

earlier societies. The beginnings of this view are to be found in the writings of Herder, but it has had its most influential exponent in Hegel. Though originally merely a speculation, it found both a theoretical and a practical application; the former in the philosophy of history and in the ideal treatment of the historical narrative; the latter through the position which Hegel took up to the political questions of the day, of the age and state in which he lived.

The second is the philosophy of Auguste Comte, in which sociology, as a special region of research, for the first time receives full recognition. It was prepared by the suggestive but abortive attempts in the direction of social reform which followed in the wake of the French Revolution. This sociological view has two distinct characteristics. It is based upon a philosophy of history, illustrating, in the main, an intellectual feature of human progress as expressed in the Law of the Three States; its second characteristic is, that it takes for granted, as an empirical fact, the existence of two tendencies in human nature, the egoistic and the altruistic, of which the latter, either naturally and unconsciously or assisted by intellectual knowledge and control, is gradually gaining the ascendancy over the former.

The third important contribution to the solution of the social problem is the philosophy of evolution usually identified with the name of Herbert Spencer, but probably more indebted to the introduction of Darwinian ideas than is usually admitted. This view regards social relations, following upon biological and