self-denial. In order to justify their contention, theologians ought to show that they have never made use of other modes of control, or, at least, that such others were merely of secondary efficacy. Now, the result of civilisation has been to prove that, in the long run, supernatural methods are futile, and that human motives always prevail over them. Theologians have never ventured to use the one sanction without the other ; and, whenever there has been any conflict between them, the human sanction has invariably been victorious.

To see, in the divine sanction, the guarantee of morality, when, apart from the intervention of human means, its efficacy has never been established, argues more faith than logic ; for the constant association of the one with the other affords rather a presumption in favour of the earthly sanction. From the theological point of view, the punishments and rewards dealt out during this life are merely instalments of those which await man after death. For this future sanction to be effectual, it is needful to believe. Without faith, no salvation. This, the first condition, ought, according to the theological argument, to have been the only one. Now, if this supernatural faith had been sufficient for salvation, none but saints could have lived in the palmy days of faith. And yet, what types of moral monstrosity do we not meet with in the Middle Ages among those who were ostensibly most devout ! Assuredly, it was an attempt as bold as it was

frugal to pretend to reduce the penal system to the operation of supernatural sanctions only. But, if the theologians, satisfied therewith, had not done something more, they would have played a dangerous game. Force would have reigned without a rival, and the only victims of oppression would have been the honest people, who would have found it necessary to quit for ever so harsh and painful an earthly life, and take refuge in the other world. Hence, in their profoundly human wisdom, and in order, as far as possible, to ensure happiness on the earth, spiritual leaders like Moses, Numa, Saint Paul, and Mahomet required that belief should be accompanied by practice; and they never allowed the priesthoods they founded to forego the use of positive procedures. It was a serious inconsistency on the part of those organs of an absolute and omnipotent Being, who ought necessarily to be obeyed, thus to confess that the divine sanction is insufficient, and, at bottom, a simple fiction. They went even further. Their God being made for the service of Humanity, and not for her destruction, they reduced his moral office to that of sanctioning, in heaven, their much-needed right of binding and loosing upon earth; where, indeed, they have maintained order as if they had had nothing to rely on but their own authority.

Nothing better proves how secondary and fleeting was the supernatural sanction than the tests to which experience has everywhere subjected it. Divine commands, however portentous, have never been able to withstand the force of public opinion; whenever human sanctions were pitted against those alleged to be divine, the latter were always worsted in the encounter. A telling instance of this occurred in the Middle Ages. Feudalism, borrowing a custom from that Roman civic spirit out of which it partly grew, at first adopted the practice of swearing an oath of fealty, changing merely the character attaching to the supernatural solemnity. Latterly it dropped the oath altogether, and, as a pledge of future fealty, appealed solely

to the vassal's honour—that is to say, to the good fame attendant upon an entirely loyal past. The Catholic Church declared that whoever fought a duel would go straight to hell, and that this would be all the more certain, as he would die without confession. Feudal opinion, on the contrary, held the man who would not fight to be a poltroon, and as dishonoured to the day of his death. Between these conflicting sanctions knights and cavaliers did not hesitate; they preferred to run the risk of being roasted throughout eternity in company with Beelzebub and Satan and their legions, rather than brave public scorn for a few years; and, for the sake of remaining faithful to their honour, sacrificed a life of everlasting happiness with God. The theological sanction, therefore, was not a success.

In what does the positive sanction consist? What are those general methods of governing men which are everywhere so effectual; which our forefathers, and even the votaries of theological systems themselves, have never failed to employ? That sanction consists in invoking, as the need may require, conscience, opinion, and force. Such are its three modes of control, classed in order of decreasing efficacy and dignity. The noblest of the three, as implying persuasion and conviction, marks the purely religious sanction; it is the appeal to the conscience of the individual—that is to say, to his heart and his reason. If that appeal fail, we must have recourse to a true moral constraint in order to compel him to submit: we then invoke his family, his fellow-citizens, his fellow-men. This appeal to opinion is, in its nature, akin to both the other modes. But when, insensible to these influences, the individual disturbs the existence of the community by his personal outbreaks, it is necessary to employ extreme measures—that is to say, to deprive him of his property, his liberty, and, in exceptional cases, even his life. In one way or another, expiation must be made on this earth, whatever may be

the position occupied by the culprit. The universal institution of responsibility is the surest guarantee of human morality. In order to prevent or amend faults, the only legitimate appeal that can be made is to conscience and opinion; and the spiritual power should make use of no other resources. Force, confided exclusively to the hands of what is properly called government, is reserved for the repression of offences and crimes; yet it should be applied only when the first two appeals have been tried and found insufficient. Such are the means of which our forefathers made use to secure the fulfilment of duties; and, taken in their admirable entirety, they constitute, as all history testifies, a more salutary and efficacious sanction than the inventions of hell and paradise. Who troubles himself about payment at so distant a date, when temptation is so near at hand? But who does not dread that immediate expiation of remorse, of shame, of corporal punishment? To all the joys of paradise man will always prefer the direct and permanent enjoyment given by the testimony of his own conscience and the approval of good people. When, as in the case of madmen, the perturbations of personal disease deprive the feelings and reason of their normal influence, we have recourse to sequestration. The positive sanction, therefore, provides suitably for every case that can occur. What specially characterises it in its twofold working, in both its directing and its repressive functions, is the influence of public opinion, whose main office it is to connect with all actions the idea of either glory or disgrace. To suppose that the only effective government is that which depends on violence and corruption is to mistake abnormal cases for order itself; for at all times, force, however necessary it be, has been only a supplementary method, and it is always increasingly subordinated to prevailing opinions. Its efficacy and the duration of its employment depend on the amount of help those opinions give it; and this is a matter which lies beyond its scope. The positive sanction, then, is essentially spiritual; and if to be

condemned by others will be more and more regarded as the supreme disgrace, men will always wish, as their supreme reward, TO LIVE AGAIN IN OTHERS. To live in the memory of men was always a wish dear to noble souls; and that immortality, to which they most ardently aspired, is the only immortality that is compatible with science. Only in that sense does Positivism uphold the common saying: All morality without a future life (a subjective, not a personal, life) lacks sanction.

In a human government thus resting on a positive basis, and wherein only popular opinion can, by its support, secure the carrying out of moral precepts formulated by philosophers, how is this alliance of a great force with a great thought to be brought about? Opinion is liable to go astray. If it wins battles, it likewise loses them at times. It, therefore, needs to be guided and governed—that is to say, brought back to habitual consideration of the common weal. That means, first of all, that each individual should freely accept a definite faith; and, then, that such faith should, by its nature, be capable of becoming the same for all—that is, a universal faith. This is a colossal problem, transcending any individual power, however great. Positivism, here as elsewhere, does not come forward to create anything new; it only developes and systematises existing spontaneous and universal tendencies. History proves that, the larger the share the positive spirit has had in forming man's beliefs, the better he has subordinated his life to them. This tendency, which at first prevailed in special views regarding human morals, has, by degrees, been extended to general views in other fields of thought. From the time of its earliest acquisitions, the positive spirit produced the only convictions which are really universal and unchangeable. Don Juan, who attaches no importance to heaven or hell, or the social proprieties, accepts the two foundations of all morality—reason and sociability: (1) he believes in the fundamental theorem (two and two

make four) wherewith begins the sacred way that ends in the positive religion; (2) it is for the love of Humanity alone that he gives an alms to the poor fellow who begged in the name of God. These convictions engendered an ever-strengthening popular confidence in those who discovered and taught positive truths. At the time when the great Catholic theorist, de Maistre, in his *Saint Petersburg Evenings*, called attention to the faith reposed in them, the people's trust had been extended from the geometers to the astronomers, the physicists, the chemists, and even the biologists. Their ascendancy extorted from him this valuable confession :—

> This species of despotism, which is the distinctive mark of modern men of science, rests entirely to-day upon profound calculations which only a very few men are competent to make. They have only to be agreed among themselves to impose silence on the crowd. Their theories have become a sort of religion; the least doubt is sacrilege. The English translator of Bacon's works, Dr. Shaw, has said.....*That the Copernican system is still not without its difficulties.* Assuredly, it requires a very bold person to give expression to such a doubt. I know nothing whatever of the translator personally, and am not even aware whether he is alive. He has not thought proper to let us know what his reasons were, and it is, therefore, impossible to judge of them; but, so far as courage goes, *he is a hero!*

De Maistre himself has furnished a decisive proof that the scientific spirit surpasses theology in determining convictions. When he undertook the systematisation of Catholicism in that treatise *Of the Pope*, whence, as from its fountain source, was derived that reactionary current that resulted in the *Syllabus*, he attempted, as he has said elsewhere, to show, by arguments of the positive kind, "that there is no Christian dogma which has not its root in the inner nature of man, and in tradition as old as the human race." To those who, disquieted by the novelty of the proceeding, regretted, with good reason, that he had not kept to the traditional vein

of argumentation, he replied: "Had I done so, nobody would have read me." Now people have read him; and Auguste Comte, while appropriating all his essential principles, has shown that the positive Revolution found an unconscious theoretical helper in the most logical of its adversaries.

Instead of being disturbed by the discredit into which theology was sinking as a result of the growing belief in science, insomuch that considerable strength of mind was needed to stand up for doctrines at variance with positive theories, that bold thinker did not hesitate to proclaim the restoration of Catholicism as inevitable. What gave him that conviction was the fact that men of science, powerful as they were in the realm of nature, were of no account whatever in purely human affairs. Like all strong philosophic heads, de Maistre had no doubts as to the inevitable tendency of the human mind towards unity of method and doctrine; and in the deplorable separation between two hostile powers—the one concerned with faith and morals, the other with reason and industry—he saw only a temporary accident. But when, contrasting the divergence in the views of modern scientists in relation to political and moral matters with the convergence and potent unity of theological conceptions, he drew the conclusion that theology, having retained its supremacy in the sphere of morals, would resume the direction of the whole scientific sphere, even including astronomy, de Maistre counted upon a reconciliation that lies beyond the bounds of possibility. Failing to make a right analysis of the situation, he was unable to perceive that Humanity must either abandon the positive method in every field where she has won the day against, and at the expense of, theology, or subject moral and political phenomena equally to her rule. Now, when the question is put in that form, who would not acknowledge the hopelessness of a restoration of theocracy? How is it possible ever to go back upon those logical transformations which the brains of men, even of

those who most rebelled against the scientific spirit, have undergone? Was it not to consolidate those conquests of the positive method, and to prepare the forces needed for its universal extension, that Descartes established, between positive reason and theological faith, that provisional and systematic truce which, in questions of physics, destroyed irretrievably the authority of theology, and foreshadowed its definitive elimination in questions of morals? Practically, in both logic and physics it is only to the discoveries of the positive spirit that the public now gives the name of *science;* and the theological conceptions relating to the same matters are, in its eyes, discredited, or they are treated with ridicule. Now, when the human mind has once really given up an imaginary theory, it never goes back to it again. Moreover, the positive spirit is essentially energetic and full of conquering activity; and in whatever domain it conquers it causes conviction to penetrate into minds utterly opposed to all theological government. Its success, as regards logic, the world, and life, having been shown by experience, there was reason to suppose that it would prove not less decisively successful as regards society and man.

We are now, thanks to Auguste Comte, in a position to solve a difficulty which was too much for de Maistre. As early as the middle of the eighteenth century, David Hume, in one of his *Essays*, had thus described the situation:—

> When I reflect that, though the bulk and figure of the earth have been measured and delineated; though the motions of the tides have been accounted for; the order and economy of the heavenly bodies subjected to their proper laws, and Infinite itself reduced to calculation, yet men still dispute concerning the foundation of their moral duties—when I reflect on this, I say, I fall back into diffidence and scepticism. (*An Inquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals,* Section ix.)

Hume's doubt had reference only to the fundamental principles that had been put forward up to his own time;

for he attempted to lift the human art out of the empirical rut in which it had so long stuck; but he was no more successful than the great philosophers before him, who, subsequent to Pythagoras and to Aristotle (in his *Ethics* and *Politics*), had undertaken to found a rational and systematic theory of government. But the popular persistence of theological morality did not mislead him more than it misled those true thinkers, his rivals, whose provisional attitude at that critical conjuncture was embodied in Diderot's death-bed aphorism: "Unbelief is the first step towards philosophy." All of them had a firm persuasion that the abnormal and temporary antagonism between the moral and the positive evolution was more apparent than real; for, in spite of the break-down of theology, they saw the moral elevation of the revolutionary West sustained under the combined influence of the scientific spirit, practical life, and ordinary common sense. Their sense of human unity was profound; and, if the positive conception of it was not within their mental grasp, they have at least preserved this unquestionable superiority over de Maistre—that they sought for it only in science, irrespective of God or monarch.

The great seventeenth century, taking up again, in its own way, the great philosophic dualism instituted by Aristotle and Plato, had opened up to the positive spirit two paths, which were first shown by Auguste Comte to lead to the same goal. Descartes, in his *Discourse on Method* (1637), set forth the immortal manifesto of natural philosophy; and, adding example to precept, founded general geometry, which will, for all time, form its logical foundation. The Lord Chancellor Bacon, in his *Great Restoration of the Sciences* (*Instauratio Magna*; 1620), endeavoured, in accordance with a judicious interpretation of Nature, to wrest social and moral inquiries from the spell of theology and metaphysical verbiage. But the programme he drew up was not followed by any durable construction; and, in spite of some valuable contributions made by a few vigorous

followers, his school displayed no such majestic development as did that founded by Descartes. Hence, while in logic and physics the philosophers were seen to be fundamentally agreed, in morals their disagreements were manifest and profound. And why? The repeated failures that marked all attempts made in the latter field were the inevitable consequences of a situation in which the means were inadequate to the pressing needs. The government of human nature, being the noblest of the arts, must needs continue in the empirical stage until all the others, which were simpler and, therefore, more accessible to abstract methods of treatment, had first been rationalised. Now, it was only by following, one after another, in a certain necessary order, that the latter became scientific. Our positive conceptions, in other words, were all the later in getting rid of their theological associations in proportion as they had reference more immediately to man. That is why Humanity's science had successively to take possession of mathematics with Thales, then of astronomy with Hipparchus, of physics with Galileo, of chemistry with Lavoisier, and of biology with Bichat, before it could be completed by sociology and morals. What, therefore, de Maistre imagined to be an absolute impossibility was such only with reference to the order of evolution of human knowledge. The attempts of such men as Hobbes, Hume, d'Holbach, and Condorcet to realise Bacon's views, and to found a rational system of morals and politics, were not wrongly inspired, but merely premature. Auguste Comte proved this by founding the Religion of Humanity.

Following in that track the necessary order of the advances made by the human mind, the public, by virtue of habits acquired in connection with the mathematical, physico-chemical, and biological arts, is beginning to acknowledge the competence of positive science in the government of human nature. That alliance between science and practice which, since industry has had free play, has led the way to such prodigious material progress,

has inspired the conviction that it would one day become possible also in the domain of man's nature and conduct, and would carry political and moral progress to an inconceivable height. That is why the public, whose cry is for measures that are real and opportune, talks glibly about scientific policy and scientific Socialism, without as yet knowing very clearly what it means. A scientific education is demanded; festivities and ceremonies, of a purely human, domestic, or patriotic nature, are spontaneously organised; and there is a growing aspiration to know more about the part played by great men in that social evolution of which they were the most distinctive products. There is no room to doubt that, amid congenial surroundings such as these, moral and religious rules emanating from science would be accepted with the same confidence as all other positive rules. As experience already shows, in the case of the arts practised respectively by engineers, astronomers, and physicians, the bulk of those who have not studied will trust for guidance, in matters of public and private conduct, to the philosophers, who will have a wider acquaintance than anybody else with the whole field of abstract knowledge, and will, to the same extent, be more capable of teaching it. A thorough consideration of the matter thus implants in us an unshakable conviction that the government of man will, in the long run, belong, without reserve, to the science of Humanity, just as the government of the world now definitively belongs to it.

But, with the advent of this new spiritual authority, will society, as de Maistre insinuates, have grounds for dreading the rise of a new despotism which, in the name of science, will take the place of that which Jesuitism would fain have imposed on us in the name of God? Or, on the contrary, will it find therein all the needful guarantees for the free play of conscience and opinion? Experience has already given the answer. Look at all the industrial enterprises which seek to turn to account, under the guidance of

science, the resources of the earth and of the animal kingdom. Are they not so many *acts of* (positive) *faith?* What more solid pledge can a man give of the faith that is in him than to comply with laws of which he does not know the proof, and upon which his fortune, his health, and his life depend? There we have a spectacle that does honour to Humanity, and attests the universal activity of kindly feelings: trust and dignity preside over the life and labours of the community. Man was not born to be perpetually on the search for principles of conduct, but to conform his life to principles universally accepted. Faith, which assures private and public happiness, will not cease to be a virtue. In the abstract, all faith consists in the disposition common to all men to believe spontaneously in laws proclaimed by a competent authority, without first examining or proving them. A rule, to be of faith, has only to satisfy inward dispositions; but, for it to gain lasting and universal adoption, it must be in harmony with outward realities. In order to consolidate an undemonstrable belief that satisfied only certain tendencies of the brain, Catholicism was obliged to have recourse to arbitrary methods of procedure; such, for example, as the infallibility of the Pope. Positivism will have no need of such devices to consolidate a faith which simultaneously satisfies these two requirements—reality and usefulness. In the positive sense, TO HAVE FAITH is voluntarily to submit one's own reason to that of Humanity—that is, to the sum-total of the abstract and general theories built up by her most powerful interpreters. All the members of the community, however, contribute to that sum-total; since individual common sense—true, spontaneous positivism—nourishes, stimulates, or controls the general reason; so that positive faith may be otherwise defined as the submission of private to universal common sense.

Sufficient experience has now convinced the masses that their confidence has not been misplaced. The relative

nature of positive faith has now been too clearly manifested to allow of their harbouring the chimerical and incongruous fear of seeing a beneficent ascendancy transformed into despotism. In fact, although the necessary proofs may not, and perhaps never will, be within the ken of all, men have learned to believe in mathematical truths, in the double motion of the earth, and in the circulation of the blood. These discoveries of the positive spirit number more believers than the Bible, the Koran, and the *Social Contract*, all put together, ever had. And what is the explanation of the fact? Simply this: that the respective abstract laws—mathematical, astronomical, and biological—having started with realities, have never been found in contradiction with the observed facts on which they were founded. Hence the unchangeable popular conviction. On what truths was faith ever bestowed with more justice and advantage? Does he who formulates the scientific law derive from it a despotic power over men? Why, he is himself subject to that law, which he has discovered, not created. What marks him out from all others is the fact that he is the first to set the example of submitting to the new truth which is due to him; and the public ends by believing in what it sees carried into practice. If it is in the law itself that an objector discovers despotism, there is no help for it; but then its name and its nature are changed. It is the domination of things and principles, not of men. Moreover, it is not the discoverer of the law who applies it. He does not issue commands; he spreads knowledge. It is for every person, according to his own convenience, to deduce from the law appropriate rules; and the activity of all, whether women, or poets, or artisans, finds in it the widest field for doing so. To drop these perhaps too abstract indications, and take, for the sake of illustration, a concrete case: if we look at the theory of arithmetical division, as constructed by Auguste Comte in his *Subjective Synthesis*, we notice that the great philosopher did not deduce from it two separate rules—one

for his own use and another for the public. The one which he formulated and adopted the public may either reject, or accept and apply, whenever it thinks fit ; and, in order to use the theory, and to find out that the rule based on it always answers its purpose, a knowledge of the demonstration is by no means essential. This experimental check is ground enough for the masses to believe firmly, and with all liberty of conscience, in truths that are, at any time, capable of being demonstrated.

The adhesion given to positive dogmas always retains a provisional character. There is always an understood exception as to possible errors or omissions. This tacit reservation, which, from the theological point of view, would be a rank impiety, is a direct consequence of the very nature of the positive spirit. A scientific law is accepted only on condition of its being confirmed by experience ; and this provisional acceptance is itself maintained only so long as the law is found to satisfy practical requirements. The moment it becomes inadequate, it is the duty of all competent individuals to elaborate and develop it sufficiently to cover the cases which must, in the first instance, have been necessarily left out of account. In this way respect is shown for human dignity as well as for mental continuity ; since, by thus amending the grounds of his faith, man does not give up his first convictions, but retains, or expands, them accordingly as the sphere of his activity remains the same, or becomes more extensive. Moreover, any person may claim, within the measure of his abilities, to modify existing rules, or formulate new ones, on the sole understanding that he fulfils the intellectual conditions required of scientists themselves before faith is reposed in them. On that point alone is there equality, those conditions being incumbent on all alike. Haunted by no fears of those oft-recurring aberrations against which Catholicism had no effective safeguard except in the secular arm, positive faith admits the amplest right of criticism and

revision. To overcome heresies, such as the squaring of the circle, the pretended calculus of probabilities, and the make-believe science of political economy, the positive spirit has no need of force; like Dante, in his *Divine Comedy*, it "lets the people talk"—"looks, and passes by." Their discredit soon follows as the consequence of its triumph. Not only is the rule common to all, but the faith is so likewise. There is no such thing as universal competence. No man has the ability to observe everything, or to verify everything. Scientists have, therefore, of necessity, the same confidence in one another as that which the public reposes in them collectively. What varies is merely the *degree* of confidence, which is strong or weak in proportion as more or less competence is displayed. Thus, in this submission of the individual reason which distinguishes positive faith, there is nothing approaching the humiliating character of theological faith; nothing of that indispensable voluntary blindness which led a Saint Augustine to believe in the Gospel in spite of its absurdities, and a Pascal to reduce himself to a condition of stupidity in order to become a perfect Christian.

Nothing could be more opposed to the setting up of a despotic dogmatism than the spontaneous suitability which demonstrable truths possess for producing in all minds that involuntary acceptance which alone can overcome all self-conceit, and promote and facilitate all kinds of self-sacrificing effort. In that general assent the positive spirit finds the support needful for the application of the laws which it discovers. Far from enlarging the domain of legislation, whether civil or criminal, that spirit, owing to its ability to maintain order in men's brains by spiritual agencies alone, puts an end entirely to prosecutions relating to opinions or intellectual tendencies. To cause its doctrines to prevail, it will no more make use of persecution under the Republic, which secures it freedom of action, than it made an appeal to insurrection to secure

their dissemination under the reign of theology. To show that it is demonstrable faith alone that can boast at once of a peaceful development, a general agreement, and the power of inspiring unshakable convictions, no more striking proof could be adduced than the universal adoption of the theory of the double motion of the earth. When did the human mind ever have to vanquish such a concourse of hostile influences, the most formidable, perhaps, that ever opposed the adoption of a truth among men? It was obliged to contradict formally the evidence of the senses, and the all but unanimous tradition, of the human race; to lower the pride of man, who had previously regarded himself as the centre of creation; to throw doubt upon the very Word of God, who was detected in an exhibition of stupendous ignorance; and to demolish the keystone of the arch of the Holy Catholic Church. And yet, in spite of the obstruction of the Inquisition, and without any public disturbance, the positive spirit triumphed. It was enough for Galileo to subject to the rules of the positive method the conception of a few ancient astronomers, which, at an opportune moment, Copernicus had recently resuscitated, and, for the first time, to give that conception the support of demonstration. Nothing more was necessary. That fine genius overcame all hindrances by virtue of his profound comprehension of the true character of positive reasoning. Thanks to its aid, he was the better able to keep within the limits of the real—the abiding and exclusive field, as he rightly deemed, of natural philosophy. Assuredly, when the lessons that directly flow from that fruitful demonstration shall have been brought home to the mass of the working classes, they will have no hesitation in forsaking the conceited teachers, whose gross ignorance has no means of solving questions of any kind otherwise than by destruction, and will turn to the positive spirit to seek from it the means of salvation, as well as the secret of their destinies and the conditions of their happiness.

