

Philosophy of the Sciences and "The Philosophy of History." Though some chapters of the 'Philosophie Positive' will probably retain an important place in philosophical literature as being of lasting value, Comte was primarily, as little as Francis Bacon, a scientific thinker; his was not exclusively a philosophy of science. Scientific thought was for him merely a method, not an object in itself; it was a method by which the great social problems created by the French Revolution were to be brought nearer to solution.

52.
His social
aim.

I stated above that Comte was not led to philosophical speculation by a religious interest. This is correct only if we limit the religious interest to that problem which, as we have seen, interested the leaders of philosophical thought in Germany during the classical age of German poetry and speculation: the seventy years from 1770 to 1840. I defined it there as the problem of the relation of knowledge to faith, which was gradually transformed into the question of belief and unbelief. This problem did not trouble the mind of Comte, but if we take a different view of the religious problem and identify it with the question of the moral order and spiritual government of human society, then we must admit that this was exactly the problem which presented itself to Comte's mind at a very early period of his life; and this in consequence of the anarchy which prevailed in his country as a consequence of the great Revolution. In fact, it was the problem which the Revolution had set before the age as its most important task.

53.
His religious
interest.

We may at once contrast this with the historical