

physical or abstract state; lastly, the Scientific or positive state." And the correctness of this enunciation he proves by reference to the four fundamental sciences which had already at that time entered upon the last stage—viz., Astronomy, Physics, Chemistry, and Physiology.

Turning, then, to Morals and Politics, he proceeds to show how the former "are conceived by some as the result of a continuous supernatural action; by others as incomprehensible results of the action of an abstract entity; and lastly, by others as connected with organic conditions susceptible of demonstration, and beyond which it is impossible to go." And so far as politics as a science is concerned, he looks upon the supernatural idea of Divine right as belonging to the Theological state of politics; the doctrine of the sovereignty of the People as expressing the Metaphysical condition of politics; while, lastly, the Scientific doctrine of politics "considers the social state in which the human race has always been found by observers as the necessary effect of its organisation." The aim of practical politics accordingly consists in facilitating natural tendencies when these have been sufficiently ascertained. And the main natural tendency of man he considers to be "to act upon nature in order to modify it for his own advantage."

Comte considers that politics could not before his age become a positive science for two reasons. First, because the science of politics, or what he later on termed Sociology, being the highest and most complex science, could not enter upon the last, *i.e.*, the positive stage, before the other sciences had attained that position;