So precious, so truly incomparable, a victory is well calculated to reassure us, amidst the agitations of the present time, by connecting us with that body of demonstrable truths which form, as it were, the anchor thrown out by our forefathers into the reality of things. Our destinies are indissolubly bound to it; we must hold on to it, and to it alone. Around those positive truths all the best intellects of the race are banded; and their agreement is the best guarantee which the faith of the masses can possess. Every new result acquired is at once fraternally communicated from one end to the other of the Republic of the West. To whatever land they belong by birth, these positive minds are united in agreement with one another, and possess in common the same method, principles, language, and aim. The best minds throughout the West are emancipated from God and kingship, thanks to that philosophic league against which neither the thunder of the Papacy, nor the scaffold of democracy, nor the cannon of kings have been able to prevail. A single discovery emanating from that body has done more for the happiness, the peace, and the freedom of the human race than all the writings of Voltaire, Helvetius, and Rousseau, great as may have been the influence of those superficial and too often inconsistent authors.

The evidence, then, is conclusive. Theologians, no less than democrats, must choose their side—for or against. Positive faith has taken the place of faith in the supernatural, and its interpreters inspire a confidence which fills theological beholders with envy. The perception, waxing ever clearer, of a terrestrial and human order which is independent of us, has produced throughout the West vivid moral and religious convictions in cultivated minds, and prejudices that are constantly taking firmer root in the minds of the masses. It is an accomplished fact that there exists a moral authority, apart from God or king, whose resistless ascendancy is destined to inspire, confirm, or amend the conduct which families, classes, and nations

will follow. It is, in fact, a government of opinion, based on the positive spirit, which is keeping them, all alike, firmly cemented together. It will be the grand task of the immediate future to organise and regularise this spiritual power by propagating, through an education common to the whole of the West, the general principles which are ultimately bound to prevail everywhere. With such a leverage, the power of public opinion will be manifested more and more; and its ascendancy will be the more complete as the decay of theology releases that supreme sanction from outworn props that have now become encumbrances, at once dangerous and oppressive, and concentrates it more and more in the proletariate. The new spiritual power exists. It is consulted. It is obeyed. Its coherence and vigour in its preparatory stage give promise of the preponderance assuredly in store for it. Its rise to power will be the easier for the mental anarchy in which the existing organs of opinion are embroiled; and all brains will give it some support, for there is not one in which positive faith has not, to some extent, effected a lodgment. All the priesthoods of theology may, therefore, be left to wither away of themselves. The dissolution to which they are doomed will not endanger any of the essential results of civilisation.

CHAPTER IV.

ON THE CONSECRATION OF POSITIVE MORALITY

Positive morality, in accordance with tradition, rests upon the existence of collective beings. Man is everywhere found connected with a family, a country, and a collective organisation of a more complex character; and, outside of such environments, he has no existence. Their dominion over him, ever on the increase, is specially characterised by continuity; it is summed up in this universal law: THE DEAD GOVERN THE LIVING, by directing their thoughts and affections. Humanity, whom they represent, constitutes, therefore, the Supreme Being, in whose name the rules of positive morality should be consecrated.

POSITIVISM, the heir of all antecedent civilisations, combines, of necessity, the authority of tradition with that of doctrine and public opinion. Conscience and opinion, standing alone, were liable to illusions, errors, and excesses, and, without the regulative control of tradition—a belief in the absolute truth of which preceded the exercise of individual reason—could scarcely have avoided becoming arbitrary. Yet, to give stability to moral rules, though tradition is essential (for any doctrine that lacks it has no future, for want of a past), it is not in itself sufficient. It is furthermore necessary that, as in all the preparatory religions, this tradition should be identified with the laws of a supreme authority, giving to all the prescriptions of morality their really binding force. As was the case with all the other leading conceptions of the positive system of morals, there was no question here of inventing a Supreme Being, but, amidst the various powers that exert an influence over man, of discerning and recognising the highest by its characteristic marks, constancy and universality, which are essential for the verification of its existence.

Ordinary observation teaches us that there is *something* above ourselves; and a host of proofs every day testify that these dominating influences are manifold. We are fixed on the Earth; we cannot change our position in space very far laterally, and still less upwards or downwards. We have received from our fathers a physiological structure which it is not in our power to change. Our nature, our sex, our family, have been decided for us apart from any will of our own. We have not been allowed to choose in what age of the world we should live, or in which country we should be born and bred. We are living in the nineteenth century; our nationality is French; and we could not, if we would, make the facts other than they are. Now, various as these overpowering influences are, they may all be brought under two irreducible heads of fatality—namely, first, the order of the world; and, secondly, tradition, or the sway of antecedents. Both have been acknowledged in all times, even with some contradictions. It was assumed, in conceptions of the supernatural, that the Supreme Being had created the order of the world; a supposition at variance with the universal law that the higher order is everywhere found to be dependent on the lower. It was further assumed that tradition, which varied always with each variety of theological dogma, had first come into being at a certain epoch in the life of Humanity, and that those who lived before that epoch, and the adherents of all other creeds, were not affected by it. For example, although Jews, Christians, and Mussulmans have a common ancestor, Abraham (more nominal than real), yet the generally accepted tradition dates for the first only from Moses, and for the others from Jesus and Mahomet respectively. Their mutual antagonism and conflicts prove how much tradition has been broken up by these several attempts at unity.

The problem was, then, to attain to a conception of tradition which should include equally all the partial adumbrations of it; a conception by which due regard

should be shown for the outward reality of things, and for the facts of human continuity—conditions of the problem which, up to the present century, were either misunderstood or wrongly stated. For its solution, what had to be done was (1) to take the most advanced portion of Humanity to start with ; to trace back from generation to generation the course of its development throughout the succession of the ages without any break of continuity ; and to confirm the results thus obtained by comparing this past, in its several stages, with all the civilisations that did not share in its course of evolution ; (2) by virtue of the same law, to determine, among the various constant influences dominating each generation, that one which rules them all, without exception, in time and in space, and represents at once their principle and their end. By his foundation of sociology, Auguste Comte has made the real truth of the matter clear for every honest investigator. He has demonstrated that, in every age, men, whether they knew it or not, have been subject to collectivities, or associative embodiments, on which they are, necessarily and inevitably, ever more and more dependent, whether they will or not. That is the state of the case, only empirically apprehended until Comte's time. What is necessary is to frame a systematic conception of it, in order to be able to deduce the consequences that logically follow from it.

In spite of theological and metaphysical dreams, man was born in society. The Adam of the theological paradise, and the *Ego* of metaphysical speculation, both adult-born, are sheer fictions of the imagination, never met with anywhere, not even in Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe;* for Crusoe had not only been brought up in a family, but had with him what he had recovered from the wreck : labour-saving tools, books to console him, and a cultivated brain —all of them things which bear imprinted on them the stamp of society. Before we come into the world the family exists. It makes all the preparations for our

reception, and, at first, passes on to us everything, beginning with life itself. The family is not an exclusively human institution; it is found among certain species of animals, such as the roe-deer and the fox. The latter, indeed, practises widowhood, as George Leroy ascertained. Consequently, the existence and the necessary permanence of the family ought no more to be a subject of discussion than the existence and necessary permanence of our organs of digestion or locomotion. Rousseau, then, was only giving way to his own disordered imagination when he drew a fanciful picture of a state of nature in which man, like a wild beast, lived a solitary life in woods and wilds. Again, every family, in its turn, forms part of a larger society, a clan, or tribe, or nation, under whose protection it developes its spontaneous germs. A solitary family has never been seen, unless by accident. It is this dependence of the family on some higher group that De Maistre had in his mind when, with reference to the *Declaration of the Rights of Man*, he wrote:—

> Solitary Man is a mere abstraction. There is no "man" in the world. I have seen Frenchmen, Italians, Russians, etc. I know, even, from Montesquieu, that there may be such a being as a Persian; but as to *man*, I declare I never met him in my life. If he exists, it is quite unknown to me.

Lastly, the several fatherlands, in spite of their primitive struggles, or, rather, even by reason of them, form themselves into aggregates, establish among themselves definite relations, which transform them into members of a common organism. Cook's *Voyages*, like the accounts of the discoveries made by the great navigators who preceded him—Da Gama, Columbus, Magellan, and Tasman—always show us, in the continents they explored, man living in society.

The further man advances in civilisation, the wider becomes the range of the collectivity that impresses itself on him. As time passes, everything becomes connected. Each generation is born of that which precedes it; and

the impulsion which each century receives from its predecessor is inevitably transmitted to that which follows it. Directly or indirectly, man is more and more dependent on the heritage thus handed down to him. Each of us, by his family and his fatherland, dates back to the first ages of the human race, through an unbroken line of ancestors belonging to all families and all nations; and they have, of necessity, been the influences that have shaped our present state. But he is also becoming more and more closely connected with the entire population of the planet. This is true now of the most advanced portion of the race, and it will gradually become so for the various communities of the East. The moment one of the latter groups joins the concert of the West, it brings with it, as a contributory element, the action of its own ancestors, who thenceforward become also ours; and it adopts, in return, those who were specially our own. Thus it is that the two sources of our power, solidarity and continuity, go on increasing, spontaneously and without preconceived plan, in a manner that tends towards final unity. Hence no one is born alone, and everyone is a fellow-citizen of all the ages and all the peoples that have co-operated in forming him, and whose united agency makes man, as Leibnitz expressed it, a compound of time and eternity. Life, knowledge, power, everything we have, is transmitted to us by society. A self-sufficing being, independent of help from his kind, must, to use Aristotle's strong expression, be either a beast or a god. It would, therefore, be an impossibility to establish rules of conduct by leaving out of account those collective organisms without which man can neither be conceived, nor live, nor be developed. Of necessity each individual forms part of a family, each family part of a country, each country part of a collectivity still more complex; and to think of founding a positive system of morals apart from these collective beings would be to wish to build upon sand. *We live by others.*

There is, then, a continuous and ever-widening collectivity

that overrules us; and into this we must now inquire more closely, in order to ascertain the nature of the preponderating element in it to which everything must be subordinated. In that all-embracing union, the pressure of generations, or *continuity*, necessarily overcomes, more and more, the co-operation of contemporaries, or *solidarity* properly so called. What, in fact, distinguishes the human race from the various animal species, and constitutes the source of its superiority, is the fact that it has ancestors, who, by virtue of their ever-increasing number, furnish it both with the force that impels and the rule that controls it. Their action extends even to our domestic animals, which, moreover, voluntarily take a share in the collective work. If the sporting dog, for instance, successfully restrains its natural instincts, this result is due to man's intervention; and the influence of social continuity accounts for what it has become. It is through the tutelage of his ancestors that man has been able to rise from the level of animality, and, divesting himself of vain terrors, to take into his hands the government of the organic and inorganic world. It is through their intervention that we are enabled to endure its influence, for without them we should have lacked the time and the forces of every sort necessary to foresee and modify the phenomena of nature. To them we are indebted for the rudiments and the methods of all the arts. Whether we follow up their enterprises, as they pursued those of their predecessors, or start new enterprises of our own, we act always in conformity with the laws of art or nature which they discovered for us, and by means of which they protect us against ourselves. Those who do not believe themselves to be subject to such laws are ignorant of the sources of their own thoughts and affections; they do not know whose sons they are—that is all. Although our ancestors are mostly unknown to us, we do know that it is only through them that we exist; and it is the feeling and the notion of their real co-operation with us

that urge us on to an active universal sympathy. Auguste Comte, then, when he formulated this fundamental law: *The Living are always more and more governed by the Dead*, only described, without any exaggeration, a situation which was the necessary result of antecedent circumstances, and which, up to his time, had been submitted to with all the disadvantages incident to ignorance. This law of human order, which destroys, from its very foundation, the democratic doctrine, appears strange to minds imbued with revolutionary prejudices, only because it is difficult for them—and more so for them than for others—to observe what is continually happening around them, even beginning with their own families.

In order to complete these indications as far as possible, it is important to show how the dead govern the living, so as to become at once their models and their protectors. In the life-work of our ancestors there are two distinct movements to be noted—one efficacious and permanent, the other disorderly and finally brought to nought. The activity of our forefathers has ceased—their bodies have disappeared; but during their lives they produced a certain number of results—material, intellectual, and moral. All of these results, however, do not continue to endure; and, finally, only the good they wrought remains—the river of oblivion carries away the rest. The unassimilable part of their activity neither suspended nor distorted human order in its nature, arrangement, or serial progression; the most it could do was to retard or enfeeble the common advance. In every conflict provoked by faults or crimes evil at first preponderates, although—great as the power of human continuity may be—its ascendancy becomes always less and less. But, as these individual disturbances are temporary, and not indefinitely renewable, they continually grow weaker and weaker, and in the end continuity prevails. In this respect, such incidents resemble the impulsive forces in all bodies whatever, which become constantly attenuated, and are finally overcome. The

ages, therefore, in their course, purify by degrees the heritage of the human race. In ultimate analysis this heritage is composed only of souls, since material results, being by their nature perishable, have to be renewed. Only the products of intellect and feeling are capable of combining, in the brain of the living, with the results due to its individual activity in each case. This combination, taking place spontaneously, is, in most cases, an indistinguishable fusion; so that, speaking generally, in each of their projects the living would be at a loss to refer its various elements to their manifold respective authors. The souls of the latter are identified with the brain which preserves, transmits, and even developes, the intellectual and moral results due to them; and, as these results are fixed and constant, they end, like all continuous forces, by becoming preponderant, however intense may be the reaction of the assimilating brain. Owing to the subjective nature of their action, those souls can act uniformly upon all, can spread and divide themselves to any extent without losing anything of their power. The value of the law of falling bodies, due to Galileo, has been in no way impaired by the universality of its adoption. This property of spiritual influence, its indefinite expansiveness and divisibility without loss of power, is the foundation of the co-operation of the dead with the living, and is at the same time the guarantee of its perpetuity. Hence the overruling sway of our forefathers has in it nothing of that arbitrariness of godhead which imposes what it *wills*, and distributes, when and where it pleases, moral and intellectual faculties. Here personality has disappeared; and, as there are no longer any organs, there are no more faculties or wills, but only *laws*. By this all-important distinction between the absolute reality of theology and metaphysics, and that reality whereof usefulness to man is an inseparable attribute, and which alone is destined to endure, Auguste Comte has brought to light the true supreme power—that power which binds together the various

human elements, nourishes, regulates, and consecrates their affections, thoughts, and actions—HUMANITY.

All its properties are now known. The true Great-Being occupies a situation identical with our own, and offers a similar, but more highly developed, nature. It has tasted of our affections, experienced our sorrows, shared our hopes, and put forth, like us, constant efforts to make a wretched set of surroundings, and a coarse nature, gradually better and better. It was the feeling of this real existence, not yet unveiled to view, which, in order approximately to represent Humanity, instigated our forefathers to create gods; which next suggested to them the fiction of the Man-God, and, lastly, the utopia which took the place of Jesus in all chivalrous hearts—that of the Virgin-Mother—an ideal still closer to the real conception, and the harbinger foretelling of its near approach. Humanity not seldom awaits for centuries the answer which time always brings for problems capable of demonstration. She could not be perceived until after she had, through the medium of the Republic of the West, taken mental possession of the Earth and attained adult age. Auguste Comte was then able to discover the laws which best characterise her—namely, the laws of Progress—and to show the universality of the laws of Order; both categories being equally immutable as regards the *arrangement* of phenomena, and their *intensity* alone being susceptible of modification. The fundamental institutions of society—property, the family, language, government—are everywhere co-existent. They have undergone no changes except as follows—viz., (1) in the mode of conceiving them, which was at first by fictions, then by abstractions, lastly by positive notions; (2) in the mode of consolidating them, which was at first by war for conquest, then by war for defence, lastly by industrialism; (3) in the mode of consecrating them, which was at first in the name of domestic selfishness, then of national selfishness, lastly in the name of universal love. These

laws allow of the future being foreseen ; and this capacity of prevision, which was the characteristic attribute of the gods, belongs only to Humanity. The laws were not constructed by her out of caprice. She respected and applied them long before discovering and formulating them ; and they are ever being confirmed by what is taking place before our eyes, although there is no longer any act of will forthcoming on the part of our ancestors to introduce modifications in them. Humanity is subject to the astronomical, physical, and vital order, which is the necessary foundation of our activity ; and, by formulating its laws, she gave, earlier than we could, the example of the first of submissions. At the same time she fulfils the essential condition of power, since her existence is independent of those who are subject to it, and who are its direct instruments. Derived though it be from beings like ourselves, we can no more withdraw from subjection to that power than from subjection to the double motion of the planet, and still less can we control its working. She symbolises that incontestable fact, the over-ruling influence of the past ; and, in order to fulfil simultaneously all the successive conditions of its predominance, she needs only to eliminate some of its transitory phases, which, in their succession, seemed to render those conditions incompatible. She embraces the future generations, since the past generations were themselves the future, before being incorporated into Humanity. This real extension into the future meets, at the same time, the desire felt by every man of prolonging his existence ; for it links him, through the medium of his successors, with imperishable destinies. As for contemporaries, since they will one day be ancestors, and since, consequently, the future depends to some extent on the worthy modifying activity they may exercise, they, too, are called to form part of Humanity. In her they find both a lofty ideal and a type of constant improvement. But in the past, in the present, and in the future there is no really enduring life but that which has

been consistent with the general utility. Families and countries are of the same nature and composition at any given time, and in their successive stages of growth; and all, in their upward march, have tended to form that Humanity with which they are finally incorporated. Humanity, therefore, represents the whole mass of beings who have freely concurred, are concurring, and will concur in working for the common welfare (*res publica*). Our contemporaries and our posterity being only through hope incorporated with her, the Dead are, at present, her sole representatives. It is to Humanity that the aphorism of Hippocrates about the human body is specially appropriate; in her *everything concurs, everything consents, everything co-operates.* Under all aspects and relations, as Auguste Comte wrote in 1842, "man, so called, is at bottom nothing but a mere abstraction; there is nothing real but HUMANITY" (General Conclusions of the *System of Positive Philosophy*). We ought henceforth to consider individuals, families, and peoples, not as separate beings, but as so many members of a single Great-Being, so far as they all co-operate in time and space, in preparing for its advent, and in serving it.

To set up Humanity as the beginning and end of all existence is the direct and necessary consequence of our social nature. A dignified submission is the requisite condition of our welfare and our happiness: *Man agitates himself, and Humanity leads him.* No individual or private power will prevail against hers. She is defended against all attacks—by her mass, which extends to all ages and all places, and by her cohesion, which makes every part dependent on the whole—a whole which spontaneously represses and paralyses all divergent impulses, and secures and perpetuates co-operation from all quarters. The guardian sway of Humanity will be the better submitted to in proportion as she becomes more loved; and she will be the more loved in proportion as her benefits become better appreciated—benefits which she liberally showers upon us

before we are able to ask for or deserve them. When once transmission of sentiments and opinions has begun, from that moment there is subordination on the part of the recipients. Rousseau expressed the feelings of rebels when he said "I hate benefactors"; and, in fact, the tendency of the revolutionary spirit is to make man an outlaw to Humanity. Since the dead directly govern the thoughts and affections of the living, the dominion of authority will be everlasting, and those who speak in its name, Family, Church, and Fatherland, can have no other legitimate aim than to cause Humanity to be loved, known, and served. At first man comes passively under this yoke of the past, as represented by his mother and his teacher, who have shaped his heart and mind. He becomes a *citizen* only when he freely accepts the yoke, and begins, in his turn, to work for others, as others had previously toiled and suffered for him. The worship, the doctrine, the life of Humanity—it is in these our hearts should seek inspiration, our minds enlightenment, and our activities an object. The anterior forms under which morality had been conceived had no value beyond the degree of Humanity each of them contained: *Without Humanity* (and without the Family and the Fatherland, her necessary preparatives) *there is no morality.* After the West first began to foresee more clearly the advent of this supreme existence, it was smitten by a profound attachment (1) for the abstract laws, concretely embodied in space, which have guided the emancipation of Humanity; and (2) for the Earth, which has been the object of her prodigious conquests and the theatre of her moral greatness, and will be the eternal seat of her dominion. Sociability, at first domestic, then civic, was at length able to assume its universal character by extending itself to all populations—past, future, and present—and, since then, Western civilisation, the nearest approximation to Humanity, has, by the marvellous manifestations of its sociability, laid the foundations of a genuine political order. It has had the boldness and

the ability to grapple with the high enterprise of uniting, by an identical, demonstrable faith, without violence or vain display of authority, all men of good will in a bond of mutual love and a common destiny. Auguste Comte was the first to attain to a positive notion of that unity, which has been looked forward to and desired by all the generous, energetic, and enlightened souls our race has numbered in its bosom. That supreme providence, of which men like Aristotle, St. Thomas Aquinas, Descartes, Leibnitz, Diderot, Hume, and Condorcet gradually prepared the conception, and from which they are henceforth inseparable, is the creator of universal morals. It is in the name of Humanity that moral rules of every sort will henceforward be consecrated; and it is under her direction that public opinion is called upon to give its sanction to the applications of the principles which she has formulated.

CHAPTER V.

ON THE POSITIVE CONCEPTION OF DUTY

Duty is a function performed by a free organ. All co-operation in a common work implies social inequalities, either spontaneous or acquired, which fulfil distinct functions. Duty is the systematic formulation of this unalterable condition of things, and is incumbent on all classes alike. The correspondence of functions with organs not being absolute, tendencies to divergence must be kept in check by sacrifices of individuality, the extent of which must be determined by abstract reason. Faith is, therefore, an indispensable condition for the fulfilment of duty. There are various degrees of duty, corresponding to the individual's station in society and to the grade of civilisation. In fact, duty is submission to Humanity.

