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Spencer had the misfortune that what he wrote that was valid and fruitful has been absorbed and incorporated into modern thought with very little awareness of whence it came (and its source forgotten). But what he wrote that was erroneous or has been outdated or has been rejected, but with continued recollection of who said it.

"Much of the truth which Spencer expounded has now passed into the framework of the scientific universe of discourse; part, perhaps, has still to be incorporated; and not a little, bound up with "use-inheritance," will probably have to be rejected altogether." (Anonymous, "Biography of Spencer," review of The Life and Letters of Herbert Spencer, edited by David Duncan, Nature, Vol. 79, pp. 122-125, 1908. P. 124)

"I sometimes think that we Platonists and Idealists are not half so industrious as those repulsive people who only 'believe what they can hold in their hands.' Bain, H. Spencer, & c., who are the very Toppers of philosophy and yet have gained for themselves fame & name." (Letter from Benjamin Jowett to Edward Caird dated January 5, 1875. In Letters of Benjamin Jowett, M.A., Arranged and Edited by Evelyn Abbott and Lewis Campbell, John Murray, London, 1899. P. 190)

"But I strongly think that we are suffering, and shall suffer for some time to come, until the world recovers its balance, from the ideas of physical science. There is a fellow named Herbert Spencer ... [this elision occurs in the book, suggesting that Jowett used stronger language in referring to Spencer than his editors thought seemly to include] who knows a little of physical science, and gives back to the scientific men their own notions in a more general form. Of course they worship him as a god, and instead of being thought an empty sciolist, he is regarded by them as the philosopher of the future. I hope that we shall some day put a spoke in his wheel at Oxford, but at present he is rather swaggering and triumphant." (Letter from Benjamin Jowett to R. B. D. Morier dated January 26, 1875. In Letters of Benjamin Jowett, M.A., Arranged and Edited by Evelyn Abbott and Lewis Campbell, John Murray, London, 1899. P. 195)
"I have tried to set Thomas Hill Green to fight with the Philistines—Bain, H. Spencer, &c., and he seems well disposed. He takes a year of holiday ... next year, so that he will have time to make the attack." (Letter from Benjamin Jowett to Edward Caird dated January 5, 1875. In Letters of Benjamin Jowett, M.A., Arranged and Edited by Evelyn Abbott and Lewis Campbell, John Murray, London, 1899. P. 191)

"Only cosmic minds can appreciate or measure Spencer. How then can he be measured by academic minds which are neither cosmic nor even cosmopolitan, but donnish and cliquish? The twenty-fifth century will do him full justice." (Grant Allen, Personal Reminiscences of Herbert Spencer, Vol. 35, pp. 610-628, 1904. P. 628)

"It is no wonder that many conventional schoolmen in the English-speaking world read his philippics with mingled feelings of disgust and dismay. If Spencer was right, they were wrong; if his teaching should triumph, theirs would go, and they likewise. Teachers of the classics especially looked upon him as the chief of the Philistines, and with tongue and pen sought to punish him for what they called his pedagogic presumption and wickedness." (W. S. Sutton, Herbert Spencer's Individuality as Manifested in His Educational Thinking, Journal of Proceedings and Addresses of the Fortieth Annual Meeting of the National Education Association, pp. 225-230, St. Louis, Mo., 1904. P. 227. Sutton was Professor of the Science and Art of Education at the University of Texas)

"Vir [John Viriamu Jones, a fellow-student at Oxford] had but a poor opinion of Herbert Spencer, whom he described as 'parent of a philosophy dead before it was born.' The stimulus and enthusiasm aroused by Spencer's writings had been to me a great educational force from the age of seventeen onwards, and I could not accept his sweeping denunciation, although in later years, from the new point of view which we owe to August Weismann, I became convinced that the great intellectual superstructure of the synthetic philosophy was founded not even upon the sand." (Edward Bagnall Poulton, John Viriamu Jones and Other Oxford Memories, Longmans, Green, and Co., London, 1911. Pp. 81-82)

"By men whose conception of the sphere of knowledge has not been shaped at the English Universities, Spencer's life-work has repeatedly been described at the greatest effort ever made to give that sphere a comprehensive chart." (J. M. Robertson, Explorations, Watts & Co., London, [ca. 1923?]. P. 113)

"And in the end Spencer will be remembered and admired, and they [Spencer's English academic critics], for the most part, forgotten." (J. M. Robertson, Explorations, Watts & Co., London, n.d. [ca. 1923]. P. 116)
"The academic opposition to Spencer, therefore, was in large part the outcome of the pre-scientific habit of mind." (J. M. Robertson, *Explorations*, Watts & Co., London, n.d. (ca. 1923). P. 118)

"... the academics continue to this day to belittle Spencer because they are the products of an education still mainly shaped by the light of the Middle Ages, and but slightly modified by the unifying science which he [Spencer] sought to compass." (J. M. Robertson, *Explorations*, Watts & Co., London, n.d. (ca. 1923). P. 119)

Robertson suggests that one reason for opposition to Spencer was that his writings carried "... a general suggestion that academic minds were everywhere ill prepared for a system of thought in which the objective is always Causation." (J. M. Robertson, *Modern Humanists Reconsidered*, Watts & Co., London, 1927. P. 180)

