

thinkers like Mill, Grote, and Lewes, we must add the much more important fact that Comte offered exactly that which Mill was occupied with and in search of, but for which Comte's own countrymen were not yet prepared, a patient and scientific analysis of the methods of the exact sciences and an examination as to how far these could, or could not, be employed in the treatment of political and social questions.

Mill had<sup>1</sup> completed about two-thirds of his 'System of Logic'; he had at an earlier stage already become acquainted with Comte's writings when the latter was still classed as a disciple of Saint-Simon. Having for a time lost sight of him, he again fell in with him when the first two sociological volumes of the 'Cours de Philosophie Positive' were published. In them he found assistance in elaborating his theory of "the Inverse Deductive Method as the one chiefly applicable to the complicated subjects of History and Statistics."<sup>2</sup> We know that Mill's logical studies were originally prompted by a similar desire to that of Comte—viz., to make the methods which had proved so fertile in natural philosophy useful and applicable in dealing with political, or what we now term social problems. The further development of Comte's ideas on the subject of social science had disappointed him, but his "enthusiasm was rekindled" when in the sociological volumes Comte expounded his 'Connected View of History' which contained his celebrated 'Law of the Three States.' Mill then carried on an interesting correspondence with Comte, which terminated when, as Mill says, "I found, and he probably

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Influence on  
J. S. Mill.

<sup>1</sup> See 'Autobiography,' p. 209.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 210.