Living by others, aspiring to live again in others, every man finds his destiny fixed for him without choice. The situation made for him, betwixt the past and the future, brings along with it, as a necessary consequence, the universal duty of giving a social purpose to his whole activity. The laying down of the boundary-lines of duty presupposes that the problem of human unity has first been solved. For the collective organism that problem has found its solution in the direct notion of Humanity; and we shall now go on to see how Gall's discovery allows of our completing that notion by means of the moral unity of each of her individual agents. Before Auguste Comte's time the positive conception of duty had been scarcely perceived in the obscurity of the metaphysical theories which then prevailed. Setting out from the synthetic idea always attached to it by popular common sense, he was able to analyse its several elements, and succeeded in consolidating the notion of it. He defined Duty thus: *a function performed by a free organ*—every function consisting in co-operation in the life-work of a collective

being. Hence the sentiment of duty has a close connection with the spirit of general harmony.

Let us first show in what this co-operation of the living consists. The dead govern them, but in a blindfold way, so far as regards the general direction in which they guide them in Humanity's name. To constitute an efficacious co-operation, a mere impulsion, a rule, a goal, is not enough. Their influence, though subject to unchangeable laws, is not sufficiently precise, nor sufficiently definite, to allow of a direct action in each particular case. For it to become operative, wills are needed to complete the sociological laws—the dead act only through the living. There can be no co-operation, therefore, without participation of past generations and of contemporaries (future generations coming in by way of destination); and this co-operation is, according to circumstances, sometimes more and sometimes less extended as regards its duration and range of space. But this concurrence of the living with the dead is not enough; co-operation is barren, if not actually obstructive, whenever, in each distinct task to be accomplished, it is not concentrated in some one pre-eminent individuality. It is only in such a case that there is a social force. All collective activity which, according as it is spontaneous or systematic, does not end in, or emanate from, such an individuality amounts merely to an agglomeration —it represents a mob, not a force. Spontaneous or acquired inequality is, therefore, a necessary condition of all co-operation. It is not an inequality *in kind*. The activity is common to all, but is more intense and more direct in one of the participants—the leader, who thereupon becomes the instrument, the organ of the function. Inequalities amongst the elements of society are inevitable; heredity produces them, exercise developes them, civilisation augments them more and more; and the tendency everywhere is for the preponderating elements to acquire the governing power. Inequality, whilst inevitable, is also not less indispensable. Without it each one would

be able to do without any others—a state of things which we know is not possible, either for an individual, a family, or even a people. We all have need one of another; and this is an ever-increasing need, seeing how constantly the subdivision of labour goes on as regards clothing, housing, and food. What do we seek from others but what we ourselves lack? Without such necessity, how could society, coeval with man, have grown and developed?

As no one can do all the good which the community needs, and at the same time provide for all its practical labours (for what he might gain in one way would be lost in another), and as only Humanity includes all functions, it is essential to the right employment of each person's special ability that he should fulfil the duty for which he is best fitted. It is these real inequalities, and not a fantastical equality, which form the bonds, ever more closely drawn, of solidarity and continuity; which give free scope for attachment to our fellow-citizens, for respect for our ancestors, and for universal good will towards our successors and the less advanced peoples, as well as towards the animal races associated with us in our work. Equality is not compatible with liberty and fraternity; and, in order to establish it, inequalities would have to be suppressed; that is to say, violence would have to be employed and hatreds excited. But work of that sort would be inconsistent, and could not last. The envious fellow who protests aloud against inequalities does not stop to think that his selfishness may arouse the pride of the man who looks down upon him because he is not his equal in wealth. Universal love alone can turn into a source of harmony and happiness the inequalities created by Humanity for her service, which become a source of disturbance only when we do not know how to make them work smoothly and to employ them suitably. Let us not forget that the man who is capable of the greatest crimes is also capable of the greatest virtues. The better a man can estimate how great his debt is to society, and how much

he would miss but for the self-sacrifices of the powerful, the wealthy, or the philosophic, the more highly will he cherish the order that overrules him. "Love alone makes light that which is heavy, and supports with equality the inequalities of life." This maxim of the author of the *Imitation of Christ*—the finest book, said Fontenelle, who was a good judge, that ever issued from the hand of man—characterises the essential principle of all co-operation, of all force, and of all society.

Clearly, there can be no order unless there happens to be some general action arising out of the combination of unequal elements under the direction of a preponderating inequality; and the greater the difference among the elements, and the closer their harmony, so much the more stable is the resulting order. In ultimate analysis there is no function whose organ cannot be reduced, essentially, to an individual, and its purpose to Humanity. To have a clear view of a social function, two things must always be borne in mind. First, all activity is not necessarily entitled to the name. Thus, the parasite, who merely consumes, no more fulfils a function than does a hail-storm or a flood; since, in both cases alike, the effect is disturbance and destruction without any useful production. The acts must be such as converge, more or less directly, according to the nature and situation of the agent, towards the general sum of the human order of things. Next, functions of every sort should be regarded as so many components, manifold and inseparable parts, of one general function, of which the several agents are but the particular instruments. If we recognise distinctions among them, it is only in order the better to perceive their mutual interrelations; but we must hold fast to the feeling of their being an indivisible whole, which is the life of Humanity. Since inequalities can arise only from differences in the proportionate development of the three elements of every social force (feelings, reason, and energy), there can be no essential difference between one function

and others except a variation in the relative degree of intensity of each element. Functions are thus reducible to two distinct classes of relations, spiritual and temporal. The first, the spiritual, are uniform in character, at least to this extent, that all their organs must fulfil the same conditions; it is only the second, or temporal, that require a multiplicity of functions (since no one can do everything), reducible to three classes: agriculture, manufactures, and commerce. Spiritual functions comprise moral offices, which are incumbent on women, and philosophical offices, the appropriate sphere of the priesthood. In like manner, temporal functions allow of a twofold division—namely, into the directors of material operations on the one hand, and the immediate industrial workers on the other. The latter do not, any more than women, constitute a class in the narrow, strict sense of that term, for they have their aspirations in common. Working men make up the social body, out of which emerge those inequalities of force on the one hand, and of enlightenment on the other, which essentially constitute the two general powers in every society. All activity being devoted to the general welfare, each of these elements should regard itself as sharing in a common work, to which it contributes, by means of a distinct function, in proportion to its moral, physical, and material powers.

To fulfil one's special function, to perform the duties of one's own position, is, therefore, a consequence that follows directly from the necessary existence of social inequalities. All participation in the collective life is, therefore, and must necessarily be, subject to a set of conditions incident to the function; conditions which form a connecting bond between the agent and the society for which he works. These reciprocal relations, spontaneously growing out of the function, are, in whatever aspect we look at them, the necessary source of the corresponding positive duties. This fact gets rid of any arbitrary interpretation of the nature of duty which has

its origin in self-interest. Duty, therefore, is simply the systematic expression of a state of things brought about by necessity. All classes alike are subject to determinate duties. If this were not so, society would be a contradiction in terms, and on its way to dissolution; for it would have organs without functions. If individuals disturb the social organisation, as the old governing classes do when they cease to fulfil their functions, or the parasites whom Horace described as mere producers of manure, then the spontaneous tendency of society is to transform them, or, if they are incapable of transformation, to eliminate them—that is to say, to reduce them to a lower level; in fine, to absorb them again into the common activity. Society would be not less of a contradiction if we imagined it to have functions without organs. What are pariahs? Individuals who perform social functions without being regarded as members of the collective being to which they render service. Civilisation tends to cause them to be acknowledged as members having the same claims as others; that is to say, to incorporate them into society. Since order is the product of co-operation, disorder is always due, in ultimate analysis, to idlers. In every well-regulated society, and under normal conditions, there are no members who are not citizens; that is to say, functionaries, each of whom fulfils a special office, either moral or material, and freely accepted or chosen.

Will it ever be possible to establish, in every case, harmonious correspondence between the function and the organ? Social perfection would be manifestly achieved if each organ, whether an individual, a family, or a people, could devote itself exclusively to the exact sort of activity for which, by reason of favourable spontaneous dispositions, strengthened by education and aided by circumstances, it was best fitted. Unfortunately, however desirable such a harmony may be, it will never be completely realised; there will always be imperfections and serious

shortcomings. It need not be taken for certain that the existing order can be everywhere rectified or completed, whether by removing its organs, or by creating for it new functions. Such changes, in their turn, open the door to abuses of their own; and, above all, we must beware of the revolutionary hallucination that every change is necessarily a move forward in the path of progress. As functions are no longer distributed exclusively through hereditary influence, but partly through that and partly through a complex set of conditions working in conjunction with it, among which personal merit is not always even the principal factor, it becomes more and more difficult to specify all the grounds upon which selection is made, and still more to test all claims. The result of any such attempt would be that the most important functions would consist in conducting examinations, and the first functionaries would be the distributors of office. As there are, in the destiny of all men, fortuitous influences against which it is impossible to provide, because no one can foresee them, yet which intervene to modify situations, the distribution would always be imperfect and require to be effected over again. As for *creating* new functions in a society where everything is firmly jointed together, without knowing exactly what effect the modification introduced will produce upon the organism as a whole, or without a clear insight into the essential connections of this new element with the entire fabric—that is, assuredly, a serious undertaking. It is only with fear and respect that a hand should be laid upon the social edifice. Besides, we do not create functions; we may develop, or keep under control, existing functions, and all these have their inconveniences. There will, therefore, always be immense imperfections and inevitable abuses. That is due to Humanity's earthly situation, and the nature of her component elements, who are liable to disease, and in whom altruism cannot always predominate, whose mind cannot foresee all that is to happen, and whose

activity is not able to make provision for everything.

But, if man's greatness lies in resigning himself to what he cannot prevent, it becomes much more conspicuous in his efforts to make the best of the situation created for him by fate. In order to consolidate the social harmony, he reacts by preference on the conditions which are modifiable —that is to say, upon personal qualities, which, more than the situation, are dependent on him. That is why he brings his regulative activity to bear mainly on the way in which the social forces are *employed*, far more than on the *origin* of the organs, which, in general, eludes his control, especially in the most important cases—as, for example, the forming of a millionaire, a statesman, or a philosopher. Moreover, their origin never exempts them from the necessity of having the use they make of their power regulated, whether they derive it from heredity, election, their own labour, or some fortunate chance. Social functions of every sort are so many public trusts, and they require everyone to make an effort to assist in the maintenance of material and moral order. Inequalities of development, the separation of spheres of labour, the want of harmony between functions and their respective organs, engender habits, prejudices, and sentiments which cause great differences. The activity peculiar to each of the social elements has a continual tendency, by virtue of the spontaneity or want of system among such elements, to make them diverge indefinitely, and so to arrest all development, and even to dissolve society altogether. These personal tendencies, though nearly equally strong in the mass of individuals, are always of more or less opposite kinds; while the subdivision of social functions, and the degrees of fitness for discharging them, admit of infinite variety. But as, in most social offices, men, although necessarily useful, are not, individually, absolutely indispensable, experience, which is the fundamental condition of success in every art, makes up for their initial unfitness; while

education, by cultivating their moral and mental faculties, prepares them for their office. Thus education and practice concur in maintaining material order, in which two things are always necessarily implied—a feeling, inducing submission to such order, and reason, throwing light upon the nature and conditions of that submission. An effectual effort of the will is also needed, for without it inclination and knowledge would not be sufficient. But, inasmuch as character places itself indifferently at the disposal of either good or evil, it is in feeling and reason that we must recognise the foundations of personal unity and the conditions requisite for the fulfilment of duty.

There can be no living society without sacrifices, for it is impossible, even in the matter of the simplest acts, to co-operate in the collective existence without repressing selfish feeling to a certain extent. We have boundless desires which our petty resources, improve them as we may, will never enable us to gratify. We cannot enlarge the Earth, neither can we add organs to our brain. Human activity will always have obstacles to meet; self-abnegation will always be needed; relative mediocrity is the lot of the human race, and those who are rich in heart, intelligence, and energy will never lack objects worthy of their goodwill. However important resignation may be as an element of happiness, to submit to what we cannot prevent calls for no very lofty virtue. But man raises himself the moment he submits to a voluntary obligation—as, for example, to be punctual in his habits. He has then, for the common advantage, to regulate the employment of his time—that is to say, to impose on himself a series of precautions and sacrifices. Primitive peoples are not punctual; they have no idea of such a thing. This regularisation of activity is one of those great improvements of the modern world which ought to be extended from industrial life to mental and moral existence. There are circumstances in which, for the service of a collective being, it is necessary to accept the duty of dying—which is a very different thing.

Yet military civilisation obtained that self-abnegation from a timid being essentially engrossed in self-preservation, to which he is naturally inclined to sacrifice everything else; and in 1870, as in 1792, Frenchmen died for their fatherland, to the cry, *Vive la République!* Admirable examples of similar devotedness are seen at times in industrial life—such as that of the engine-driver on a railway, who, in order to save a train, exposes himself to a peril as certain, with a spirit of self-sacrifice as sublime, as that of the most heroic forlorn-hope in war. Love, then, is the first condition enabling us to do our duty—for it is gratuitous. It gives before it has received, and even without ever receiving. It is also the source of all unity. We are necessarily subject to various influences, and, in the absence of altruism, selfishness reigns in us. Now, as altruism alone, in its full development, does not restrict any social activity, it is important to the common welfare that selfishness should give way to it in everything. There can be no such thing as duty without an effort over self in favour of others; only thus can we be said to love, and only in that way can we win the love of others.

Duty cannot, however, be reduced—as Kant, with his categorical imperative, asserted—to a simple sentimental impulse dominating the rest of the brain; for, in that case, it would be as easy to mistake its true nature, and to confuse it with a selfish impulse, as to apply it to its proper purpose. This would happen, for instance, in the case where love for one's own family was allowed to prevail over all other affections. In order to perform a duty, self-sacrifice alone is not enough; altruism must form elevated views and acquire a positive knowledge of the conditions which give a social efficacy to devotedness. Altruism is victorious only when supported by the light of abstract reason, which alone can deliberately indicate the beings for which it should be exercised and the degree to which the subordination of egoism should be pushed. Duty cannot be said to exist without a consciousness of the

harmony to which one's own function contributes in space and in time—without, that is, a sufficiently familiar knowledge of the normal relations subsisting between one's own and all other social functions. It is, therefore, a moral obligation, of universal cogency, to take one's inspiration from the whole body of the acquired knowledge of one's own time. But reason should be the complement of love, not its master. Without such union of love with knowledge, the sight of misery and disorder awakens no sensibility. Geometers and biologists, though freed from supernatural belief, have made no efforts to provide the people with teaching which might prevent revolutions and consolidate society, although it is society which has created for them that leisure which they might use to better purpose. They have knowledge, but no belief; they are still children of doubt. A doctrine which does not touch the heart and has no outcome in social action is wanting in point of completeness.

We shall be able, thanks to the solid reality of Positivism, and without any fear of the dangers that are inseparable from theological mysticism, to turn to useful account a precious disposition of our nature, rich in both intellectual and moral advantages—the instinct of personification. There is a tendency in man, whenever a deep feeling lays hold of him, to personify things which, like the natal soil, are inanimate, or, like reason, are abstract. By yielding to this tendency, we succeed in transforming the notion and the feeling of duty into a real thing, which guides us, which we love, and for which, if need be, we are ready to lay down life itself. The aim of positive education will be to transmute the scientific notion of duty into a state of feeling, or an inclination to conform one's conduct to the requirements of collective existences, in ways formulated by the science of Humanity.

To found personal unity on love, and social unity on faith—that is the whole human problem. Such faith must be common to all; and universality is, as we have seen,

one of the essential properties of positive faith. *Trust* is, therefore, an indispensable condition of all social existence. Why, indeed, in all regular societies, have the men of duty always been men of faith? Why, at all times, has the preference been given to them rather than to the men of reason? It is because faith, which is reason touched by love, has an important practical advantage. Reason argues a long time before giving way; that cautious procedure, the result of dear-bought experience, is necessary; but it is enough for a few to have it for all. Besides, this must be so in any case; for demonstrations will never be appreciated except by a small number. But the man who loves can believe without great effort. He is easily persuaded. Faith is active, because it combines the warmth of the heart with the enlightenment of reason. The latter, left to itself, hesitates, while faith moves on and acts. The struggle against Catholicism has created a belief that there is an incompatibility between abstract reason and faith; but in the case of positive faith there is no longer any difference of nature between the two: the laws are the same for both. Faith becomes reason *plus* a something more; they occupy common ground.

There is no longer any antagonism betwixt reason and faith; there is harmony. Does not a mother's love, enlightened by the positive spirit, make a man of reason of the child whom she has subdued, moulded, persuaded without the aid of demonstrations? Did any really great person ever exist whom reason did not make a man of faith? Was it not this special feature which made him the leader of those in whom the same notions had stopped at the stage of mere reason? The Republic was not founded by those who used to say that it would be the best of all governments, but by those who had faith in its opportuneness. Language testifies to this superiority. We pity the man who is without reason; we despise the man who is without faith. Is it not the highest reward of a well-spent life to be surrounded by noble souls who have faith in you, who

believe your word without actual proofs? The efficacy of demonstrable truths is independent of the source of the notions, whether they come through faith or through demonstration. The all-important thing is to submit oneself through love to the laws of Humanity. The main consequences of the principal discoveries were not perceived by their authors, or by many of the brains that became acquainted with them, in the first place, through demonstrative reason alone. Copernicus, Galileo, and Kepler, to whom we owe the establishment of the doctrine of the double movement of the earth, believed in God, as likewise did Gall, to whom is due the demonstration of the existence of innate benevolent instincts. They failed to see that those discoveries marked the decisive victory of Humanity over the absolute, and eliminated God from the world and from man—facts which are quite evident now to most of the active minds who have received those two conceptions through persuasion and simple downright faith. Positive faith is not, therefore, necessarily inferior to abstract reason. It always rests upon the latter for support. But it is able, thanks to new acquisitions, to become more clear-sighted than even the most eminent minds formerly were when science was less advanced.

Faith requires the concurrence and participation of the benevolent feelings, and from that fact it follows that it is a virtue. For a man to consent to adhere to truths which he does not yet comprehend, he has to make an effort, a sacrifice, for the common good; not, indeed, of his reason, but of an unduly selfish exercise of it. Those who assert that they obey nothing but their own reason are, even when they are sincere, most frequently inspired merely by egoism. It will, to the end of time, be a duty for a child to have faith in its mother, and for old and young alike to have faith in the word of a man of honour. There is no teacher, even the most argumentative, but would prefer his pupil to be a well-brought-up child—that is to say, spontaneously disposed to put faith in all those to whom

his parents entrust him. And why? Because, for a child to learn well, think well, and act well, he must put his heart into it. It was only by that means that we all began to exercise our brains. Whether we wish it or not, all our ideas rest on the faith with which our mothers inspired us. It is a public misfortune when generations are required to change the notions which serve as the basis of the common faith, for such generations are sacrificed for the general happiness. But still, even in such circumstances, love is rendered more certainly rational, in accordance with the new and more perfect mental laws, than reason is led by such elevation to greater social devotedness. It will undoubtedly be love of the Republic and of Humanity that will attract generous minds towards the positive solutions of social problems, much more than the demonstrations on which those solutions rest. Whoever is disinterested in heart rarely mistakes the nature of his duty when once the truth is known to him. While the great body of ordinary academicians were still at a loss to know whether Positivism is possible, a humble, illiterate domestic servant was practising that faith. In the view of the Religion of Humanity, the workman who devotes his life to those around him is the superior, in reason and morality, of the proud scientist who acknowledges no social duties, and who sees in the illiterate masses only the poor in spirit.

Conceived as a derivative from the notion of Humanity, the notion of duty becomes as relative as its source. Duty depends simultaneously on all the conditions attaching to the function to be performed—that is to say, it depends on our nature and our situation. Being a compound function of the brain, the notion of duty varies with the loftiness of our feelings which inspire it, of our intelligence which enlightens it, and of our character which realises it. It varies likewise with the position, whatever it may be, of the individual in society. The more *elevated* man is, the more duties he has. The double sense of the word reminds us that the task of education is to raise man from the

animal state, in which he acknowledges no obligation, to the civic state, characterised by the voluntary acceptance and continuous fulfilment of his duties. The more prominent a man is in the State, whether by birth, or wealth, or merit, the more numerous are his duties. We have a good illustration of this in the East. The Hindu theocracy makes of the pariah—that is, of the social outsider—a being who has no duties; while it subjects the Brahmin, placed by his function at the summit of the social hierarchy, to most minutely prescribed obligations. Again, the more the civilisation to which the individual belongs approximates to the normal state, the more the number of his duties increases. The notion of duty is, in fact, in correlation with the degree of civilisation—in other words, it changes with the stages in the evolution of Humanity. Were it not so, society would have been inconsistent, since the harmony of its working would have decreased in proportion as man moved further away from his original state, received from society more means of excitement and more resources to use and abuse, and had, consequently, a heavier account to render. In fact, Humanity, who inspires and formulates duties, secures their general observance by the exercise of an influence which is not merely mental and practical, but even physiological. There are families and races which exhibit more or less of innate morality. Thus, it is not only the number of duties which increases with successive generations, but spontaneous morality as well—that is to say, the hereditary disposition to accept such duties, and the cerebral aptitude for fulfilling them.

Duty must be viewed, then, as the sum of the relations or laws which bind man to Humanity. Duty makes us debtors to all, as all are under obligation to us. There can be no duty without a mutual exchange of services, thoughts, and good feelings between the individual organ and the collective being. What can there be in common between God, who proclaims himself to be necessary to us,

and creatures whom he declares to be useless to him? There is nothing human in him—he is a stranger to us! Without morality, without duties, he is alone. That is the necessary consequence of omnipotence—the most monstrous conception that ever was coined in a human brain. Through duty, questions of the mind become also questions of the heart. It enlightens and touches us at the same time. Man never did good from considerations of mere reason; for duty implies love, which inspires or completes the recognition of actual relations. By connecting him with Humanity, duty endows man with all the resources of her power; and it is thanks to such support that altruism is able to control vicious tendencies, and to achieve the sacrifices of self-interest required by the common welfare. Conscience, which is the expression of the habitual preponderance of either good or bad instincts inspiring reason, ought not to be listened to except when it subordinates itself to the altruistic instincts alone—that is to say, when it respects the human order. The great object of education is to cultivate reason and love in such a way as to make them both agree, by rendering one the mirror of Humanity, the other the echo of her voice. The more these two elements become her faithful interpreters, the more is conscience elevated. Duty means worthy submission to Humanity.

CHAPTER VI.

POSITIVE MORALS ESSENTIALLY SOCIAL

Since independence is social, both in its originating conditions and in its consequences, there are no absolute rights; all rights are relative to the degree of voluntary submission to the human order. As the only right possessed by a being of any sort is the right of always doing its duty, the problem of freedom consists in making the discharge of duty more and more a matter of free-will. Positivism solves it (1) by elevating human dignity—withdrawal of co-operation being the supreme moral sanction—and (2) by advising its adherents, as a course not less inevitable than indispensable, *to live openly*. In this way, in the discharge of any duty whatever, the element of moral freedom becomes more and more predominant over the legally obligatory element. Since there is a continually-increasing tendency to constitute opinion the supreme judge, it is the proletariate that is universally destined to exercise the functions of control and appreciation.