"... on the whole the academics, until recent years, at least in England, have maintained a professional attitude of superiority to Spencer, who was revolutionizing opinion without taking them into account." (J. M. Robertson, *Modern Humanists Reconsidered*, Watts & Co., London, 1927. P. 183)

Spencer "... was to clash with a then prevalent hostility, especially in academic circles, where he was never forgiven for being self-trained." (J. M. Robertson, *Modern Humanists Reconsidered*, Watts & Co., London, 1927. P. 189)

"... the subsequent English academic reaction against his [Spencer's] philosophic doctrine ... Men who had never opened their mouths against the utter falsities of the traditional carred were eager, after Spencer's death, to detect and proclaim—invent—error in the greatest of modern cosmological constructions. This was but the revenge of academically trained men upon the fame of one who in the past had dwelt on the general absence of the concept of causation from all their thought, and the invalidity, thus proved, of their discipline in the past. Their very criticism was a fruit of the intellectual impulse he had given, and it leaves only the clearer the fact that this man had been a force for sheer truth such as the house of religion had never harboured. In the (J. M. Robertson, *A History of Freethought in the Nineteenth Century*, Watts & Co., London, 1929. P. 439)

"On the contrary, they [the English reading public] were paying considerable attention to Herbert Spencer, who was anathema at Oxford ...." (Robert R. Marett, *A Jerseyman—at Oxford*, Oxford University Press, London, 1941. P. 96)
"Philosophy I found tremendously exciting and absorbing, so much so that for a time I seriously toyed with the idea of giving myself to it permanently. But such conclusions as I formed at any rate counter to the prevalent trend of thought in the Oxford of my day [he was there from 1892 to 1897 or later]. This was very much dominated by the German philosophers, more particularly Hegel, and by English thinkers like T. H. Green, Bosanquet and Bradley who seemed to me essentially of the same school. Inductive thinking, as represented by Bacon and Mill, and the whole evolutionary conception, as embodied in Herbert Spencer's works, were hardly regarded as deserving serious consideration."


"The hostility to Spencer among ordinary English academics, then, so far from supplying a measure of his power, is simply the measure of their restrictions. They cannot judge his work as a whole because they have never assimilated it; cannot survey it because they have never stood as high as his point of view. And of this restriction they have no suspicion. Brought up, with hardly an exception, not on the modern evolutionary gospel but on the obsolete theosophic one, living in a perpetual compromise with endowed superstition, trained in institutions ruled by priests and shaped to priestly ends, reducing philosophy at every opportunity to a rehabilitation of creeds grown more or less incredible, how shall they appraise the original performance of a great pioneer, whose constructive work begins where their appreciations end?"


"Both "the snarl which pretends to be a smile," and "malice" disguised as concern for science/ memorably illustrated in the conflicts with Spencer of the late Professor P. G. Tait, who figured as poorly under Spencer's criticism of his account of "Force" as in his own crass display of odium theologicum. His joyful resort to the support of the Rev. T. P. Kirkman's Philosophy without Assumptions (1876), on the ostensible ground that its author was a mathematician, set up in some minds thenceforth an indestructible suspicion of the philosophical competence of mathematicians as such. On retrospect, most of the frontal attack on Spencer is now very plainly discredited--is indeed wholly disregarded. But the animus shown is to be historically noted. That of Jowett, unable to reach any save sentimental conclusions, is markedly spleenful and unscholarlike. (See Facts and Comments, p. 108.)" Later, the remaining orthodox animus of the "educated" classes, pitiably exhibited in the acclamation of the worthless work of Benjamin Kidd on Social Evolution, gave a joyful reception to the attack on Professor James Ward. The whole series constitutes a distressing cumulative proof of the lowness of the standards of much English academic thinking, and of the correlative poverty of moral tone. We seem to face a survival of the malice of the cloister."

"At our oldest Universities there is a strong disposition to believe that the general treatment of social phenomena can never go beyond a philosophy of social life, and that therefore a department or chair of Sociology is unnecessary." (E. J. Urwick, "Sociology and Social Progress," The Sociological Review, Vol. 3, pp. 137-149, 1910. P. 137)


"While our own universities made themselves snug and smug in the half-way houses of Kant and Hegel, foreign nations were accepting England's great philosopher as of more value than the Germans." ("W.", "Herbert Spencer," The Athenæum, No. 3972, pp. 794-795, December 12, 1903. P. 795)

"One drawback certainly was attached to Spencer's exclusion from university life. He was compelled to face not only a hostile public, but the insidious opposition of university cliques, who could not bear to see a new thinker of commanding power step forward into the intellectual arena without the hallmark of university culture. Had Spencer been the centre of an admiring group of university disciples his system would have come into vogue much earlier; it would, in other words, have become fashionable. As it was, after the gradual decay of home-made philosophies, Hegel became the idol of university circles, and Spencer was left a voice crying in the wilderness." (Hector Macpherson, Spencer and Spencerism, Doubleday, Page & Co., New York, 1900. P. 13)

