

system of morality on an independent basis, reconcilable with a purely biological, anthropological, or naturalistic point of view.

### III.

54.  
Herbert  
Spencer.

The only consistent and comprehensive scheme which professed to solve this problem does not belong to German philosophy, but is the work of Herbert Spencer, who, prompted by social and political interests, made an attempt to work out the idea of evolution or development through all the different regions of nature and mind, of intellectual and moral life. To this task he brought uncommon power of penetration, of description and analysis, but also a remarkable self-reliance which permitted him to pursue the line of thought he had chosen without being disturbed by the arguments of other contemporary or earlier thinkers, most of whom he entirely neglected and refused to understand. It is not necessary here to dwell on the fundamental formulæ of his philosophy such as the persistence of force, the transition from the homogeneous to the heterogeneous, his special doctrine of the unknowable, &c. All these would, to a large section of thinking readers, appear even more obscure and unintelligible than the fundamental conceptions of the Hegelian system, were it not for an abundance of illustrations and analogies drawn mostly from the biological sciences which, mainly through Darwin, were then flourishing with new vigour. On the other side,