In the system of universal co-operation already referred to, we have to discover what is the part properly played by each and all directly intervening in the discharge of duties, whether the organ be an individual, a family, or a nation. To reduce the entire man to submission without depriving him of his freedom—that is the problem to which Positivism furnishes a coherent answer; the problem which so sorely puzzled the Catholic theorists, who found themselves unable, in their attempts at representing the reality of things, to reconcile the freedom of man's will with the omnipotence ascribed to God. Positive morality humanises the notion of right; it teaches every man to regard his inner private life (whether in his personal, domestic, or civic capacity) as the primary basis of his social function, and as subject to rules, some of which are materially obligatory, and others purely moral—that is

to say, freely accepted. It enjoins the performance of duty, not in accordance with the inspirations of conscience, but with social considerations. In other words, it lays down that every being, whether individual or collective, should look upon himself, or itself, as in everything a citizen of a common country, or a member of a universal family. It is from that point of view that positive doctrine surveys and judges men, families, and cities.

The denial to a social element of the right to intervene, whether as regards the beings amenable to it, or those on which it is dependent, would be tantamount to a denial of the existence of society itself. Whatever may be the nature of the being in question, its conditions of existence, like the effects that follow from its independence, are social. Each of the individual or collective elements being, by itself, incapable of providing for its necessities, is necessarily dependent on the social whole which controls it. There cannot, therefore, be any duties restricted specially to the individual, to the family, or to the country; for duty is inseparable from the idea of a social aggregate. No activity of such elements could take place without, on the one hand, the co-operation of predecessors, who supply the impulse, the knowledge, and the instruments; nor, on the other, without the aid of contemporaries, whose protection secures to them the scope for, and the benefits of, their activity. It is public life which constitutes the atmosphere, the environment, that preserves and multiplies all the virtues, whether private or civic. It is in that atmosphere we learn the duty of being useful to others, of becoming something, of earning a good name. It is there we labour, but not for ourselves alone. In order to subordinate egoism to altruism—selfishness to unselfishness—nothing is so good as to serve a superior collectivity. Individuals, families, and peoples whose wealth or violence leads them to a life of idle leisure—that is, to isolation from their kind—fall, inevitably, into a state of corruption and degradation. Collective beings

yield to a gross delusion when they suppose that they can hold aloof from that social aggregate, and subsist by their own powers alone. If they are able to maintain a separate existence, it is because they have inherited the past and present results of the common life; and the more largely they have participated in that inheritance, the longer are they enabled thus to isolate themselves. But, far from separating themselves from the whole by such suspension of their activity, they merely end in increasing their dependence by living more than ever on their heritage from their ancestors, to the enlargement of which they no longer contribute.

Under all circumstances the various modes of performing actions have real, undeniable, social consequences, which cannot be viewed with unconcern, since, ultimately, their results directly or indirectly affect all collectivities. We are all submerged in Humanity, like fishes in water. It is our environment. That is why, in any and every system of social relations, individual acts exercise an inevitable influence upon society as a whole. Nothing could be more irrational and immoral than the pretended absolute right of non-intervention. Can we afford to leave to the prudence of one State the control of actions which should be incorporated in the general scheme of Occidental operations? In an industrial commonwealth, is it a matter of indifference to see countries rich in forests and coal-mines foolishly wasting those precious materials? Such a policy, it is true, inflicts no direct or material injury on the property, freedom, or existence of the other peoples; but think what evils it engenders, and how difficult these are to remedy! It cannot be left to each State to decide, on its sole responsibility, what restrictions on its action are most suitable; but, as this reaction of the whole on the parts makes itself felt more slowly in the case of a nation, some room has been left for supposing that an anti-social line of conduct could there be reconciled with private happiness, as in the case of colonial wars, or of State

restrictions on industry. But in no case is that true ; and, what is more, such deviations from the right path are becoming less possible with every year that passes. The reaction makes itself felt more and more distinctly as we pass from nations and classes to families and individuals, and is also more perceptible in cases relating to personal morality. It is evident that, in our endeavours to regulate the existence of the individual being, as well as that of classes or nations, we must not admit as our starting-point the consideration, exclusively, of private utility ; for that would simply amount to giving free scope to the self-regarding sentiments. Why is abstemiousness a duty? Because, the moment we overstep the proper measure in our use of the alimentary products, we fail in respect for the labour of our ancestors, and in kindness for posterity and the poor, for whom all immoderate consumption on the part of others makes the acquisition of nutritive materials more difficult. Moderation in the use of food, and in the satisfaction of our other wants, always conduces to the benefit of those who have received less than ourselves ; it allows of each obtaining his due share. Academic scientists assert that every animal is suitable for food, as containing the four flesh-forming elements ; but, for all that, man should not eat of everything that it is possible to eat. Following the example set by our predecessors, who relinquished the practice of including their fellow-men in their list of articles for consumption, positive morality excludes the horse, the dog, and other animal races on which man bestows his affection, or which he uses for industrial or military purposes. It would be an impoverishment of Humanity, with whose life they are associated, to degrade the habitual functions of our dumb companions and servants by turning them into mere laboratories of nutritive materials. Why is it impossible to be indifferent to the action of the man who gets drunk? It is because he does not live alone in the world. Whether he carries off his intoxication well or ill, he is doing wrong

to others; and the liquor that brutalises him is too often changed into the scalding tears of his family and those about him. This reaction upon all of the conduct of any beings whatever is so manifest, as soon as we place ourselves at the general point of view, that not only Positivists, but others as well, may be counted on to condemn and reprove abuses, whether on the part of individuals, families, or public associations. We must import the social sentiment into every sphere of action. Duty must be prescribed, not in the interest of some being, but first of all, and mainly, in consideration of the fact that he or it is a necessary member of a collectivity. Up till the time of Auguste Comte, morality appeared to be a private and personal matter; so that women asserted the supremacy of sentiment, theoricians of the intellect, and practicians of politics. Henceforward everything must be subordinated to morality; everyone has an interest in all the acts of his fellows; and, for the citizen of the present day, Terence's maxim has become a reality: Nothing human is a matter of indifference to him.

For every rational mind, seeing things as they really are, independence cannot be held to be an absolute right. There can be no duty without an adjustment between compulsion and freedom, between co-operation and independence. If there be too great a sense of dependence, the necessary function cannot be worthily performed, whether the subjection be due to violence, as in the case of a prisoner and his conqueror, or of a slave and his master, or arise from a deficiency in morality and intelligence, as in the case of a Russian who eats his seed-corn, or of an infant at the breast. An adequate amount of independence is necessary as the condition of all activity and all progress. The preservation and the renewal of capital, perishable as it always is, require perpetual exertion, the full efficiency of which presupposes mutual confidence. The latter cannot be established and maintained, unless the intellectual and moral faculties are

allowed free play. Humanity would never have been developed if the individual had, in all respects, been dependent on existing powers. In fact, whether as regards health, duty, or happiness, nothing can supply the place of personal effort; but, in order that self-conquest may be complete, and our inclinations towards virtue encouraged, freedom is necessary. Independence, then, must be respected. At the same time, there must be a certain amount of dependence, for if the individual enjoyed absolute freedom there would be no responsibility and no society; those concerned would be as incapable of exacting co-operation from him if he refused it, as they would be of regulating it in case he misused his freedom. Absolute kings, emulating the gods, assumed the right to regard themselves as being under no obligation to their subjects; but the day came when, by striking off their heads, a Cromwell or a Danton reminded them that on earth no man is independent of others. It is God alone who, in the safe refuge of his heaven, escapes all responsibility. He is under no obligations; he has no duties to anybody; he has only rights over all. Such a conception of superiority is as immoral as it is absurd. Along with greater moral elevation dependence increases, because the number of duties grows larger; and there is also greater freedom, because the performance of duties becomes more voluntary and more certain. Whatever does not contribute to the general well-being is a source of perturbations, which are injurious to the health, the peace, and the happiness of others. All, therefore, have a legitimate right to call upon every organ for the scrupulous performance of its function. But for such intervention, those who fulfil their duties would be oppressed by those who fail to perform their own.

In what does our freedom consist? The sway of fate over Humanity is not absolute, but relative; it admits of some amelioration. This modifiability of our destiny consists in the variations in the extent and rate of speed

of the common march towards final unity; variations which must, under penalty of sterility, be both secondary and subordinate to the spontaneous order of societies. Freedom, therefore, is connected with an artificial order which comes in to complete the natural order. It has its laws, whereby human actions may be foreseen, and the degree of permissible independence be determined—that is to say, the amount of it that is compatible with co-operation. We can act only from egoism or from altruism. Freedom does not consist in indifference as to which of these we ought to obey. We must act from affection, and think in order to act; that is the law, and liberty consists in submitting to it more and more completely. The so-called mental liberty that rises in revolt against the heart is really restricted to preferring the coarser, the more capricious, and the less capable of the two masters. In such a case, selfish interest triumphs over social feeling; the action of the State overrides the influence of conscience and opinion; and, in ultimate analysis, this idle illusion of pride means an inclination not to yield to anything but force. The glory, the freedom, and the power of man have always consisted in submission to the laws of Humanity; that is a fact constantly and universally disclosed by observation. From this it necessarily follows that imprescriptible and inalienable rights are not compatible with the existence of society; for it is in society that rights find their very purpose and origin. Right is force; it is the sanction given by the State to a power over others for the common advantage. Now, all power is responsible for the fulfilment of the duty for which it was conferred and sanctioned, and may, therefore, be suspended, or even annulled, just as it may be acquired. It was not a *contract* which brought man into society in order to guarantee his rights. He is born into it. He does not introduce conditions into it; he finds them already made. All he can do—and there is no other legitimate or efficacious liberty—is to improve that natural order by

first of all submitting to it. Humanity has given rights only in the shape of obligations; man is free only to do his duty. It is only by so doing that he escapes constraint, whether of opinion or of material force. Positive morality, instead of giving prominence to the qualities which separate man from his fellows, insists everywhere on his necessary connection with them. For the discussion of rights it substitutes the elaboration of duties. In fact, to take rights as the starting-point would be to deny the completeness of the whole, to dissever its elements, to look at it only through the haze of egoism; referring everything to Self. The idea of primordial right, divine in its origin, is strengthened by concern for supernatural things. The Godfrey of Tasso's *Jerusalem Delivered*, devoted and chivalrous as regards earthly things, directs his steps towards heaven by a solitary path when his own salvation is in question. It was certainly not from social science, for it did not yet exist, but from a spirit more negative than organic, that the framers of the *Declaration of the Rights of Man* drew their inspiration. The good feelings that animated them did not suffice to found a social order, as the course of the Revolution proved only too fully. In the republican scheme of life, as Auguste Comte wrote in 1842, "no one has any right beyond that of always doing his duty."

It may be thought that this conception of duty savours somewhat too much of authority; yet, in spite of appearances, Positivism is liberal beyond other doctrines. While subjecting every being, whether individual or collective, to wider duties, it insists, with the utmost emphasis, on the means of rendering the acceptance of them more and more voluntary, in order thus to reconcile subordination with dignity. It enhances the nobility of all organs by connecting individuals, classes, and nations with the totality of existence, viewed as extending through all the ages and over every region. True, we did not create Humanity; but she is supreme only through our co-operation. None

being isolated, every one can be something ; every worthy life becomes, morally, a true civic office. Positivism strengthens the conscience of every upright man by giving him the assurance that a virtuous life is never useless, that on the path of goodness nothing is ever lost. The performance of duty is rewarded by an inward and immediate joy, all the more precious in that the theoretical and practical results are not always commensurate with the efforts they have cost ; so that the sole source of our happiness is not thereby affected. Honour, that infinite fear of all deserved disgrace, rests upon a real notion befitting the delicacy of a feeling which in man is the counterpart of modesty in woman. If we suffer from inevitable misfortunes, due neither to our own faults nor to those of our ancestors, we resign ourselves with sympathy to what is a condition common to all life. In fine, remorse itself is ennobled, so to speak, seeing that, in the absence of perturbing fictions and abstractions injurious to our moral unity, it concentrates itself exclusively on the evils and the wrongs done to Humanity.

As seen by the light of this conception, the supreme characteristic of freedom, its most sublime manifestation, is the refusal of co-operation. A free activity distributes the effects of its ministry only to those it deems worthy of them ; any other arrangement would imply slavery. The power, which all have over each, of requiring the fulfilment of function, each has over all ; and, if the governing authority is relatively independent of its subordinates, the latter, to a certain extent, are so of it. Duty, which unites the whole of Humanity from below upwards, unites it also from above downwards. Humanity, Country, Family—all have duties towards the beings which constitute their respective elements. This universal reciprocity of obligations, which makes fulfilment of duty the sole religious act, can never be invoked in support of oppression, injustice, or evil-doing of any kind. In such cases a strike becomes necessary ; for there can be no duty in opposition

to duty. It is as strict an obligation to refuse one's co-operation in useless or injurious industrial operations and unjust wars, as in acts which offend against decency. Such refusal of co-operation ought always to be reserved for extreme and exceptional cases, in which it becomes the substitute for the employment of violence, which used to prevail in the military form of society. This is what the proletariate ought not to forget : the wealth entrusted to the employing class cannot be directly reproduced except through the workers ; and if the continuous services which the latter, by following their occupations, render to society were interrupted by a concerted suspension of their activity, the strikers would soon impede all social existence. The only legitimate strike is that which has for its aim to get rid of the obstacles which are injurious to the social object of their function, the fulfilment of which never ceases to be their first duty. Nelson's rallying-cry should be their constant motto : "The country expects every man to do his duty."

In the normal and regular state, everyone seeks to strengthen the support of his own conscience by the concurrence of his fellow-men. It is his duty to fulfil all the conditions which are indispensable for the better accomplishment of his special function. Now, these conditions can never be considered apart from the other elements of the organism, which are all connected by an indivisible mass of bonds with the functionary who, in each special case, should be regarded as their minister. The discharge of their own duties never exempts them from that of helping, by such means as they have, those who, without that assistance, could not fulfil their special or general functions. The honourable man, the republican, employs the forces placed by society at his disposal only for the purpose of contributing to the common welfare. His views, which are as general as his feelings are generous, never separate him from the whole. He has, therefore, a right to the social advantages which follow the fulfilment of duty—to

confidence, to respect, to education, to protection. For him, right is only an appeal to the devotedness of others—that is to say, an appeal for the fulfilment of their duties towards him, in order to help him better to discharge his own, and, by that means, to become still more useful to them. This positive conception of right, instead of tending to crush the weak, protects them against the violence of the strong or the rich. It gives to him who devotes his chief activity to others the right to count on the assistance of all in the satisfaction of his various physical, intellectual, and moral wants, for which his own activity does not permit him to make provision. This outside support may not be forthcoming; but it is always most desirable; it restrains deviations, increases strength, and prolongs services. Our jurisdiction extends, not only to our own life, but to the lives of many; and our existence, whether positive or negative, is bound up with those of our contemporaries and our successors. The past alone lies outside the range of our power. Everyone should, therefore, regard himself as a real providence. He should, consequently, exercise foresight, and provide after foreseeing. He must divert his thoughts and activity from whatever he could not say or do before witnesses. In doing so he establishes for conscience an objective criterion of duty. He whose life is spent in devotedness to others has no fear of criticism, and cannot, without incongruity, become the defender of a wall between private and public life against any individual or collectivity whatever. Everyone has the right to examine and judge the conduct of those who employ their power either to misuse it or to use it well. We judge and are judged. Selfish and blind passion thinks it has escaped observation and criticism. Vain illusion! There are always eyes that have seen, ears that have heard, tongues that have spoken. *To live openly* is, then, a duty as inevitable as it is indispensable; not in order to display an ignoble personality (for, in that case, publicity means a scandalous notoriety,

and constitutes one more disgrace), but in order to keep egoism within bounds. It is only noble souls who can submit themselves without reserve to this test; they owe us their inspirations and examples, as well as the results they have produced.

Human imperfection necessarily requires an organ specially charged with the duty of representing the general interest, and of subordinating thereto, in suitable measure, all private interests. In proportion as progress becomes more widely extended and rapid, the more urgently necessary is that organ; for divergences acquire a corresponding increase of intensity. *There can be no society without a government.* Its function, which is that of guiding activities in the line of the common interest, and making those which deviate from it fall in again, requires to be constantly exercised, and is inseparable from every kind of association. But that discipline has two aspects: one civil and obligatory, the other moral and voluntary. The one does not extend beyond the bounds of the Government which imposes it; the other dominates all those who share the convictions which consecrate it. Thus, each of the essential phases of private life, such as birth, marriage, and death, has a direct bearing on public order; and, accordingly, Government attaches to them, in legal shape, the conditions which that order requires—conditions always of the most necessary and least fastidious character. But the liberty which has no other restraint than that afforded by our own interests, or by the material barriers which are established by the State, or arise from the rights of others, will always be rather disorderly. The State can deal only with what is actually done. It does not see the antecedent acts which beget offences and crimes; it does not attack secret evils; it does not touch the heart; it does not raise, but degrades, those whom it punishes. That is why positive morality limits to conscience, and ultimately to opinion, the acceptance of conditions which would be oppressive and ineffectual if they were not

voluntary. In all that does not directly offend against order Positivism formally rejects the intervention of law. Liberty, also, is one of the aspects of human order ; and to make use of violence in order to intervene in the intimate relations of a family, or a people, is to outrage and disturb that order. In such cases it is to opinion alone that appeal must be made, in order to stimulate or correct it ; and Positivism will energetically withstand the revolutionary tendency to obtain a legal sanction for measures of any kind merely on the ground that they are useful. The very best kind of discipline is effective and durable only through our voluntary submission of ourselves to positive duties. The principle of the separation of the two powers, the one moral and the other material, must be respected everywhere, and, consequently, the normal distribution as between the domains of legal obligation and spiritual liberty must be everywhere adjusted. Those who reject the principle and the conditions of existence of that separation are responsible for the evils which its non-existence creates.

It is opinion which, in the physical, intellectual, and moral domain, affords the supervision which nothing can escape, whatever be the nature of the being in question. If it be an individual who does wrong, it is his family or his fellow-citizens who will condemn the culprit ; and this will hold good in every class. When Rousseau wrote : " If it be a people that wishes to do itself harm, who, pray, is to hinder it ?" experience and good sense had already given the reply that, in such cases, all those who suffer from the effects react spontaneously against such action. However degraded a population may be, there will always be one city on earth, or one lofty soul, found to save the moral inheritance of the human race from loss through prescriptive lapse. Failing the voice of contemporaries, there will always be that of the supreme judge of morality, Posterity, to whose bar deeds and claims are carried. The opinion of one's own time may, perhaps, be taken by

surprise, but the future cannot be imposed upon. Whatever noise was made, during his lifetime, by Bonaparte, that man who lived only for himself, Humanity has already cut him off from her communion. When Fame passes in front of him she will lower her trumpet, as in the case of the egoist of whom Milton speaks in the *Paradise Lost;* whereas she will loudly proclaim the names of many worthy souls whose noble deeds had previously remained hidden in silence. No act is irrevocable, or beyond possibility of reconsideration, except such as are in conformity with the law of Humanity. It is posterity which confirms the judgment of him who, armed with this key, binds and looses, or reverses undeserved awards of praise or blame. Unshakeable fortitude belongs only to the good. They are not entirely at the mercy of the strong. One man, even were he alone against all, will conquer, provided Humanity be with him. Should it be his lot to remain always under the weight of unmerited opprobrium, he knows that his works will reach their destination. Posterity lies before him; the past sustains him; and he is not shaken by the clamours of purblind contemporaries. It is only great souls who are so steadfast as this; but some may be found in all conditions of life. Strongly as all desire to complete this assurance by the approbation of their contemporaries, there are cases in which it is necessary to have the strength to do without it, and to say, with Danton, "Perish my memory, provided my country be saved!" But, after all, the good man has never been quite alone, nor abandoned by all; some support has never failed him, whether in his own family, in his city, or even among strangers.

Among the various providences which assist in forming this outside support, there is one which, by its situation, may energetically call forth lofty views and generous sentiments—may be able to appreciate and protect; and that is the proletariate. Directly connected with each of the three great social constituents, with women by the domestic affections, with philosophic guides by education,

and with temporal governors by labour, it is called upon to watch over and control the exercise of powers of all kinds. In every country it should intervene to prevent, or to terminate, the conflicts which result from the spontaneous activity of functions, each of which is prone to exaggerate its own special influence and to overlook that of the others. In fact, as the community of situation and aspirations enables it to surmount the difficulties arising from the diversity of occupations and nationalities, it is called spontaneously to the general supervision of all public affairs. By the exercise of this function the proletariate saves itself from oppression, and from the degradation which would ensue from its exclusive concentration on its own material activity. In order to fulfil it effectively, it ought freely to renounce, not only the use of violence, but also the thought of becoming the exclusive, or even the preponderating, element in government, whether civil or political. If it were to abandon its situation, the proletariate would lose all its advantages. Perpetual struggles between its various elements would break up the homogeneity of its mass; and an ignoble cupidity would distort its vision and lead it to regard as the object of the general existence those who, by their number and their direct and social activity, constitute at once its basis and its true general providence. It is not by the exercise of power, it is by the discharge of this function, that the proletariate will attain to a true nobility —that of devotedness.

CHAPTER VII.

ON THE RELIGIOUS CHARACTER OF POSITIVE MORALS

It has at all times been necessary to guide opinion. This was the purpose of religion, without which there can be no society. Every progressive transformation, brought about by a social question, ends in a religious reform, or, in other words, in a new conception of the sum of existing relations. The corresponding spiritual power is as indispensable as it is inevitable. Its elements exist; and not to recognise them is to leave them without discipline and support. They tend, moreover, to assume their proper position, which can always be determined by fixed principles. The task of this priesthood consists in spreading the positive religion, which has for its cult the love of Humanity, for its doctrine moral science, and for its scheme of life the pacific Republic. Attribute everything to Humanity: such is the universal duty prescribed by this religion—the only one that has proofs. LIVE FOR OTHERS is the law of Humanity.

