

the attention of foremost thinkers in all the civilised countries, and attempts were made to do more thoroughly and adequately what Hegel on the one side, Comte on the other, had only adumbrated. The interval was filled up by that large volume of research which both schemes needed and presupposed, but which neither could supply; this is the work of the historical school, or better, the historical schools, which started everywhere, sometimes consciously but mostly unconsciously, gathering and preparing the material for larger generalisations and the solution of the greater problem.

49.
The historical spirit in Hegel and Comte.

The true historical spirit lived both in Hegel and in Comte, exhibiting in each a distinct but very different character. It would be quite incorrect to classify historians by this distinction. There can, however, be no doubt that two distinct tendencies exist among those modern historians who desire to be more than mere annalists, that these tendencies appear sometimes apart, sometimes united, now clearly recognised, now only implied, and that they are in the abstract represented by Hegel and Comte. It will be of use if I try to put in words somewhat more clearly what these two tendencies are.

50.
The idealist conception.

The first, and, in time, the earlier philosophical conception regarding the essence of human culture, civilisation and progress, is that this progress brings out and unfolds an ideal content. Ideas are the motive power in the history of the race. According to Schelling and Hegel not only human but also natural history, not only the living and thinking portion of creation but inanimate nature itself, is the playground of the Spirit