

Comte disliked the Protestant spirit, which he identified in Germany with the metaphysical and critical, in England with the aristocratic as opposed to the monarchical as well as to the democratic tendency. Believing in a general and fixed Order of Nature, the highest product of which was Mankind and its History, he never lost sight of, and latterly reasserted the necessity of, a definite social order and a supreme authority approaching almost to absolutism. He had great admiration for the theocratic system of the Middle Ages, and his reconstructed Order of Society contained an intellectual or scientific in the place of a religious priesthood. He had not the large Protestant view of individual liberty as it lived in the minds of the leading thinkers in Germany. The masses, he considered, could never take part in working out the principles of the highest and ruling order of things; such intellectual activity must be confined to a selected class. The work of the masses would be to apply, for the benefit of society, the truths understood and represented by a small number of thinkers. Thus he had even less appreciation for the metaphysical and critical school of thought than he had for the earlier theological, and in him we find that remarkable combination of the hierarchical (or Catholic) with the Positivist (or scientific) spirit which is still to be found among French thinkers of the day.

We see then how fundamentally different were the intellectual predispositions and surroundings in which Comte's philosophy grew up. The total absence of a critical foundation, such as German philosophy, since Kant's time, has considered to be indispensable, the