If it is opinion that amends or approves all kinds of actions, to such an extent that the impotence for evil of individual or collective beings depends on it alone, it must not be forgotten that opinion is as apt to disturb as to regulate. It is not enough, then, to abandon to its spontaneous activity the moral career of peoples. A support is all the more needful to them, as, by the very fact that it removes the obstacles that inconvenienced both the strong and the weak—but especially the strong—liberty, in the absence of such a support, would disarm only the poor, who would thus be isolated and abandoned to the oppression of the rich. Liberty, without a moral authority to propagate a knowledge and a love of the order it completes, would end in industrial despotism and commercial monopoly. Fortunately, the social momentum bears us onwards, calling into existence the elements of the moderating power which becomes the regular organ of universal duties, the defender

of public liberties, and the protector of the poor. It is a power which furnishes a peaceful support against force. It can do nothing without the assent of families, of classes, and of governments; and it has no other secular arm than that of opinion. This moderating power reconciles dictatorial authority with freedom. By limiting the temporal power it consecrates its exercise; by more fully guaranteeing the participation of each in the common work it extends independence; and it thus at once ennobles both obedience and command. Man feels himself too exalted to obey only man; but when he beholds in any organ a reflected image of Humanity, he can submit. It is she alone whom he will obey. His conscience will be at ease, and his dignity safeguarded. It is Humanity that settles and formulates that supreme contract that binds the agent and his principals without servility on one side or oppression on the other. This universal bond has religion for its expression. To say that *there is no society without religion* is to acknowledge that there is no association without relations or without rules as between its several elements. An individual, a family, or a State can no more exist without religion than day without the sun.

No one is allowed to plead ignorance of the duties of his position—no one is supposed to be unacquainted with the law. That is a constant and universal principle. Nevertheless, the mother who is training a new generation, the workman who is engaged in producing material wealth, the employer who has to administer it, and the statesman who has to carry on the work of government, are all absorbed in their special functions. How are these two requirements to be reconciled? Who is to preserve abstract moral truths? Who is to dispense them to the children of the poor? Who is to remind the people of disregarded or forgotten principles? In a word, who is to help each one to do his duty by telling him what it is, and how he is to accomplish it? The continuous activity of the various producers of all kinds of articles of utility has

created a need for a more general industry, a spiritual function having for its aim to improve the agents of all the other operations by making them healthier, more energetic, more intelligent, and more virtuous. What prompts the claims which are asserted with continually increasing energy by the proletariate is the need of a general education of this kind, the absence of which characterises the moral crisis through which we are passing. The transmission of functions is less and less governed by the principle of heredity, and home education is, therefore, no longer sufficient for superintending the inculcation of the requisite tendencies in favour of the various occupations. In order to develop spontaneous aptitudes and enable them to be utilised more easily; to provide more regularly for the increasing and necessary subdivision of functions; to form an opinion as to the improvements that should be introduced, and the aberrations that should be restrained; in a word, in order to cause all activities to co-operate towards the same common end, there is but one means available—namely, the universal teaching of the fundamental relations of this entire social organism, which is always becoming more and more complicated in its structure and development.

There has never been any progressive transformation of Humanity without some accompanying introduction of new duties, the systematisation of which, by a new spiritual power, constitutes the corresponding religion. In fact, whenever the course of civilisation has given rise to new inequalities, sufficiently developed to abolish the previous state of subordination and become predominant, conflicts have broken out, and the result has been a social question to be solved. In such crises there has never been any intention to constitute a government from among *the enfranchised* orders, or to institute directors who had retained the servile manners proper to their old situation; for that would have amounted to making men slaves of other slaves. An endeavour was made rather to settle

such crises by a new solution of the religious question—that is to say that, the old conception having, as a result of the permutation of the inequalities, become necessarily insufficient, philosophic minds once more placed themselves at the point of view where they could consider the whole of the existing relations. To observe the facts, to verify them, to formulate them in laws, to submit to those laws, and to propound them to the peoples: such is, then, the function of him who will retain for ever the name of the founder of a religion. If, indeed, the problems solved by Moses, Buddha, Confucius, Saint Paul, or Mohammed be examined by the light of the scientific method, it will be seen that religious reform was always brought about by some social question. Religion is not invented, it is established; the establishment being regularised by a form of decree, the correctness of which depends on the epoch and the knowledge possessed by the founder.

Viewed from this standpoint, the advent of the Republic, which implies, at least, the moral superiority of the new mental and practical inequalities over the old governing classes, imposes new moral rules upon both. Now, under this head, no invention is needed. The means are ready to hand; they have presided over the rise of the elements of the modern order, and all that is needed is to develop them. The mutual relations converge of themselves, and it will be enough if we regularise this convergence in accordance with general and uniform principles derived from the positive faith. All will have to be reminded, as in the past, of the general conditions that conduce to the common welfare, as they are apt to be overlooked amid the divergences incident to daily practical life. But, further, the functions of the new organs—workmen and philosophers—will have to be clearly defined. For instance, ought they all, without distinction, to be included in the lists of electors; and, if so, on what conditions and within what limits? Upon the proletariate, thus called upon to appreciate and to control all kinds of things, great duties

devolve. What are they? Again, what functions should the old governing classes perform, in order that, in their new subordinate condition, they may be able to turn their inevitable decadence to some socially useful account? It is only when this question is answered that they can be led to adopt, or be maintained in, a position that will not be productive of disturbance. To regulate all the organs of a complete set of indivisible functions—that is the religious problem to which, in all ages, and for every situation which has been profoundly modified, a fresh solution has been sought by provisional methods, either astrolatric, polytheistic, or monotheistic, which, however, were only so many gradual approximations to the one definitive general solution furnished by the nineteenth century.

In this positive conception of religion there is nothing offensive to reasonable and cultivated minds; it enables us to understand how religion, instituted for the benefit of Humanity, constitutes, in every regularly organised State, the surest guarantee of the citizen against the arbitrary encroachments of power in all its various forms. The revolutionists, always imperfectly emancipated, cannot hold aloof from the struggles of their own time; and, by giving way to the blind hatreds so evoked, they have been hurried into attempting to suppress government altogether, and have also sought to abolish all religion. Positivists, on the contrary, living already in the future, have all its impartiality and tranquillity; and, without ceasing to respect the past, they are going henceforward to make the necessary substitutions, beginning with the object of their feelings and thoughts, in order the more surely and effectually to accomplish them in facts and deeds. When that work of substitution has been carried out in full, the Revolution will be at an end; a consummation which presupposes that the religious solution has been adopted, first by the leaders, and then by the rest of the citizens. Thus, so far from the republican scheme of life leading to the suppression of all spiritual power, it

renders its existence more necessary than ever. In a less complex society, under pressure of the situation, and with an imperfect doctrine, there arose, between Saint Paul's time and that of Hildebrand, a moral power, distinct from the temporal power, whose self-imposed mission it was to teach a faith that gave to all a common origin and a common aim. Under a republic, society cannot afford to be less complete in organisation than the society of the ninth century. To abolish the separation of the two powers, the main feature of the superiority of modern over ancient times, would be to make the Republic of the West a body without a soul, a monstrosity ; for, wherever the State becomes itself the dispenser of common truths, it makes a step backwards towards theocracy.

All those who desire to unite, in the same hands, education and government are doubly inconsistent. For, firstly, they already possess this spiritual power to which they object. The priests of democracy are the journalists, novelists, and dramatists, who hand down to workmen and women the only higher instruction they have outside of theological education. In the revolutionary chaos it is they who counsel, consecrate, judge, and play the pontiff. There each is the pope of a little flock, which requires of its priests neither morality nor competence. Positivism, careful not to damage any legitimate situation, brings both light and order into this grave spiritual anarchy. Their second inconsistency lies in not observing that there exist to-day, as at all times, great inequalities of force and intelligence, which are everywhere invested, in more or less regular ways, with governmental power. The present situation is the outcome of the ascendency of new spiritual and temporal inequalities over the old ones, whose places they have taken either directly or by means of temporary intermediate organs. Thus, temporal government will more and more belong to the industrial class, because the functions that have to do with practical life have passed out of the hands of warriors into those of workers. In

like manner, the functions whose concern is the culture of sociability and reason have passed from the guidance of theologians to that of positive philosophers, who have been led, by the universal need of a relative morality, to found that scientific priesthood whose advent d'Holbach and the grand eighteenth century hopefully foresaw—that new papacy, as Frederick the Great made bold to call it.

The revolutionary attitude of repugnance to any spiritual power will have one sure result: it will leave the most potent organs—that is, those which are most capable of abusing their power—without any restraints but those which their conscience may suggest; and conscience does not always rightly distinguish between inclination and duty. To decline to acknowledge the functions of such organs is both foolish and immoral. To look facts in the face, and see things as they are, is the first condition for exercising any real action upon them. What cannot be prevented must be endured, if we wish to make the best of it. Government, be its outward form what it may, whether monocratic, aristocratic, or democratic, depends on a trifling minority; most frequently, indeed, it is practically a single person who governs, and outward ceremonial and routine do not alter the essential fact. It never was and never will be otherwise. The more evident, therefore, these inequalities are, the more important it is to moderate, temper, and control them—that is, to subject them to duties. The vaunted freedom of the revolutionists, arising out of their ignorance of these conditions, means the abandonment of this government to chance, or caprice; in a word, the release of the principal functionaries from their duties, and even from all responsibility. It is, however, only honest folk who govern themselves—that is to say, those who have the least need of being governed by others. And it is the same as regards spiritual functions. The revolutionists have failed to perceive that principles fitted to bring the Revolution to a close have been formulated; that the positive faith on which they rest is

spontaneously accepted by the people; that a general dissemination of these abstract truths would have been enough of itself to prevent or to mitigate our political and social crises; and that this has not been done for want of a corresponding spiritual organ.

It is useless for them to say that they dread possible abuses; as if, forsooth, the other powers were perfect, as if it were not the greatest of abuses to dispose of a great force, and not to acknowledge any rule. Because all society is exposed to disagreements between the governors and the governed, to the antagonism of interests, to the schemes of the ambitious and the discontented, does it follow that society should be abolished? Whatever harmony we may imagine between the various industrial organs (agriculturists, manufacturers, and merchants), there will always be conflicts between merchants and bankers, or between capitalists and workmen. Is that sufficient reason for suppressing these several industrial functions? Since material interests have never yet succeeded in constituting a social order, and, for that purpose, a body of truths held in common is required, is the State to be charged with the task of formulating and disseminating them, under the pretext that, by thus suppressing antagonism between men of thought and men of action, the abuses of a priesthood would be avoided? But, as there are abuses inseparable from the function, the State which usurps it, becoming thereby judge and party in its own cause, makes them the more serious, as they are more direct and less easily remedied, and as he who advises has the sword in his hand. Such doctrines cannot impose on the proletariate for ever. If abuses alone were enough to justify a policy of destruction, all social institutions would be overthrown, and all independence ruined, merely in order to reduce society again to the most ignoble slavery. The day is coming when it will be understood that, without religion, there can be no liberty for a people.

To suppose that philosophic teachers could continue to

perform their function without eventually forming a systematic organisation under a single director would be nothing short of a paradox. As well might we acknowledge the existence of rivers while refusing to admit that they all flow towards the sea. It were indeed a strange exception if the highest moral function, that which consists in fixing, transmitting, teaching, and prescribing the duties requisite for securing human unity, were alone to be denied the conditions essential to its existence. Sincere theoricians will always seek to place themselves in the conditions which are most favourable to the full exercise of a function for which they are responsible to Humanity. Like the proletariate or any other social class, and on the same grounds, they lay claim to all the forces needed for the fulfilment of their moral obligations. To contest this legitimate right in their case would be to deny it to all. They reject such a pretension in the name of positive morality, which imposes on all men mutual duties in keeping with their reciprocal functions. *There can be no religion without a priesthood.* That institution being essentially reducible to a single organ, the only reason for which it requires a multiplicity of agents is to secure more completely the universal diffusion of its doctrines ; but the functions and the duties are uniform for all. This uniformity necessitates a certain aggregate of conditions, to which Auguste Comte duly submitted ; and his successors, following his example, will also conform to them without possible hindrance from any power; for this attitude means merely that they are upright and self-sacrificing, or, in other words, that they seek to do their duty.

To ascertain the conditions of existence with which, by the very nature of things, all philosophers must comply, all we have to do is to consider what is needed for the right exercise of their profession. Brought up under the protection of the fatherland, they are bound to fulfil towards it all the common obligations, and consequently, in temporal matters, they must set the example of

submission. Their mission being to teach positive morals, in which all the aspects of human nature are embraced, they must possess the necessary competence—that is to say, they must have mastered the general view of all human relations. Called by this very education to become the judges of all civic conflicts, it is important, in order that they may remain impartial and disinterested, and not be diverted from these general considerations, that they should take no part in any political or industrial function. It is even necessary, in order that they may be fully exempted from all practical activity, that they should not possess any property. And, inasmuch as the principles they have to spread must be common to all the Western nations, it is essential, with a view to the prevention or the adjustment of conflicts, that the philosophers should be independent of their respective governments. Their functions being especially intended for the poor, and their active work not requiring any materials, their office should be essentially public and gratuitous. From all this it follows that their livelihood should be guaranteed by the free subscriptions of those who share their beliefs.

These few indications are enough to show how great is the difference between such a set of conditions and the qualifications required of the Catholic clergy, which allow a man to be admitted thereto at the age of twenty-five, without renouncing his rights to property, and without any scientific preparation ; and which, by virtue of an invisible grace which places the priest above the State, exempt him from civic burdens, and forbid him marriage as incompatible with his function. Auguste Comte fixed forty-two as the earliest age at which the highest functions of the Positivist priesthood—those, namely, of consecrating and judging—can be fulfilled. In the preliminary stage the aspirant, after having discharged the usual obligations of citizenship and tested his vocation, will have to justify his mental and moral fitness by renouncing all inheritance; by marrying ; and, especially, by teaching the whole range

of abstract knowledge. It is by conforming their conduct to this succession of duties that the members of the new spiritual power will win, among women and workmen, the esteem and sympathy which are indispensable to their office. For it is only through the support they will receive from these sources, in the family, the State, and the Republic of the West, that Positivist philosophers will succeed, by the distribution of praise and blame, and, at need, by the refusal of co-operation, in peacefully inducing the social and political leaders to evince, by their habitual conduct, the supreme value they attach to considerations affecting the common welfare.

Everywhere and always men have made use of the same method for reconciling co-operation and independence, dictatorial power and liberty ; or, in equivalent terms, for securing the ascendency of duty. Like its predecessors, the Positivist priesthood will always place itself at the religious point of view by a comprehensive consideration of our nature and our situation. It will have over all its precursors the advantages conferred by a rational over an empirical conception of the sum of things. Humanity exercises an incontrovertible action over the entire man. By her fundamental institutions she transmits habits to all ; and by language she communicates to them the truths which make up the common faith. In brief phrases everyone learns from Humanity a set of notions respecting his duties, his past, and his destiny, which, though received without discussion, bring his reason much nearer to positive solutions than cultivated pride supposes. It is thus that Humanity, through the intervention of the family, lays hold upon the infant in his cradle. The Positivist Church will renew this universal spontaneous teaching, and, by crowning it with the complete sum of abstract notions, will give it that clearness, precision, and generality in which it was deficient. The education it has to supply consists in disciplining each individual by subordinating his affections to the love of Humanity, and then by binding him to collective

beings by faith. The individual, thus prepared, will be fitted for co-operating by a distinct function, under the protection of the fatherland and in a durable way, in the common activity, or, in other words, in the universal tendency to improvement. It is in this that the essential purpose of religion consists.

To see in Humanity the true Supreme Being, the only one we ought to love, know, and serve—that is the beginning and end of every life, the aim of positive morality. In order to be of any value in the world, we must love Humanity! The more our love for her increases, the more inclined men are to love us. How could it be otherwise? He who wishes to be on good terms with all around him, and to deprive no one of anything, always succeeds in winning over egoistic opponents, and, in the end, the companionship of sympathetic souls affords the greatest enjoyment to everyone. Humanity furnishes proof of this. Without any interested motive, she gave us everything to begin with, and she has toiled specially for those who are most unfortunate. The mother, the masterpiece of her creations, affords us the primordial and eternal type of that sympathetic providence, and the fatherland is ever more nearly approximating thereto, insomuch that its name will yet be replaced by that of motherland, as better expressing the character that pacific activity will give it. The Church of Humanity prefigures for us that world of the future which—contrary to the conceptions of the past, wherein the human race seemed born only for a few—will dedicate to the poor of every class all the strong, who will be transformed into their ministers and servants. The faith in Humanity rules over us like the love of her. It is as efficacious as it is real; and it is true. It is not a freak of caprice, but the work of past ages, which have demonstrated, handed down, and developed that doctrine of eternal and perfectible good sense which brings expansion of the mind as much as of the heart. Criticism, so far from shaking, confirms it; and the submission due to it

increases with the lapse of ages. There was a special faith for Jerusalem, for Benares, for Athens, for Rome, for Mecca; but for Humanity there is but one law, the reflection of which is in each of us. Light comes to us from above. Humanity alone has constructed that positive faith, which could not possibly have been built up by a single man, a single age, or a single people. The hope of Humanity for a better future has never been disappointed. And where could be found an ampler destiny than in her service? We behold her for ever tending, by a vast co-operation, towards a better state in all forms of activity, without ever falling back, even in situations which seem to be the most desperate. He who knows and respects her laws, and adapts his conduct thereto, has the certain assurance of having helped to improve the future, not only as regards its material conditions, but especially in relation to human destinies, which, in former times, were reserved for the decision of the gods. Thus, in the case of Humanity, man derives from his love the ardour which so many benefits naturally inspire ; from his faith, the tranquillity of spirit given by prevision ; and from the certain hope of a happy future, the perseverance that completes and prolongs the efficacy of good works.

Everything should be attributed to Humanity, since everything comes from her. Composed of all that is good, true, and beautiful, she represents the union of the spotless ideal with the perfect real. Her name expresses at once love, order, and progress. Humanity is the exemplar for all beings and all ages. She is the model to contemplate, to meditate, to imitate, and to develop. She reconciles everything, without obstructing anything. All the fictitious conceptions of beings range themselves in subordination to that which gave birth to her, and which embraces them all, in so far as they contained elements of social efficacy. She makes use of them in poetry, and even in science, just as she reserves for childhood's games old military weapons and exercises. She is the inspirer of all good actions and the

source of all laws, civil, intellectual, and moral. The world itself, on which she is dependent, is summed up again in her ; and, if we did not recognise this, we could neither love, nor know, nor serve her. Humanity, then, is the embodiment of that host of ties, moral, intellectual, and physical, that bind us indissolubly to our fellow-men, to the Earth, and to Space. All peoples and all races will one day freely proclaim her empire, and then her reign will have fully commenced. But, even now, those who acknowledge themselves to be her servants can be partakers in her life. She represents the whole of convergent beings. To draw nigh to Humanity—such should be the ideal of families and nations. He who offends against or disowns her involves himself in perpetual inconsistency, for, without his knowledge, and even in spite of himself, Humanity manifests herself in his acts, his language, and his affections. When man strays away from her, she abandons him to irresolution, inconstancy, and folly. The way, therefore, to reconcile happiness with duty is to give ourselves up to Humanity, in heart, intellect, and activity ; for in so doing we entrust to her the only thing we have which may survive ourselves, and enable us to reach that moral greatness which preserves to our heart, even in old age, the freshness of eternity. In the ocean of realities in which we are immersed, Humanity is everywhere the shore on which our affections, our thoughts, and our enterprises should be fixed.

Outside the Religion of Humanity there is no belief that can furnish proofs. It alone is demonstrable. It would, indeed, be strange if those whom Humanity has touched had not found again in her that active faith which they thought they had for ever lost. Are facts required? Why, that religion starts with facts. Principles? It is reason itself. Feelings? It fills the heart. It combines the features of antiquity, the future, and youth. No religion preceded it ; none can outlive it ; and it is continually inspired with fresh ardour. There is no existence

that surpasses Humanity in number and power; she increases in strength, conquers, and becomes more exalted every day. Has she any occasion to shun the light? Why, her existence is passed in the open day; she is born of criticism. The more accurate and comprehensive it is, the more evident she becomes, and the larger she looms before our gaze. Has she any need to fear the discovery of new truths? Why, apart from her, truth has no existence, for it must once have had a beginning. All those who revealed to men truths brought down from Heaven, and not due to the earthly past, arrived too late in the day; Humanity had existed before them. Who possesses universality, if not she? Nothing has been done, nor will be done, without her having a share in it, whether to develop and consecrate, or to restrain and eliminate. She is connected with everything. Her creed was not made for one people, one race, or one class. It is destined for all. It is the religion of Humanity. Though she has had for her interpreters not a few great natures, none can say to her, "I made thee." Auguste Comte did not imagine her; he merely recognised her; and that was enough to make his glory unique in the records of man. There has never been more than one religion; there will never be another Auguste Comte.

Attribute everything to Humanity—that is the universal rule of duty. By complying with it, we make personal and collective unity more complete and more durable than by striving to attribute everything to God. Thenceforward, good is whatever appears to us to be of service to Humanity, materially, intellectually, and especially morally; evil whatsoever appears to be the contrary. Merit consists in making a worthy use of all our powers for the benefit of Humanity. Therein lies the true sanctification. Esteem is no longer bestowed in accordance with the value placed on the mere function, but with the degree of total fitness for co-operating towards the common welfare. In this moral elevation there is room for all; for, in the act of

drawing nigh to Humanity, there is no displacing or impoverishment of anyone. He who, through effective love of Humanity, thinks and acts for her benefit, apart from all hope of reward in this world or elsewhere, is the truly religious man ; and indeed there never was any other such man than he who fulfilled his duty. This real notion of holiness has been more or less unconsciously accepted at all times. Two instances will suffice. Towards the middle of the eleventh century Saint Bernard wrote his *Treatise on the Love of God*, to show that true believers should love God, not from the hope of rewards, nor the fear of punishments, but solely for the love of himself, a love pure and disinterested. A century afterwards a Mussulman woman expressed a wish to destroy Paradise and Hell, in order that, for the future, men should serve God from love alone ; and the last of the essential organs of Catholicism, Bossuet, considered it his duty to reproduce, in his *Abridgment of the History of France*, her noble words, which had evoked the admiration of St. Louis.[1] As all history shows, hell and heaven were made only for vulgar souls. It became necessary to sum up in a single law the life-work of all good people—of those who, through the medium, first of the family, and then of the fatherland, dedicated a necessary personality to the service of Humanity. Auguste Comte condensed all duties, all morality, into this supreme formula: *Live for others.* That is the law of Humanity.

[1] Joinville thus relates a reply given by a woman to one of the ambassadors whom Saint Louis, being at Acre, had sent to the Sultan of Damascus: "He found in the middle of the street an aged crone who was holding in her right hand a basin full of fire, and in her left a bottle full of water. And Brother Yves asked her what she was going to do with these two antagonistic elements. She answered him to the effect that with the fire she wanted to burn up Paradise, and with the water to extinguish Hell, so that there should be an end to both of them. Whereupon Brother Yves asked her again what provoked her to say this. Because, said she, I don't wish anyone to do good in this world for the sake of getting to Paradise as a reward, nor anyone to refrain from doing evil for fear of Hell-fire ; but that they should do so entirely from pure love of God." (*History of St. Louis.*)

PART III.

