

absence also of any unifying cosmic idea, have induced German historians either to disregard Comte's philosophy altogether or to deny it the title of a philosophical system. By many Comte's unifying principle is considered to be merely a method. This is correct to a large extent. Nevertheless this method is not merely that of the sciences or that of common-sense, although we find him reaffirming again and again the intimate connection of Positivism with both. The unifying tendency of his thought, which he never tires of extolling, is architectonic, an attempt to bring order and arrangement into human thought and knowledge; and the larger part of his first great work is occupied with establishing the hierarchy of the sciences, according to which one follows out of the other and the whole series ends in the new science of Sociology. As this deals with the highest product of nature, the society of human beings, it is also the highest among all the sciences, of which it is the consummation. Next to this order of the sciences there stands the well-known order in which he conceives of the development or evolution of human society in the course of history. In fact, Order or logical arrangement and Development make up the central and unifying thought in Comte's system. With this idea he desired to lift society out of the state of anarchy into which it had been plunged through an extreme application of the mistaken metaphysical or abstract spirit, which had resulted only in experimenting and floundering.

56.
Unifying
tendency
in Comte.

Keeping always in view the rearrangement of society, the new social Order, Comte is well aware of the im-