

through reaction and contrast. This has, in modern times, been abundantly evident in the rapidly succeeding phases of modern history. It has also been recognised by philosophical writers. Let us then try to correct the formula of Comte so as to bring it into harmony with the larger experience of the day. We might feel disposed to say that Comte was right in assigning to philosophical thought an intermediate or transitional position, preferring, on our part, to speak of philosophy rather than of metaphysics—as the latter term, though perfectly legitimate and useful, has acquired in the eyes of many persons a doubtful meaning. We might then go on to say that the stage of positive or exact thought having been reached in the course of the nineteenth century, this itself is producing the desire for a new departure, a counter-movement which will call forth and urge the active rather than the purely intellectual powers of the human soul. Philosophy thus occupies still the intermediate or transitional stage assigned to it by Comte; only that we now find ourselves, as it were, reversing the Comtian process of development, passing from the one-sided sway of exact or positive thought through philosophy to a renewed life, not of dogmatic Theology, but of practical Religion, bringing with it a fresh display of the creative powers of the human mind.

In offering this concluding formula, I do not desire to attach much importance to any scheme which unduly abbreviates my task of exhibiting the mental forces of our century in the fulness of their life and their many-sided significance; but conducting my readers, as I am