ON THE CHIEF APPLICATIONS OF POSITIVE MORALS

CHAPTER I.

ON POSITIVE PERSONAL MORALS

Personal morality has for its aim the development of altruism by two convergent methods: *indirectly*, by the purifying of the egoistic instincts, not by their destruction—for personality is necessary, although it requires improvement; *directly*, by the cultivation of the sympathetic instincts, which was instituted by Saint Paul, and is consecrated by Positivism. By bringing worship and activity under one and the same law, Auguste Comte identified happiness with duty.

I PROCEED to complete this exposition by a very summary, but sufficiently general, view of the chief applications of positive morality to the three successive stages of existence —personal, domestic, and social—in order to determine the duties that are incumbent on us to-day.

The habitual practice of the personal virtues has, at all times, been deemed the most solid foundation for the domestic and social virtues. Man is brought up, firstly by the family, and then by the country, for the service of Humanity. Consequently, it is only by a necessary effort of abstract thought that the training of the individual can be considered independently of this twofold environment. Personal morality can be, quite as properly as domestic and civic morality, included in a religion which regards man, properly so-called, as an entity; for families and nations,

as well as individuals, are inseparable from a larger whole. Positive personal morality has for its aim to give greater prominence to the cultivation, by two concurrent methods, of sociability than to that of personality, these methods consisting respectively in the purification of the egoistic, and the stimulation of the altruistic, instincts. It inculcates the combination of purity and self-sacrifice with a view to the formation and maintenance of the elementary habits which constitute the foundations of all further moral development.

In the eyes of Catholic teachers the personal instincts are essentially bad ; all the efforts of the individual should tend to annihilate them, and his desires should be to break bonds that are incompatible with Grace. Good sense has rebelled against these aberrations; and Positivism, consecrating that resistance, has taken up the traditions of its theocratic predecessors, which Catholicism too much ignored. It imposes on the philosopher the obligation of being a physician, in order never to separate, in the government of human nature, the brain from the body, the moral from the physical side of man. Since personality, by its connection with the vegetal life, is especially charged with the preservation of the individual and the race, no collective life can be conceived without it. The bodily functions must be performed in such a way as to allow of the complete life of the brain and its outward manifestations. Society is interested in the health of each of its members, not only in order that they may be able to fulfil their duties, even when they have to endanger their lives, as in social or other emergencies, but also in order that their successors may be sound in body, as well as courageous, sensible, and honest. The activity peculiar to the instincts of improvement will be not less indispensable in a civilisation which continually imposes on them fresh tasks. Our life, moreover, is still less our own exclusive property than are the material goods we possess, for we hold it direct from Humanity. Thus, whether we look

at our origin or our destination, we see that existence has been given to us, not for ourselves, but for others. That is why Positivism condemns all austerities and privations that would impair strength which is already insufficient. Repudiating suicide in every shape, it makes the care of his health one of the fundamental obligations of the citizen. It is a duty to *be* well in order to *act* well. Personality is not less inevitable than indispensable; it is useless to protest against that half of the brain which maintains a spontaneous supremacy, even over lofty natures, at least in their daily routine of life. The personal side of our nature is also constantly stimulated by the primary necessity of procuring food, and by the requirements of an environment that demands activity, either to enable us to endure inconveniences or to overcome them. Any other influence, however noble it may be, can merely exercise a modifying action on our conduct.

Not only should we give scope to personality as being the necessary foundation of our whole activity, but also as directly co-operating in the fulfilment of our functions. We must get rid of those absolute views which represent the existence of altruism as irreconcilable with that of egoism, and which see in personality only the source of all evil. Auguste Comte, by an important theorem which completes the views of Gall, was the first to set forth the direct connection that exists between the egoistic instincts on the one hand and the sympathetic instincts on the other. By reason of this correlation the social emotions become mingled with the personal emotions, and this adds a charm to the latter, while it gives to the former greater strength. Thus, it is by virtue of these spontaneous relations, and not from refined calculation or complicated deductions, that the infant comes to love her who holds its life in her hands, the poor man to respect the rich man in whose employ he finds his material existence provided for, and the fetichist to adore the earth and the sky that sway him by influences beyond his power. That is also the reason

why domestic or social functions, at first sought after for the satisfaction of personal needs, come at last to constitute, for all who are not unworthy, a favourable medium for the growth of sympathy. In this respect, ambition is as necessary as self-interest. It was because he did not wish for power that Danton, in spite of his great moral and social superiority, failed against a hateful and superficial rival, utterly destitute of governmental capacity. So precious a correlation allows of our utilising the superior energy of egoism to the profit of altruism; and this furnishes a testimony to the greatness of Humanity, who, by a dignified preliminary submission, has been able to extract a means of improvement from attributes which at first seemed to consign her to a state of perpetual inferiority. It is on the ground of their necessity to our whole life —in order to allow of our serving others better—and on that account alone, that Positivism consecrates the personal inclinations. Any moral system that takes no account of the most energetic of our instincts is purely declamatory and dangerous; it leads straight to hypocrisy; for, in seeking to follow it and play the angel, some men only debase themselves and play the beast.

The Catholic priesthood, arising in an environment of profound moral dissolution, attempted, in spite of its doctrine, to regulate the whole set of cerebral functions that make up personality or selfishness. But, notwithstanding laudable efforts, and although it had an undeniable measure of success in that direction, it did not fully solve the problem of purification. With its absolute doctrine, which stimulates personality by the very fact that it endeavours to eradicate, or at least blindly to restrain, it, it was impossible for the priesthood to make due allowance for egoism. That its doctrine was the true cause of its failure has been shown by many proofs since the close of the Middle Ages. To mention only a few among many: the exaggerated vanity of the mystics; the portentous pride of those servants of God who were

as insolent to their inferiors as they were servile towards their superiors ; the universal development of self-esteem which marks the revolutionary malady from which the Western peoples are suffering ; the growing disdain for questions of hygiene ; the morbid love of suffering, which led Pascal to consider ill-health as the natural state of the Christian, because it develops certain moral qualities. The last, however, was an inconsistent view, for invalids imply people who nurse them, and who are robust enough for the work, to say nothing of the fact that, from the moral point of view, the healthy are in most cases the more interesting class of the two.

There was, therefore, urgent need for a new solution of the problem, how to purify the selfish propensities. In the first place, there must be a careful avoidance of anything that would develop instincts which are never in want of stimulants. To restrain them by force would be a remedy worse than the evil, for it would only redouble their activity ; while it would necessitate the restoration of a censorship of manners, which would be equally ineffectual and oppressive. Undue gratification of personality brings on perturbations, not only because it impairs our physical strength, but chiefly because it endangers our mental and moral faculties, which are at once the weakest and the most precious parts of our nature ; and this even although our health might not suffer from the injurious consequences of intemperate indulgence. As the various selfish propensities cannot of themselves succeed in arriving at a state of harmony, it is necessary to regulate them—that is to say, to calm them by directing them towards a lofty aim out of reach of the passions. Positive morality makes purity consist in the normal subordination of our personal instincts to sociability, with a view to the continuous service of Humanity. It ennobles them by eliminating all caprices at variance with the general well-being, and by allowing them an opportunity of exercise only in this direction. Certainly this requires no small effort over oneself ; but

only thus can man raise himself, and whatever limits his desires gives him greater strength, provided the obstacles are not disproportionate to his powers. As de Maistre very well expressed it, a man may be able, at the age of thirty, to vanquish the most violent passion, because, at five or six, he was taught voluntarily to do without a plaything or a sweetmeat. Although, at the outset, it may be painful not to be able to commence, or finish, where we should wish, and it may seem that it would be better to give way to the irregular impulse of feeling, it is always useful to be subjected to rules, even in cases where the natural laws are not yet known to us. Age and experience teach us how much man gains thereby. Since the nobler phenomena are everywhere subordinate to the coarser, it is a good thing, in order to reduce caprice as much as possible, even to go the length of giving numerical precision to the rules we may voluntarily lay down for ourselves. Such are the bases on which Positivism institutes the duties of purification, the starting-point of morality.

By purifying the egoistic inclinations of all that is vicious in them, we have already advanced a part of the way, for we have gained all that we should have lost had we yielded to them. But, in order to constitute morality, that is not enough, unless we join with it self-sacrifice. By itself, it is true, purification indirectly contributes to the free play of the benevolent feelings, since it reduces by so much the ascendency of personality. Thus, Positivism advises the due exercise of economy, because wealth ought not to be destroyed without regard to the interests of the future, and because it is necessary that the family breakfast should be made ready every day; but it is, at the same time, the only way of enabling us to be generous, and to meet the claims of charity. Nevertheless, in order to forestall the possibility of bad actions, it is imperative, above all, to cultivate the noblest attributes of the soul. Positive morality sets before man, as the aim of his whole life, his

own intellectual and, more especially, his moral improvement, and also, so far as it depends on him, the improvement of others. Work and the culture of good feelings combined are what lead to virtue, provided they be never dissociated from science; for false opinions give rise to disordered feelings. To be happy we must have sound thoughts. It is, therefore, requisite that man should cultivate his mind, by initiating himself in the encyclopædic course of instruction, completed, or replaced during the epoch of transition, by a study of the books chosen and recommended by Auguste Comte, and happily limited, thanks to his universal competence, to a small number of masterpieces, all comprised in the list entitled the *Positivist Library*. But this mental effort should always follow, not precede, the culture of sociability. As our existence, both private and public, is maintained only by a continuous series of sacrifices and acts of self-denial, the habitual practice of good actions has been, and will always be, the chief means of cultivating the unselfish instincts. But, as the results produced by our co-operation in the life of the community are rarely dependent on our efforts alone, and as they are likewise not always within our reach, we must, in order to keep within the field of personal morality, specially consider what means of culture each of us can command in solitude. That is why, in order to make up for the necessarily intermittent character of our acts, we should especially strive to maintain the good feelings which prompt them, and which, in our view, have a much higher value. By directly cultivating them we more than double our forces. To render altruism supreme over egoism is the ideal at which man should aim, but which he will never be able completely to attain.

Such was the end Catholicism pursued, and to it we owe the cultivation of the sympathetic instincts as a systematic institution. The Romish priesthood took for the corner-stone of its government Saint Paul's theory of human nature, the grandest moral conception produced by

Humanity until the time of Gall and Auguste Comte. The founder of Catholicism thus formulated the fundamental distinction between egoism and altruism :—

> The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh ; and these are contrary the one to the other.—*Galatians* v. 18.
>
> For the good that I would I do not ; but the evil that I would not, that I do.—*Romans* vii. 16.

Taking his stand upon this decisive conception, Saint Paul conceived the daring problem of transforming human nature by making, in spite of the superior energy of the self-regarding feelings, grace, or the spirit—that is to say, the sympathetic instincts—prevail over nature, or the flesh, which is the personification of the egoistic instincts. Unfortunately, the theological setting of this theory greatly marred its efficacy. In the Pauline conception the distinction between nature and grace is absolute ; it allows of no reconciliation between them, and it has had a far greater tendency towards repressing the personal, than towards exalting the sympathetic, instincts. It was both an error in fact and a defect in method, and in any case inevitable. But, however insufficient the primitive methods might be, the main point was to institute moral culture by a special kind of exercise. This doctrine has, nevertheless, hindered the development of the unselfish feelings by reducing them to the single virtue of charity, and by directing the main anxiety of the individual towards the selfish object of his own salvation. For Saint Paul, in fact, grace is a gift to us from outside, a direct impulse of the deity, who bestows it on any person whom it may please him to select. "We are not able of ourselves," he wrote, "to form any good thought, but it is God who enables us to do so." Man was thus driven to look for support outside of Humanity and of the world—that is to say, outside of reality. From the point of view of moral culture, as from all others, those who were transformed by

Catholicism were so, not by virtue, but in spite, of its doctrine.

In reality, all men, by the very fact of their existence, are partakers of grace. We have known this since Gall displaced the theological theory by the positive theory of the innateness of the sympathetic propensities, which were previously abandoned to divine caprice. Henceforward the improvement of man depends on his own providence alone. He can deliberately endeavour to develop benevolence, and cause it to acquire an intensity previously unattainable. Owing to the spontaneous feebleness of altruism, it will always be necessary to stimulate its growth by appropriate and purely moral exercises. If these exercises are, at first, less efficacious than acts properly so called, still, as they do not require materials, are always within our reach, and can have continuous scope, they acquire at length an inestimable value. To these habitual moral exercises, in which thought and action are combined with the always predominating element of affection, Positivism, while discarding provisional methods, continues to give the designation, long since consecrated by universal usage, of prayers or religious exercises. It makes definite use of them by the systematic institution of private worship, whereby man exercises a daily effort over himself in order to develop his affectionate feelings. This inner worship, in which each becomes his own priest, rests upon the following moral law: The expression of feelings stimulates and strengthens them, with an intensity increasing with the regularity and continuity of the corresponding efforts ; so that fortuitous impulses are by this means rendered habitual. This law will enable everyone to form an estimate of the final power of these small acts daily renewed, and to understand how, by perseverance, the feeblest efforts at last engender the noblest kind of progress. It is only by means of this habitual worship that men can, with any certainty, accomplish in themselves that preliminary moral revolution which

is required for the free ascendency of the Religion of Humanity.

What are the advantages of this inward moral culture? In the first place, it makes us more capable of *living for others* in the present and in the future; it strengthens and improves the entire apparatus of our brain, and, consequently, our health itself, which is so intimately connected with our affective unity; it helps to improve the race, since every serious organic modification is transmitted by heredity. Lastly, it makes for our happiness; it "imparadises our soul" by the cultivation of the memories left to us by the dear witnesses of our life, memories which we connect with the loved images of those who surround us, and of those who are not yet born. Would it be really *living*, if we were to concentrate our affections only on the present time, without reverting towards the past, or without caring for the future? Love alone knows how to derive advantage from everything, and finds pleasure in so doing. It extends its solicitude beyond the human race to the sentient beings who bring us their co-operation, to the Earth which is our dwelling-place, and to Space, which represents the inevitable operation of the most general laws. Everything thus aids in developing affection, and conspires to give it scope. It is in the benevolent acts which it inspires, and in the sweet emotions which accompany it, that man finds happiness. To love is to be happy in the felicity of others; it is, if not immediately, at least in hope, *to live for others*. Auguste Comte, by thus blending in the same single formula the law of happiness and that of duty, reconciled, for the first time, what previously seemed incompatible. He demonstrated what so many lofty natures had vaguely felt, and what inspired in the Marchioness de Lambert this maxim: Perfection and happiness are allied. It is only through his heart that man is estimable and happy; it is in that his true greatness resides. Auguste Comte made the direct culture of the altruistic feelings—that is to say, of

love—the principle of positive morality and of the Religion of Humanity, which is its necessary outcome. Positive personal morality, therefore, helps towards the establishment of collective unity by simultaneously purifying and exalting every individual nature.

CHAPTER II.

ON POSITIVE DOMESTIC MORALS

The aim of positive domestic morals is to educate man, under the care and influence of woman, for his country and Humanity. Humanity, which created woman, is always accentuating and developing the aptitudes and functions which make her different from man. Freely dedicated to the home, woman there becomes the moral providence of man as housekeeper, wife, and friend, and, above all, as mother. Positivism rejects all visionary plans of education which would entrust to the State a function belonging to the mother alone; and likewise those which would call woman into public life. It is in the bosom of the family that she best participates in social existence; and it is in order to assure to her this her chief function that *man should support woman.*

To make the individual a moral being—to make him, in other words, pure and devoted—would be impossible, unless he were kept in surroundings which spontaneously nourish, regulate, and stimulate his affections, thoughts, and activity. Family and country, by their joint efforts, finally educate man to the recognition of his duty to Humanity; but it is in private life that his apprenticeship to public life must first of all be served. A bad son, or an unworthy husband, cannot be a good citizen. In order to inspire, to form, and to preserve the social virtues, woman's love will always be necessary to man. It is in the midst of the beings for whom he chiefly likes to live that he learns to subdue his own nature, to taste the pleasures of self-sacrifice, and to live openly. The family should be regarded as the social element specially destined to train man under the guidance of woman, who is its principal organ. To regulate domestic morals is, therefore, equivalent to solving the question of the position of woman.

The family, in its present form, is, in all respects, merely

the primitive family developed. At the outset, woman, in the modern sense, does not exist, and the condition of the human race hardly differs from that usual with the animal races, among which the male excels the female in strength and beauty. In the early stage of society, still represented by some of the more backward peoples, there is barely any distinction between the sexes. The female—overburdened with the coarsest and most laborious kinds of work, regarded in the same light as the rest of the household, and treated as the principal slave—is, under such circumstances, merely an inferior sort of man, only leaner and uglier. Such was the condition in which Humanity found this nameless being from which she has fashioned her most characteristic creation, woman, who owes to her all that constitutes her nobility and power. As social evolution proceeds, the two sexes manifest increasing inequalities of a threefold kind—physical, mental, and, especially, moral — while their functions concurrently become more and more differentiated. This development, however, enables them all the better to work together for their mutual elevation, man by his action, either spiritual or material, outside the home; woman by her domestic and moral action inside. Such co-operation makes their union more complete and stable; woman gradually suffers less from the brutal domination of man, and he, on his side, by concentrating his attachment, becomes more amenable to her moral influence. Of all the features of family life, the mutual improvement of the two sexes is at once the most abiding, and that which becomes more and more important.

There have been women who, on very rare occasions, have played a useful part in public life, without detriment to their private virtues; but, notwithstanding these exceptional and transitory instances, it is in the family that woman finds her highest destination. The family should, in fact, be regarded as the workshop where the greatest of all work is done, and woman as the chief artisan.

Voluntarily dedicated to the home by her several functions of housekeeper, wife, friend, and mother, she educates man, purifies him, exalts his good feelings, and becomes at once his consoler, his adviser, and his providence. By her management she secures the comfort of her household, and by her frugality and thrift she brings out the importance of preserving materials, and the immorality of waste. In the pursuit of her habitual occupations she participates, within her family, in industrial activity more worthily than she will ever do as an operative in those large factories that do so much to lessen feminine delicacy and endanger her native morality. When she becomes a wife, woman ennobles man by disciplining the most energetic instincts "in that union which constitutes the most perfect form of friendship, adorned by an incomparable mutual possession" (Comte, *Positivist Catechism*, Conv. x.). In voluntarily accepting the obligation of sharing their lives together, they both impose on themselves incessant sacrifices, and testify respect for each other's functions. The more completely the indissolubility of the bond is guaranteed against the effects of individual caprice, the more surely does that fixity turn to the benefit of the married couple, and engender constancy in their mutual devotedness. "Between two beings so complex and so different as man and woman, the whole of life is not too long for them to know each other well, and to love each other worthily" *(ibid)*. Such a union, when it has been really sincere, becomes stronger than death, and survives the objective existence of one of the partners. To re-establish divorce would be to imperil these precious results, since, in violation of a vow freely taken, it suppresses the functions of both mother and wife. Divorce is permissible only when one of the married pair has been condemned to a degrading punishment entailing social death. In cases where the pair have in fact separated, it would be reasonable, on their request, and proper grounds being shown, to sanction the dissolution of the first marriage ; but with

the proviso that both parties should be thereafter permanently disqualified from contracting a second.

As the result of the natural development of their great moral authority, women are induced to interest themselves in matters of higher and wider range than those of their own family circle. In the character of the female friend, Humanity has added to her affective providence a new organ, whose power is founded on a combination of the most profound tenderness with the purest respect. Thanks to this creation, the human race has achieved an immense moral advance; the members of other families have ceased to be regarded as strangers, and can now find a welcome in the house at whose fireside sits honour, and, with honour, dignity, liberty, and peace. Realised among the foremost portion of Humanity, this transformation distinguishes Western women from all others. Such are the women whom Voltaire has depicted for us in his fine tragedy of *Zaïre*:—

> Companions of their husband, and queens everywhere,
> Free without dishonour, and prudent without constraint;
> Their virtues never being derived from fear.

Their influence is exercised by means of advice and affection, never by commanding will; and it is especially in their capacity as friends that they take a share in the political, social, and religious affairs of their time. It is only at home, in their *salon*, that they help to mould opinion; everywhere else, in church, school, or club, their assistance should always be merely passive. The sphere of their sovereignty is the home; it is there that they act so powerfully on the heart of man, and realise the Positivist conception of woman personifying Humanity.

In their search for means of improving the instruction of youth, minds misled by revolutionary errors go so far afield that, ultimately, they find it impossible to agree. But, whatever method they may adopt, they will never succeed in wresting from the mother her educative function. It is only a mother who is capable of educating man, for

she alone has that affectionate power which, notwithstanding the child's bodily and mental indolence, and in spite of his turbulent appetites, forms his character and fixes his habits for life. To see in the mother the perpetual guide of her children is the principle of all sound education. Until the age of puberty, they ought to be exclusively dependent only on her ; and it is a misfortune both for her and them when such cannot be the case. During all the rest of their existence she should retain the supervision of their education. Established on the worship of the mother, through which both sexes rise to the love of Humanity, the inward worship has for its chief result to prolong, beyond her death, the sweet and salutary influence of that guardian angel, whose existence is common to all ages. Was not she the first to love her child and suffer for it? Did she not risk her life in order to bring it into the world? Its first accents, looks, and smiles were for her whose flesh and blood it was, and who, day and night, lavished on it those tender cares, the multiplicity and duration of which would have wearied everyone but her. Let us, then, leave the children to their mother. There is no being who is bound to them by so many ties, whose life has been so much devoted to them, and to whom they have cost so much in all respects.

Scholastic innovators, who are always advocates of compulsory instruction, would have us believe that the child is in the way at home, and that he ought to be entrusted to a *stranger* in order to withdraw him as early as possible from feminine influence, and to make a man and a citizen of him. But this is only furbishing up the old jesuitical device of immuring youth in barracks. With de Maistre we say : "Children can be made for the taking of the trouble ; but the great honour is to make men ; and women can do that better than we." The State does not understand the subject. Such is women's fitness for fulfilling this function that in it they reach the limit of human perfection. For that tiny being, so weak of understanding,

so incapable of responsive action, and so absolutely dependent on her, the mother will have an unbounded affection. Nay, more, she will load with her attentions and caresses the invalid child who will never be anything but a burden to her, absolutely incapable of making any return for so many acts of self-sacrifice. No; it is not by a director of conscience, whether priest or layman, but by the mother alone that moral advice should be given to the child; and that this should be so is better for both. As the only medium through which society can, without danger, make its action felt by the child, the mother has the glory of having formed what the country and Humanity have regarded as their purest and greatest: a Saint Augustine is always the son of a Saint Monica, and only a Cornelia can bring forth Gracchi. As the sum of all perfection, the mother, from the excellence of her nature, has become the cherished image of the country and Humanity.

