

many others the advantage of being based upon a much broader foundation, inasmuch as, quite independent of the ethical and practical interest which now rules supreme, historical and anthropological as well as juridical and economic studies had independently prepared the ground for a larger and more comprehensive treatment.

In consequence of these various interests and influences the problem before us has not only been raised to a position of great importance but has also become extremely complex, so much so that it is difficult, perhaps even impossible, to do justice to all its sides, or to give any tolerably concise survey of the many lines of thought which in the region of sociology have come into action or into conflict. Nevertheless, for the purposes of this History, some disposition of the large material must be attempted. I will try to put it in order by making use of the different points of view which these introductory remarks have so far disclosed.

The philosophy of human society may conveniently be divided into the discussion of three main questions. These are: the Constitution of Society, the Work of Society, and the History of Society. The first of these may be termed the Social problem *par excellence*, or in the narrower sense of the term. The second may be termed the Economic problem, and the last has, till quite recently, been termed the Philosophy of History.

During the greater part of the Nineteenth Century each of the three countries with which I am dealing has, in a fairly distinct manner, taken the lead in one of the three directions mentioned, and this for reasons which are historically easily understood. The fundamental