

be explained with due reference to the conditions each society is exposed to—the conditions furnished by its locality and by its relations to neighbouring societies.”<sup>1</sup>

This passage shows sufficiently how much more comprehensive and many-sided is the view which Spencer takes of the social problem than that of Comte; how his principle, consisting, like Hegel's, in a continual action and reaction of two elementary processes—that of differentiation and that of integration—affords a great variety of combinations, illustrating and explaining many social and historical phenomena. With Hegel the two processes were the logical processes of affirmation and negation and the union of both in a higher affirmation. But what marks by far the greatest advance of Spencer's principle upon that of Hegel as well as upon that of Comte, is the introduction of specifically Darwinian ideas into his scheme. These ideas centre in the conception of descent or inheritance which Spencer does not limit to accidental and unexplained variations (as the extreme followers of Darwin do), but extends also to acquired characters (as the followers of Lamarck do). By accepting this he is able to do justice to the marked difference which exists between living organisms and lifeless structures; a difference which Comte had already emphasised, but which, with him, is characterised rather by a statical arrangement than by a dynamical process.

By thus introducing into his sociology the Darwinian or genealogical principle, Spencer is able to give a plausible account of those moral tendencies in human

<sup>1</sup> 'The Study of Sociology' 11th ed., 1884, p. 52.