Why the purely revolutionary theorists, in their schemes for reforming popular education, have given utterance to so much nonsense is simply because they have not kept in view the necessity of prejudices—in other words, of worthy subordination to the heart, of which they fail to understand the importance. Far otherwise does the mother judge. She exerts all her energy in instilling those prejudices, the value of which man will appreciate all the more readily when it has been demonstrated to him by science, and he has been longer accustomed to them. By their failure to recognise the existence of the benevolent feelings, these theorists revive the claim, brought into fashion by Rousseau in his *Émile*, that man should be educated free from prejudices—an outrageous conception, calculated to bring woman into contempt by the mere fact of so radically misunderstanding her functions, and, at the same time, to bring true emancipation into discredit with mothers. Woman is an excellent observer of the realities of life with which she is in such close contact, and she looks down with pity upon those professed partisans of

observation who themselves fail to see that the suppression of prejudices would amount to leaving a clear field to that wild beast that every man has in him. It is not surprising that the revolutionists who fall into such gross mistakes are just the men who allow themselves to be carried away by an affected sentimentality, in imitation of Rousseau, whose trail is easily perceptible in all the aberrations of the time. Every parent who, when necessary, administers corporal punishment, is almost sure to be set down as a heartless person by those sensitive souls who, under the designation of rights of children, have invented one of the most extravagant conceptions of a century specially rich in that line. But, whenever gentler means have been tried, and found insufficient, it is quite necessary to have recourse to more efficacious methods. In the education of children we must do as is done in civic life; submission in all essential points must be enforced. Indeed, the worst evil that can happen to a man is to have been a badly brought-up child. In educational matters it is well to distrust these so-called improvements, which, in nearly every case, are merely hurtful changes introduced by theorising minds inaccessible to feeling.

On the whole, the schemes urged by the revolutionists are not of a kind to facilitate the solution of the modern problem, for they merely increase woman's objections to all reform. Now, without her conversion, not one of the questions of our time, whether religious, social, or political, can be solved. In their attempts to identify the functions of woman with those of man these anarchists are pursuing an anti-social enterprise; for, if they could succeed, they would end by bringing back our race to the stage of primeval similarity—that is to say, the work of Humanity would be undone. Universally, it may be said, the pretended equality of the sexes amounts to an interchange of their functions; it means the wife working in the fields while the husband sits spinning in the house; the schoolmaster educating the boys while the mother is away at the work-

shop. One must be mad to see a change for the better in such a transposition. As progress tends to render women less and less fit for outside life, their lot can be ameliorated only by formally sanctioning this tendency; and it is, therefore, not desirable to urge them to become electors, lawyers, deputies, doctors, or manufacturers. Acting in the family as organs of the moral providence of Humanity, they ought not to take any part in outside life, either as female citizens or as workwomen, in positions of authority, or in preaching. They can show their superiority only by remaining women; and the moment they seek to become superior after the manner of men they are no longer anything but apes of men. All the declamations about the so-called slavery of Western women made by champions of women's rights, too zealous to be really disinterested, are in contradiction with the facts, and also inconsistent with the method that women have constantly employed for enhancing their independence. What should be done is to help them to develop their nature, as they did in the past. By fulfilling their duties, in spite of all hindrances, they succeeded, without insurrection, in winning their present liberty; and by that heroic manner of devoting their lives they obtained the best guarantee of their rights —namely, domestic existence. No one who appeals to the duties which bind them to their family will ever fail in obtaining a hearing from them; for it is there they find full scope for their physical, intellectual, and moral activity, and there only are they truly happy. Let us, then, never seek, by artificial inducements, to draw them away from it in order to place them in a situation which would undermine their moral superiority and interfere with their social duty. To do so would be to degrade their nature and, at the same time, to threaten their happiness.

To respond to the universal aspiration of people of feeling by assuring to all the peaceful development of the domestic affections, which are the only source of true happiness—such is the most efficacious means of improving

man and exalting woman. To assist her husband, to manage the household, to create in body, mind, and heart some of those beings whose formation and development require such delicate and prolonged attention—all this, exclusive of any other occupation, is quite sufficient to absorb the existence of one woman. Such is the task to which it is her duty to devote herself, because no one can there supply her place. It is in order to guarantee to her the enlightenment, the leisure, and the freedom which her function requires that the Church and civil society intervene in the existence of the family, which they have, in the past, assisted by their influence to elevate and develop. To incorporate woman into the mental growth and movement of Humanity—that is the function which the positive priesthood will have to discharge towards her. It is to fulfil that duty that the sciences acquired by Humanity will be taught to her as well as to man. But, although they will be taught by the same masters, it will be in separate lessons, and with a less extensive range of mathematics. Without this encyclopædic tuition there would be a risk of impairing the general reason itself, by allowing, through hereditary disuse, the capacity for abstraction to decay in her who is the transmitter of it. Would a rational and pacific mode of life be founded if the new citizen continued to treat as a child, or an inferior creature, her who is his friend, who will become his partner, and who ultimately will contribute in her turn to form, body and soul, a new generation? With respect to the duty of exempting woman from work outside her home, it must not be forgotten that, though it is one which devolves on civil society as a whole, it is only through the medium of the father and the husband that it can be met. But, in cases where these natural protectors happen to be wanting, exceptions should be made, and the obligation be directly undertaken by the community. When this duty towards them shall be fully accomplished, worthy women will freely give up the pernicious custom of dowries, which are as

inimical to their dignity as they are hurtful to industrial activity. All the duties of society towards woman consist essentially in assuring to the whole body of the working classes family life in its full measure—a privilege reserved, hitherto, exclusively for the well-to-do classes. The sum and substance, then, of positive domestic morality is set forth in this universal duty which connects it with civic morality : *Man should support woman.* The proletariate cannot be incorporated into modern society without the practical realisation of this rule ; for it is only on gaining the increase of wages and leisure which the rule justifies and sanctions that workmen can be associated with the twofold intellectual and moral movement. We acknowledge, then, that the two sexes, by maintaining the distinction between them, necessarily contribute more and more perfectly, the one by labour and the other by education, to their mutual improvement, and to the formation of worthy servants of the country and Humanity.

CHAPTER III.

ON POSITIVE CIVIC MORALS

Social morality develops man as formed by the family. Country, a notion of slow growth, assures the co-operation of all citizens in the common work by means of a twofold organ, spiritual and temporal. The new mode of life forbids separate communal independence on the one hand, and huge nationalities on the other, as incompatible with the normal or proper size for the country or fatherland, of which Holland furnishes the best type. It also rejects communism and mere industrialism as antagonistic to civic dignity. All human services being free and gratuitous, labour should shake off servile manners. Sanctioning the existing industrial hierarchy, and the distinction between employers and workmen, who constitute respectively the material and the general providence of Humanity, positive civic morality regulates their respective duties through the intervention of the spiritual power, which is the proper mediator in all industrial conflicts.

We have now to inquire into social morals—or, in other words, the aggregate of the duties which Positivism institutes for civic and universal existence. It is in public activity that we must recognise the true destination of man, just as woman finds hers in private life. The family is, indeed, too narrow a field to furnish completely the feeling and the notion of collective existence; and, though the worship of the tomb is inseparable from it, neither continuity nor solidarity is sufficiently felt in it. It is true that all the sympathetic instincts are cultivated in it, but it is only the strongest of them—attachment—that gets its full measure of exercise. In fact, veneration for superiors, and kindness towards inferiors, find their true scope only in public life. The main advantages of public life would, however, be neutralised if man had to pass directly from domestic to universal existence; for the ties would become

at once too weak and too vague to admit of any great efficacy. Between the family and Humanity we need the country, wider than the one, more intense than the other; and we need it for the threefold improvement of our heart, our mind, and our activity.

To a more intelligible extent than in the case of other collective beings—though this feature is common to them all—country, or fatherland, is a result of general co-operation, by distinct functions, in a common work. The fundamental division, into spiritual and temporal, of the organ charged with securing this co-operation by the reaction of the whole upon the parts—a division already distinctly observable in the family—here becomes still more conspicuous: imperfect and spontaneous at the outset, its tendency is ever to become complete and systematic. To institute a pacific and industrial mode of life which shall be compatible with the positive separation of the two powers, and in which all functions whatever shall have reference to Humanity—such is the aim of positive civic morals and the goal of social evolution. As man was everywhere born amid a horde or tribe, it was only at a relatively late date that he arrived at the notion of fatherland; and, indeed, even monotheistic moral systems failed to reach it, from want of power to place themselves at the collective point of view. In the Decalogue, fatherland finds no place, and for the Jews, as for Christians and Mussulmans, nationality is purely religious. Hence their spontaneous tendencies towards theocracy. It is evident that, in this respect, the progressive polytheists were much superior to them. We owe the notion of fatherland, and its chief development, to military civilisation, which was outlined in Greece by such men as Themistocles and Alexander, and fully developed by conquering Rome, which formulated its principal duties, and furnished the most characteristic types in such men as Scipio and Trajan, and in Cæsar, the greatest of them all. Based on the incomparable results of that civilisation, the sentiment and the

notion of country were able to overcome the Christian doctrine, to secure the separation of the powers, and to travel down to us through the Middle Ages and the modern revolutionary era.

While the fatherland will be inspired by more generous feelings and more general views than those which prevailed in the Roman world, it will never cease to constitute, as it did at that time, the real centre of our life, the great unity for which we ought to live and, if necessary, to die. Everything should be made to converge towards this destination; to dedicate ourselves to it is the most important of duties; and, under the Religion of Humanity, man is, before everything, a citizen. An aim so noble makes the most important mission of the Positivist priesthood to consist in defining and popularising the duties appropriate to the life and work of citizens—a mission, I may say, which has been fulfilled by me in France, without interruption, for now twenty-one years (1878). I have explained how the Science of Society, having formulated the laws of the co-operation of the various nations in time and space, teaches all of them—French, English, and other Western peoples—what they ought to think, and how they ought to love their country, in order to serve Humanity. It is only from the institution of that priesthood that we may expect a systematic organisation of the industrial mode of life. Convictions not yet being ripe, before acting we must endeavour to arrive at an agreement, in order peacefully to accomplish the real, useful, and lasting work to which Positivism invites all citizens. A first step in the right direction will be taken by suppressing whatever obstacles might impede the fullest liberty of exposition, discussion, and meeting; the object being to leave opinion the sole judge of all doctrines whatever. In this respect it is a duty to oppose the present tendencies of republican Ministers; for what we need is not to repeat, nor to consolidate, Bonaparte's most disastrous measures, but, on the contrary, to suppress altogether the subventions and

privileges of every sort which the State grants to the Church and the University; all vested interests being duly respected by the concession of fair indemnities. With the support of this group of provisional measures adapted to clear away all obstacles to spiritual freedom, those who know will, by teaching and preaching, consolidate and complete the moral action of the family for the common welfare of the country and Humanity.

Holding both order and progress in respect as inseparable conditions of all peaceful activity, Positivism spontaneously discards revolutionary tendencies towards either a restriction or an exaggerated extension of country, which would render its existence barren in the one case or turbulent in the other. The anarchical utopia of the political autonomy of the commune, and the retrograde conception of large nationalities, are equally rejected by it, as inconsistent with the positive scheme of life. No doubt, the commune, or township, is an indispensable connecting link between the family and the fatherland. It is there that the apprenticeship to public life is served, and the social feeling developed which is early connected with the three institutions—the Town Hall, the Church, and the Cemetery—which perpetually symbolise union, unity, and continuity. Any attempt unduly to enhance its independence would hinder the co-operation to which it owes its existence. Essentially a creation of the fatherland, the commune is a secondary group which is dependent on the decisions of the capital city, around which many such elements have gradually collected under the pressure of a common past. The fatherland should be conceived as an organism, the rural districts of which represent its vegetative basis; their co-ordination is brought about by the action of the large towns under the leadership of a capital city, which necessarily governs because it is socially superior. This is the spontaneous order, which communal independence would throw into confusion. From the opposite point of view, the vaunted

metaphysical theory of races, or of natural frontiers, has become a simple anachronism. The large nationalities had no justification except from the military point of view. They have again come into favour owing to the decay of theological faith, which is becoming more and more incapable of co-ordinating distinct political populations. For want of common principles, order could not be maintained in such immense States without unduly increasing the power of the temporal government. Thence arises that administrative despotism which characterises the revolutionary West; for nations are no more disposed than individuals to submit to a premature dissolution.

We must, with Auguste Comte, conceive the normal fatherland as a preponderating city, with the territory necessary to support it, inhabited by a certain number of families having common antecedents and working for a common posterity. Among the various existing States, Holland may be regarded as the type which approaches most closely to this ideal. Its dimensions are sufficient for the durable existence of a pacific and industrial *régime* regulated by a demonstrable faith. What would be the use of larger nations when there would be no more fighting abroad in order to maintain an oppressive system at home? Fatherland inspires an efficacious love only when its several parts are united, without any violence, by an active solidarity which allows them to know each other sufficiently to love each other warmly. When the industrial era shall have replaced that of war, when full spiritual freedom shall be established, and the priesthood of Humanity sufficiently developed, a movement will take place leading to the gradual break-up of too large nationalities, and, concurrently, to a concentration of the legislative and executive powers; the temporal government being, during the transition, charged with the maintenance of material order, and the prevention of any attack upon the two cardinal institutions—the family and private property. France will be no exception to this law. At

an opportune time—that is to say, when the Religion of Humanity shall be established in the West—Positivism will call for the political disintegration of France, which has been already administratively prepared by the civil institution of the commune and the province, the pledges of social liberty. In that, as in all else, the positive doctrine is relative, and in it every modification has its fixed time and circumstances. We are speaking of what will have to be done a hundred years hence ; for we must begin by preaching in order to realise afterwards. Our successors will provide later on for the requirements of their situation, by continuing the task we shall bequeath to them, just as we have accepted that left to us by our predecessors.

The question of finally reducing the various countries to their normal dimensions should never be dissociated from the consideration of a scheme of national life in which labour will supersede war. By keeping these two factors conjointly in view we shall be the better able to define the leading features of the new civic activity. Should there, with industrialism, be a tendency towards monopolies, or, with communism, a suppression of independence, in both cases alike, under the pretext of strengthening co-operation, the social transformation will be obstructed and delayed. As there is no progressive society but that in which co-operation is voluntary, it is the duty of all, both poor and rich, to consider themselves as helpmates in a work intended for the whole body of their successors, for whom they are, in point of fact, toiling, just as their predecessors toiled for them. The metaphysical distinction between private and public functions must therefore be rejected. All professions suitable to the industrial scheme of life should be looked at from the social point of view, and it follows, therefore, that all human services are gratuitous. To work is to give away one's own existence, and likewise the results, due to the existence of ancestors, which one has appropriated. How is it possible to estimate

the monetary value of an activity that imperils the life of the workman, who too often falls a victim to the elements, or to mechanical appliances which, like some of the ancient gods, at times devour their attendants? It is still a common practice to retain false distinctions, introduced by a servile vanity, for the purpose of describing the remuneration of the various kinds of social functions. But whether the term "fee," or "salary," or "wages" be used, in no case is the amount a payment for the service rendered. Essentially, it represents the indemnity due towards a renewal of the materials employed in the maintenance and restoration of the forces of all sorts—physical, intellectual, and moral—placed by the individual at the service of society. Whether or not the fact be recognised, salary (under whatever name) is, in all cases, simply a prior charge upon, or deduction from, the wealth created by the past and present generations. It should, therefore, be calculated according to the necessities of family life, so as to secure leisure to childhood, rest to old age, and domestic life to woman at every age: the balance is the patrimony of the human race.

Employers and workmen, not having the social feeling of their respective functions, always believe and maintain —at least, the majority of them—that they work only for themselves. But such an attitude is a mere blind perpetuation of habits which were suitable only to the ages of warfare, when the industrial classes were but servile instruments in the hands of the military chiefs. To use the wealth at one's disposal in order to gratify desires which, in the case of the rich, are still further inflamed by selfish idleness, is, no doubt, blamable; but for a workman to set before himself such an ignoble existence as the aim and end of his emancipation is an even more unworthy proceeding. The wealthy idler has, to a certain extent, the tranquillity of mind that comes of possession, whereas the other is hurried along by eager greed, like a disappointed heir thirsting for enjoyment. Both looking

upon work as slavery, not as a duty, and each feeling that it is to his interest to relieve himself as much as he can by throwing all or a part of his burden upon others, they have both remained veritable slaves. A slave, in fact, is one who serves his kind against his will ; one who makes an arbitrary use of the wealth of the community ; or one who, ignoring its social origin and destination, avenges himself upon property for the supposed or real injuries inflicted by its present holders. As factors in human existence, workmen and employers alike ought to avoid wasting the materials and products of labour. A wise economy, while it impoverishes no one, enriches society to an equivalent extent ; and society, in return, owes to its faithful servant a larger share of its wealth. Among those who have possessions there is more foreboding than hatred, more doubt than fear. The working class can largely help to promote nobler manners among its directors by itself overcoming a distrust and envy of them that lead only to disturbances. This, no doubt, is for many a painful effort of self-mastery ; but it is assuredly a fruitful one, for freedom is the outcome of it, and it forms the main, the decisive, step in the elevation of the proletariate to the dignity of citizens. It is a survival of servile manners to regard devotedness to the poor, or respect for the rich, as either degrading or humiliating. No one can be excused from setting an example of the sympathetic dispositions which befit his office and justify his exercise of power ; it is only in virtue of his fraternal co-operation in the activity of the community that a man is to be ranked as a citizen.

In order to smooth the way for this moral reform, we should, during the transitional period, set a high value upon whatever tends to keep up the social usages and prejudices which successfully guided the early development of labour, and which still perpetuate among us the benefits of the Roman and feudal civilisations. In the industrial type of life it falls to a small number of individuals here and there to take the lead ; the materials appear only in

the shape of acquired results, which seem not to require any collective participation. On the other hand, the social character of the military type of life can be taken in at a glance. Fighting is done only by organised forces; and, as everyone engaged is directly dependent on others, merit is easily recognised, and every function, from the most general to the most special, is at once appreciated and respected. Considered in the light of reason, industrial activity appears to exhibit the same characteristics; but, before they could be discerned there, it was necessary that two things should happen; (1) industry had to expand its scope so as to include the whole of the globe, and (2) the abstract spirit had finally to achieve the conception of Humanity. It is this social character of industry that the Positivist priesthood, by raising knowledge to the level of the situation, will render evident to all. Let us, then, carefully maintain the institutions which still foster moral relations between employers and workmen, between poor and rich; let us continue to hold those festal gatherings customary among the various trades and callings, those national festivals, and that worship of great men, which bind families to their native town, to their native land, and to Humanity, and which, by reminding us of the social character of activity, contribute to its peaceful regulation.

The distinction between capitalists and workmen is necessary and fundamental, and is implied in all peaceable working of positive industry. For, the very existence of Humanity being dependent on the preservation, and even the augmentation, of her material resources, it is essential to the right ordering of things that this function should be as concentrated as the limits of individual strength will allow. In spite of revolutionary fallacies, we ought to favour this normal tendency of capital to concentrate itself in few hands, instead of vainly trying to hinder it; for it is clear that the smaller the expenses of management are, and the less indirect or artificial responsibility there is, the easier it will be to secure to the working classes

the wages and the leisure they need. Besides, it can be shown that it was the necessity of providing for the continual renewal of commodities that brought about, towards the close of the Middle Ages, that separation betwixt those who direct, and those who execute, work: out of the general proletary mass gradually arose the agriculturists, the manufacturers, the merchants, and, last of all, the bankers, who discharge the most general of the functions of industry. As the number of chiefs independent of one another in each of the grades of this hierarchy depends, naturally, on the multiplicity of practical operations, it will always be considerable, though smaller in proportion as the function is less special. For the new industrial patricians to be universally respected and their authority acknowledged, it is essential that they make it their business to carry into practice the laws of Humanity. By voluntarily accepting the universal rule which recognises the separation between employers and workmen, while at the same time complying with the just requirements of those two inseparable component elements of the new form of society, the industrial chiefs will be in a position to make the best possible use of their powers and resources. To regard wealth as social in its origin and destination, and personal ownership as the best means of employing it worthily, through the medium of family and country, in the service of Humanity—such is the fundamental law. Wealth imposes obligations. *(Richesse oblige.)*

To be the distributors of material wealth, the administration and maintenance of which are committed to their charge—such is the part assigned to the industrial leaders. Established on purpose to be the material providence of society, their general duty consists in securing to the working classes the boon of family life, which is as indispensable to their mental and moral dignity as it is to their industrial activity. As the holders of the common property of a society which will never be sufficiently rich, and as the only possessors of the elements of the economical

statistics of the whole world, with exclusive power to provide after having foreseen, to them it belongs to prevent the occurrence of crises. When poverty becomes more generally prevalent, it is because they have made an erroneous or wilfully wrong use of their power by employing it in premature or pernicious undertakings. Nor does the duty of exercising foresight stop here. It applies also to the transmission of the offices connected with the capital needed for their discharge. In the republican scheme of life the same law governs the succession to industrial and to political functions. The present holder of an office should, subject always to the approval of his superiors, have the power to appoint his successor. That is the course spontaneously adopted in respect of the simpler functions ; every good workman is considered by his immediate chief to be the best judge as to who ought to be his successor. When the rule comes to be applied to the highest political functions, the control of a superior is replaced by that of the general public, to whom the choice of a successor ought to be announced in sufficient time to allow of its being either confirmed or annulled, as the case may be. In the event of a difference of opinion, the public should have the exclusive control in the selection of its governors.

The proletariate should, in fact, be regarded as constituting the social mass, inasmuch as outside of it there is only a very small minority of industrial chiefs ; women, who form the majority of the human race, being considered apart. In every society it is the workmen who perform the actual material labour ; it is they who renew the body social, who reproduce everything needful for life, and who act directly upon the materials and the animals of which the ownership is vested in the patriciate. But there is a more general function which the proletariate discharges —that, namely, of watching over the proceedings of the public powers. It is numerous and disinterested ; from its situation it is in touch with everything, and has to bear

the consequences of every abuse. It is, therefore, called upon to judge of everything. Now, the proletariate cannot exercise this universal control with the vigour and usefulness required unless it receives an encyclopædic instruction, which may give it clear views on all subjects, and which should spread from its best minds to all its members. To put general teaching within its reach is the fundamental duty of the Positivist priesthood; and Auguste Comte laid out the plan whereby the science of Humanity, as a connected whole, should be taught to it. In 378 gratuitous lessons, given in the evenings, and extending over a period of seven years, the priesthood will impart to the children of workmen, between the ages of fourteen and twenty-one, without interfering with their apprenticeship, the instruction which is indispensably needed by the modern citizen.

When educated under such guidance, the proletariate will use its control in the most efficacious manner possible, by confirming the tendency of civilisation to divert man's destructive activity on to inanimate things only, and to limit to pecuniary penalties—that is, to deprivation of property—the punishments formerly inflicted upon liberty and life. It is its duty to forego all use of violence for the enforcement of its decisions, to confine its opposition to refusal of its assent and co-operation, and even to adopt that course only on social grounds. It may perhaps be imagined that the proletariate would be placing itself at a disadvantage by limiting its extremest form of resistance to a strike—that is to say, to a struggle between the concentrated wealth of a few rich men and the narrow means of a considerable number of poor men. But to regulate the use of one's strength is to increase it. Whenever a working-class demand is well-grounded and practicable, the worthy compliance of a single employer is sufficient to bring about immediately the consent of his colleagues. Besides, there will always be found among the chieftains of industry, as were found so often among the feudal

nobility, chivalrous souls who will be ready to place, not their arms, but their wealth, at the service of the oppressed. When all citizens share in the worship and the teaching of Humanity, direct relations of all kinds will be formed between the various social functionaries, and it will be possible to appeal to those relations in such a way as to render industrial intercourse more and more conciliatory. If, however, conflicts do break out, it is the priesthood of Humanity, called by its function to become the supreme moderator and regulator of society, and the defender of all just and worthy causes, which, with the support of women, and making its appeal to conscience and opinion, will intervene as mediator between the new belligerents.

The course which positive civic morality recommends for adoption everywhere, both in ordinary daily life and in the conflicts to which it gives rise, is to substitute for the revolutionary confusion of the two powers the normal separation between them which alone is suitable to a society based on science and industry. That course enables a distinction to be drawn between what is due to the function and what belongs to the organ, and thus allows the office to be always respected, however unworthy the functionary may be. Under those circumstances the remonstrance of the priesthood becomes reconcilable with order, and subordination compatible with progress. The separation of the two powers, which is so much in keeping with our manners, and which alone can overcome the spirit of revolt and servility, ought to be regarded as the fundamental institution of the positive republic, and the guarantee of all its other institutions.

CHAPTER IV.

ON POSITIVE WESTERN MORALS

The aim of positive Western morals is to regulate the existence of the several nationalities—more or less united, since the time of Charlemagne, by a sense of common interests and responsibilities —which make up the Western Republic. Revolutionary systems incompetent to furnish such regulation: the policy of nationalism, of industrialism, of sentimentalism. The re-establishment of order in the West depends on a religious transformation directed by the priesthood of Humanity, which the several States will assist by adopting a pacific policy. France, regenerated by the Republic, is called upon to take the initiative in both directions, moral and political.

The reign of Humanity cannot be directly realised by the country or fatherland. Between national existence and universal existence stands a special structure, the most admirable that Humanity has ever yet established as the supreme agent of her power. With its construction arrived the final term of the Revolution which began thirty centuries ago, and was distinguished by the growing rupture with the theocratic system—a rupture which was extended successively to the intellect, to activity, and to feeling. During the course of that slow evolution nations have played their characteristic parts in history, and through it they occupy a settled rank in modern civilisation. It has effected a division of the human race into two principal groups—the West and the East; the former characterised by the development of the scientific and industrial mode of life, while the latter, still more or less subject to the theocratic, or even the purely fetichist, system, embraces all the rest of the earth. Positive Western morality has for its aim to regulate the existence of the various countries which form the flower of Humanity

by constantly keeping in view their relations to that world-wide whole which it is their mission to guide.

Historically, the Western Republic was completed, as regards its essential elements, in the ninth century. All its members alike shared in the Catholic-feudal mode of life, and in the twofold movement, organic and critical, which marks the modern era. Prior to this evolution in common, three of those elements had experienced the incomparable effects of Roman civilisation, and that had furthermore extended from Italy to Spain and Gaul the results of Greek civilisation which it had itself assimilated. The impulse thus communicated to those populations was so powerful that they were able to perpetuate down to our own day a sufficiently thorough community of manners, opinions, and language, and to impart it to the northern populations. The completion of the incorporation was the work of Charlemagne, who must be regarded as the founder of the Western Republic. By respecting and consolidating the separation of the two powers he established a voluntary union of distinct political populations, linked together through the medium of the Papacy; and thus what force had failed to accomplish was brought about by a combination of good feeling with common sense. Colonial extensions included, the Western Republic is composed of five national groups: France in the centre; Italy and Spain in the South; England and Germany in the North; and Paris, which has been its focus since the time of the Crusades, will, when she has laid aside her insurrectional character, become its religious metropolis. Much more drawn together by their æsthetic, scientific, and industrial resemblances than they are separated by theologico-metaphysical beliefs and their military antecedents, these different nationalities form a conjointly associated whole; in fact, Occidentals are fellow countrymen.

With the spread of Positivism, the use, as a political expression, of the purely geographical term "European"

must be dropped ; for it was applied in an utterly irrational way to an assemblage of very distinct and dissimilar peoples. So used, the appellation errs at once by excess and by defect. Democratic hallucinations notwithstanding, there is no United States of Europe ; for this portion of the world comprises Oriental populations, such as Turkey and Russia, while it does not include the various colonial extensions of the West, especially the Americans, who manifestly form part of it. Moreover, the five denominations employed to designate the constituent elements of the Western Republic are general expressions intended to represent groups of States politically distinct ; thus the word "Germany" indicates a collectivity which includes, besides Germany properly so called, Switzerland, Holland, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Hungary, and Poland. To make a single State of those nationalities would be utterly out of the question. Diversity of interests will always require the existence of temporal governments with restricted limits, distinct and mutually independent. The more widely a government extends its power beyond the normal limits of a fatherland, the more irrational and oppressive it becomes, both internally and externally. Since the incorporation of the Western elements was completed, all the attempts made in modern times to renew the conquering work of a Cæsar or a Charlemagne have become equally useless and ineffectual. The operations effected by those two great men were as legitimate and progressive in their tendency as the action of a Louis XIV. or a Bonaparte was unsettling and retrograde. While never losing sight of the future, the true statesman will assist in the preservation of the small nationalities, and the restoration of those which, a century ago, were brutally obliterated by a culpable parody of military civilisation.

To regulate by means of new views these different populations is one of the great wants of our time—a want all the more urgent from the fact that the revolutionary

schemes now in favour are marked by deplorable inadequacy, and are a constant menace to peace. Manifestly, it is not by the policy of invasion based on the metaphysical theory of nationalities that order can be re-established in the West. That theory overlooks the very complex character of race, and its subordination to the leading element of social existence—namely, continuity. That political materialism which acknowledges no obligations of any kind, and cares no more for Humanity than for God, regards struggle, for the sole benefit of the strong, as the object of life. It sees only isolated individuals, some of whom are destined to be exploited, and others to be exploiters. Positivism bars the way. It appeals to the republicans of France and the West to withstand the monstrous consequences of an arbitrary conception which fraudulently takes advantage of the scientific method, and, in the name of law, would ruin, sacrifice, and finally exterminate the weak, to the ultimate universal triumph of barbarians. With national industrialism, again, Western policy is no better off, as regards its co-ordination. Experience has proved what theory asserts — that, without positive morality, commerce is war at home and abroad, by reason of its tendency to make each country a workshop having the rest of the world for its market. But, under such an artificial system, all production of similar goods is regarded as the work of a rival, who must necessarily be abolished. A change of fashion among consumers, or the closing of a market, is enough to cause widespread ruin, and reduce the working class to destitution. In the case of populations such as those of the West, whose historical development has been so similar, there is no feasible policy but Free Trade, in its main features at least; each producing the materials it is best fitted to supply, and exchanging them with the others. But it is for statesmen and practicians to introduce into the system such modifications as economic diversities may necessitate. Appeals to fraternity are a not less dangerous

method of smoothing away our principal international difficulties. Opinion ought not to tolerate an invocation by the governing classes of the honoured authority of Humanity, especially as there is no people pure enough to speak in her name, and as such appeals, intended ostensibly to re-establish order and peace, have hitherto helped only to aggravate our troubles after causing vast effusion of blood. Let us treat politics as an affair of reason. It is knowledge, not passion, that we must introduce into international disputes. The important thing for our practicians to aim at everywhere is to simplify questions of all sorts, not to complicate them.

The Occidental reorganisation implies and requires the rational definition of the duties which form a bond between the various classes and nations of the West, in accordance with their antecedents and their respective intended careers. The solving of such a problem as this requires the profound studies to which the priesthood of Humanity devotes itself, and in respect of which it calls for the earnest attention of all men of superior abilities. This regulating of the West renders the separation of the two powers more necessary and urgent than heretofore; and if some uncertainty might have been supposed, from the national point of view, to attach to it, there can be no possible room for doubt when we place ourselves at the international point of view. In reality, the concert of the West can be achieved only by the adoption of demonstrable duties dominating the respective relations, as the result of a uniform system of positive education, which shall establish and maintain the opinions and usages destined to be the guides of the common activity. Moral, not political: such will be the character of a union among the peoples of the West, which will become more and more systematic under the direct action of the priesthood of Humanity, called—to the exclusion of all political powers—to the government of the Western Republic.

In principle, and so long as minds are not sufficiently

prepared to accept this solution, every project for exercising a fundamental collective action, whether internal or external, should be dismissed as premature. Even for the most elementary practical institutions, such as the establishment of a universal system of weights and measures, or of coinage, Governments can intervene only by their pecuniary assistance. It is for the Positivist priesthood to elaborate and agree upon the schemes. In order that the conversion of the populations to the Religion of Humanity may be as rapid and complete as possible, it is essential that each State should adopt a pacific attitude, thereby facilitating, instead of hindering, the organic renovation. The duty which devolves on the several members of the Western Republic, so long as the present transitional situation may endure, is not, under any circumstances, to abstain from helping to maintain the territorial *status quo*. The proper course to adopt is to enter on the pathway of peace, with the watchword, "*No annexation under any pretext*," and to rally the smaller nationalities round a preponderant State, in order to guarantee both their independence and the general peace. No doubt, before they reach a state of harmony, those populations will still continue to hate and destroy each other; but such struggles will be more and more regarded as civil wars. We are actually advancing towards unity.

As the result of her antecedents France is called on, in preference to all the other nations of the West, to furnish the directing impulse. The other States, less pledged than she, can await the accomplishment of her organic transformation. Before aspiring to modify the world, she must show her good faith at home by overcoming the anarchy which periodically exhausts her. At all costs she must preserve the Republic, which for her is as indispensable as it is inevitable, allowing her, as it does, to accomplish all the modifications capable of bringing all her forces into harmonious co-operation for the common good. The French Republic must become Positivist in

its leading men, and must have a military force sufficient to secure respect for its internal developments and to maintain peace externally, this being the twofold temporal condition for the establishment of the new religion in the West. Quickened and regenerated by the Republic, France, having become strong enough to place might at the service of right, will be able to say to disturbers: "We object to anything being taken"; and she will say that both in her own name and in the name of her natural allies, the smaller nationalities whose independence is menaced. Thus will she realise the aspiration of the great Danton: "Let the Republic make itself strong, and France, by her enlightenment and her energy, will exercise an attractive influence over all peoples."

CHAPTER V.

ON POSITIVE PLANETARY MORALITY

The aim of positive planetary morality is to consolidate on system the universal tendencies towards terrestrial unity. To regulate planetary relations is now *indispensable*, owing to their growing complication, and *inevitable*, owing to the reaction of the East against the abuses of the Western Powers. Positivism alone, by reason of its relative and sympathetic spirit, is competent for the task. Regarding those peoples as backward elements in the common movement, it will incorporate them into Western civilisation by wisely graduated stages. This operation demands profound respect for their present situation, and the creation of a Western navy to assure the police of the seas.

The aim of positive polity is to make peace reign over the earth by regulating all human relations in conformity with this sacred formula: LOVE FOR PRINCIPLE AND ORDER FOR BASIS; PROGRESS FOR END!

To organise in a systematic way the unity which is spontaneously tending to establish itself on the earth is the aim of planetary or world-wide positive morals. Bossuet, in his *Policy Drawn from Holy Scripture*, has very well expressed the importance of a common abode, which makes us all compatriots:—

> The Earth on which we dwell together serves as a bond between men, and forms the unity of nations.....Men, in fact, feel themselves united by a tie of no little strength when they reflect that the same earth which has carried and nourished them during life will receive them into her bosom when they are dead.

To this common and deep-seated love of the soil has to be added a common faith—the faith of good sense, which received its first systematic expression in fetichism; and, lastly, the struggle of life against death completes, with

regard to our activity, this consciousness of a necessarily common destiny. Such are the broad foundations on which Positivism rests in establishing the work of exploiting the planet in the service of Humanity.

There is no more striking proof of the inevitable tendency of the human race towards final unity than the growing inter-connection of all parts of the planet. Isolation of the several populations has become an impossibility, and the economic and moral development of the East cannot any longer be kept separate from the life of the West. Nothing happens in the most obscure corner of the earth without producing an effect in some other part of it; what happens at Peking influences to some extent the population of Rouen, and disturbances in South America find an echo in England. Which of the nations is to-day self-sufficing, seeing that even our most common nutritive wants require the activity of far-off peoples, who in their turn have need of our services? A still more powerful tie comes in to strengthen the connection, for the peoples of the East are imitating us, and becoming acquainted with our scientific and philosophic conceptions, as well as with our industrial processes. In short, all over the East the advantages resulting from this incorporation are surmounting the differences of manners and doctrines, and opening a vast career to such as, by loftiness of nature, are worthy to place themselves at the service of those populations. It was on account of their knowledge of the sciences that the Jesuits were admitted into China. All these actions and reactions of the peoples on one another will continue to increase; and, without imperilling the results already obtained, the problem now arises how wisely to strengthen this tendency towards unity which everybody admits to be a fact.

It is, in truth, indispensable to regulate these relations on a systematic basis, threatened as they are by the disastrous empiricism which complicates them by encouraging premature contacts between populations which still

differ too widely—contacts which serve only to over-excite industrial anarchy. It is in this way that natives of the West, accustomed to a certain standard of living, find themselves, owing to Chinese immigration, placed on a footing of competition with men who are able to live in a much simpler and more economical way. These difficulties are the inevitable outcome of the disturbing interference of Western peoples with the existence of nations to whom they had previously been strangers, and whom, in the absence of a sufficient moral preparation, they could neither appreciate nor benefit. We found in Mexico, in Peru, in India, in the Malay States, in Japan, in China, and in Africa peoples who in many respects were better than ourselves. Is not the moral system of Confucius far superior to that of the Gospel, which it preceded by six centuries? And, if we come nearer home, has not the Moslem system surpassed the Christian system in its foreign relations? The spirit in which its government is administered and its constant toleration testify to the fact. Those odious prevaricators, the Christian adventurers, brought upon the countries they invaded poverty, vice, slavery, and, lastly, extermination of their inhabitants, as soon as the ardent charity of such men as Las Casas and Francis Xavier gave way to the hypocritical perversity of the industrialist missionaries, the forerunners of the Western bandits. The early conquerors of primæval times were, no doubt, occasionally harsh; but, when the first resistance was overcome, they gave evidence of a sociability superior to that of these self-styled Progressives, who shrink from no enormity that helps to facilitate the exploitation of the East to the greater profit of their greed. The industrialists who thus torture populations worthy of respect, and bring down upon us the most legitimate execration, are not ashamed to attempt the justification of their actions, and allege that they are rendering public service. According to their ignoble materialist creed, they are merely the instruments of so-called natural laws,

which doom the yellow and black races to extinction; and apparently they intend to facilitate this evolution by starving them to death. They do not consider that, if the whites apply these evolutionist processes to Oriental populations, the latter may apply them to us some day, when they have discovered the secret of our power; and even now, whenever they get the chance, they massacre the most obnoxious of these strange civilisers. Sooner or later it will be found that we cannot do evil with impunity. On more than one occasion already the West has suffered from the reaction of that ferocity which it had so blindly exercised abroad; and, on their part, those populations, intelligent, active, and strong in numbers, are arming themselves with our scientific machinery, and, unless we change our behaviour, they will one day make us pay dearly for our cruelties. Indeed, this inevitable expiation has already begun. A formidable economic invasion of the Chinese, which was derided as a dream when I predicted it eighteen years ago, is exerting an appreciable disturbing influence on the internal life of the United States, and even of England, and threatens us with serious social conflicts.

In presence of these dangers, it is urgently necessary that the West should peacefully and promptly provide for the needs created by this ever-extending intercourse of the nations; but to entrust this task to industrialists who regard the Oriental populations as composed of fools and brigands is no longer possible. And the time has gone by when Christian conceit treated as barbarians the peoples it was unable to incorporate into its creed. It is here that Positivism claims to intervene. Preserved by its spirit of relativity from the degrading and oppressive contempt inherent in all absolute doctrines, it here displays its incontestable superiority over Buddhism, Catholicism, and even Islam, the creeds which preceded it in trying to found a universal religion. It alone can understand and love the Oriental populations, and lead them, without

incongruity, to join the harmonious concert of mankind. In reality, all that remains of the mutual relations between the West and the East are some scientific or technical results and the memory of exceptional careers of devotedness ; and it is only by strengthening those sympathetic, intellectual, and material bonds which unite us to the Orientals that the problem of planetary unity can be solved. Ascribing each social institution to its own proper epoch, the positive doctrine enables us to mark the stages which the various peoples have reached in their progress towards Humanity. It regards the Oriental populations as backward elements that are merely halting for a while in a movement that assumes various aspects analogous to those which our forefathers and we ourselves have passed through ; and in this way it allows to each stage of development its proper share, while itself tending to prevail. Viewing these unequally advanced elements as so many factors in the entire sum of civilisation, the Religion of Humanity will only have to guide their spontaneous evolution, without any rupture of continuity, in order to bring them into the line of march towards their common destination.

We have possession of the two fundamental elements—one essential, the other complementary—without which all attempts to bring about the co-operation of the nations would remain futile. These are positive faith and pacific labour. Industry and science have both alike the character of universality. The first, like the second, makes use of all human antecedents, and desires that all may benefit by its results. Like the latter, also, it has had a potent influence in preparing the reign of Humanity ; so that every scheme for making industrial activity the monopoly of one region or of one nation will appear more and more chimerical. When the entire planet we inhabit comes to be regarded, from the theoretical and practical points of view, as the sole reality, the sentiments of universal fraternity will in the end prevail in the ordering

of relations which have hitherto been abandoned to ferocity, greed, and caprice. To regulate terrestrial relations implies, therefore, that we shall first have ascertained, by the light of positive laws, the present economic, mental, and moral constitution of the different parts of the planet, so as to be able to deduce therefrom the most suitable mode of incorporating them in the Western movement.

But this vast field of activity cannot be approached by governments until after the religious renovation of the West, to which the requisite philosophic efforts must first of all be directed. Up to that point there should be great caution in the choice of collective enterprises and the establishment of too close relations; and, above all, we should never lose sight of the future for which we have to prepare. To suppose that the Orientals will have to go through the same long evolution as that which the West has accomplished would be absurd. No such formal imitation is necessary or possible. What is needed is that we should fraternally assist them, and spare them the trouble of useless experiments. It is only by very slow modifications, especially of a moral nature, that we can bring their constitution into closer resemblance with that of the West. To hasten that movement by applying to them the principle of Free Trade would, in the case of the industrial castes of India, for instance, be equivalent to condemning them to die of starvation, because they are unable to make a change of occupation, as their very religion prohibits it. And the same remark applies to their customs in general. A period of transition is, therefore, absolutely necessary, if we wish to avoid catastrophes, of which the Orientals would be the first victims, but which would not be long in reacting upon the working classes of the West.

On the priesthood of Humanity alone devolves the duty of directing the mutual relations of the several portions of the planet, and of spreading the positive faith under forms adapted to their present stage of development; first of all

among the Moslems and the Russians, then among the Hindus and the peoples of the Far East, and, lastly, among the inhabitants of the rest of the world. By missions entrusted to noble natures it will approach the rulers in order to induce them to strengthen among their peoples all the convergent elements that already exist in their customs and institutions. Equipped with the necessary guarantees of mental and moral competence, Positivist missionaries will receive from Western governments that assistance, chiefly financial, which the latter ought to extend to all that helps to consolidate order throughout the world. And, while this religious work is going on, the West will complete it in the political sphere by sedulously respecting the condition of the backward populations, instead of prematurely dismembering them, as has been done in Turkey, or destroying them, as in Africa and Oceania. To oppose revolutionary Christian proselytism is a not less urgent duty. We must assist the Oriental rulers in their measures of defence against missionaries and smugglers, who, under pretext of Christian, commercial, or humanitarian principles, poison, degrade, and oppress their peoples.

To sum up: The only collective political operations should be those of a temporary character, having for their special object to maintain order on the planet; and this implies an indispensable new creation, the Western navy, for the purpose of watching and repressing disturbers of the peace—that is to say, a *gendarmerie* of the seas. Positivism, the organ of civilisation, calls the West, regenerated by the demonstrated faith, to a noble mission —to repudiate the system of conquests, to guarantee the blessings of peace against violation by the powerful, and to defend only the general interests of Humanity throughout the world. Such a policy, breaking definitively with the narrow national selfishness that was necessary in the past, and henceforth acting in subordination to a morality of universal scope, will pursue its high aims with inflexible

justice and in a wise, conciliatory spirit, ever true to that loyal social morality whose motto is "Live openly." May republican France take this great initiative in time to ward off new storms and prevent irreparable disasters!

LOVE AS THE PRINCIPLE, AND ORDER AS THE FOUNDATION; PROGRESS AS THE AIM! Such is the truly sacred formula in which the whole system of positive morality is summed up. By it all the elements of human order are regulated under every aspect, being directly subordinated to the larger general order of nature, and yet everywhere dependent on the movement of Humanity, though the latter herself is subject to the sway of her terrestrial environment. The necessity of a positive system of morals is fully proved, both by the requirements of the situation and by the universal tendencies of human nature. It furnishes to men of thought and men of action a common ground of agreement, which will enable them to settle on secure foundations the welfare and the future of women and of the working classes.

To establish the peaceful reign of Humanity on a methodical plan, with a view to universal improvement, is the aim of positive polity. The new spiritual power has elaborated the general principles of guidance to which it will give effect in the government of human nature. The duties intended to regulate the evolution of all the elements of society towards the normal state are not ascertainable by divination, nor by revelation: only extensive and profound study of human phenomena, the laws of which have to be discovered and co-ordinated, will enable us to formulate them. To reach that goal there is no other way than SOCIAL SCIENCE, on which I hope to be able to discourse to you some other time.

This exposition will have helped to dispel some prevalent mistaken notions about the Religion of Humanity. That vast construction of Auguste Comte is now seen to be a doctrine free from any heterogeneous conception which might endanger its great social and moral ideals. Deeply

respectful of all individual characteristics, whether personal, domestic, or civic, it yet brings into convergence the superior natures of both sexes, of all classes, and of all nationalities. It will thus institute a free public opinion, whose office it will be to secure the acceptance, in all matters and everywhere, of the rules of the demonstrated morality; to obtain respect for them in practice, and to realise, with the support of all men of good will, the reign of peace on the earth.

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