"Those who have seen much of English university life will not have failed to realise the spirit in which is name is held in many circles in opprobrium even at this present day." (John Butler Burke, "Herbert Spencer and the Master Key," The Contemporary Review, Vol. 89, pp. 783-794, 1906. P. 784)

"The great mass of his Spencer's work is concerned with a unification of science—... But this is obviously outside the sphere of writers such as T. H. Green, James Ward, Bradley, Case, and Caird. The Oxford school has had to confine itself to that small section of the synthetic philosophy with which its limitations permitted it any manner to deal. Such writers could not attack the Principles of Biology, to take an instance, for reasons too obvious to name." (C. W. Saleebey, Evolution The Master-Key, Harper & Brothers Publishers, New York, 1906. Pp. 332-333)
"It is a subject worthy of speculation as to why sociology, as such, should have taken such slight root in England. There are doubtless many reasons. Academic sociology is a symptom of contemporaneity in curriculum and pedagogical ideals. With the notable exception of the University of London and a few other recently established municipal universities, British education is still primarily medieval or humanistic, being concerned chiefly with the classics and dialectic and metaphysics. The ideal is still to train a cultured gentleman in terms of the older criteria of culture and learning. The objective is to prepare one to move easily and urbane-ly in formal social circles rather than actually to understand the processes of human society—to be in "society" rather than to understand social life. The more aristocratic groups in the colleges look forward to public life, and here the rhetorical and dialectical technique is viewed as the main avenue to success. Men are trained to argue with charm and lofty detachment rather than to investigate with precision. The whole process is a dignified and seductive flight from reality. The generalized approach to nature and society is through dialectics and metaphysics--Platonic rather than pragmatic and empirical." (Harry Elmer Barnes, "The Fate of Sociology in England," American Sociological Society, Papers and Proceedings, Vol. 21, pp. 26-46, 1926. Pp. 45-46)

"... at Oxford he [J. B. S. Haldane] gave the Herbert Spencer lecture. He could hardly spare the time for its preparation, "but in view of the totally anti-Herbert Spencer attitude of most of the lectures, I think I should," he wrote to his sister. He rejected the idea of speaking on the philosopher's economic and political ideas since he would, he said, "have to choose 'Marx and Spencer' as my title, which could have been misunderstood."" (Ronald W. Clark, J B S: The Life and Work of J. B. S. Haldane, Coward-McCann, Inc., New York, 1969. Pp. 217-218)

"There was a time when the great universities of Europe were called upon to resist the progress of astronomy in the name of Christianity. Later, they were again called upon to resist the progress of geology, in the name of Christianity. And now our colleges are called upon to resist the progress of sociology, in the name of Christianity. The demand, futile in the former cases, is now ridiculous. It is an anachronism, and serves only as a register of the survival of bigotry." (Edward L. Youmans, "Sociology and Theology at Yale College," The Popular Science Monthly, Vol. 17, pp. 265-269, 1880. P. 268)

"... T. H. Green, whose influence, together with that of the late Master of Balliol [ ], was dominant in Oxford and in the English and Scottish Universities generally in the Eighties and early Nineties. In this philosophy there seemed to many to be a way of escape not only from a barren individualism but from the whole philosophy of evolutionism. An adaptation of German metaphysics, a modified Hegelianism, or a form of Kantianism in which what was best in the Hegelian criticism was incorporated, might maintain itself against science and justify a spiritual conception of human life and of the entire world order." (L. T. Hobhouse, Development and Purpose, Macmillan and Co., Limited, London, 1913. P. xvii)
"As you know, the admiration of John Fiske, Youmans, and many others have for him [Spencer] is not shared by English philosophers; still less by English historians, who think that there is nothing at all in his historical work, and think he was absolutely uncritical. Who shall decide?" (Letter from James Bryce to Henry Holt, written probably in April, 1920. Quoted in Henry Holt, Garrulities of an Octogenarian Editor, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1923. P. 318)


"I recently asked a student of Oxford, here [In Washington, D.C.], for a few days on his winter vacation, how Spencer was regarded at Oxford, and he told me that although his name was rarely spoken and then only in a whisper, as if, on Pope's theory of vice in general, its very utterance might lead to closer acquaintance, nevertheless Spencer was the unseen but overshadowing presence that surrounded the university and which it was considered necessarily to guard against and drive back." (Lester F. Ward, "Spencer-smashing at Washington," The Popular Science Monthly, Vol. 44, pp. 856-857, 1893-94. P. 857)

"Yet these works [of Spencer] are introduced and freely used in the English universities. Alike in England, Scotland, and Ireland, students are required to be acquainted with the contents of the "Psychology"; and in some universities Spencer's philosophical treatises are used as text-books. Oxford led the way a dozen years ago with the "Biology" as well as the "Psychology," and even went so far as to allow Spencer's works to be given as prizes." (Edward L. Youmans, "Sociology and Theology at Yale," The Popular Science Monthly, Vol. 17, pp. 265-269, 1880. P. 269)

"The reaction from the greatest age the world ever saw (unless Shakespeare was tremendous enough to make his age the greatest) has included a reaction against the greatest philosopher the world ever saw." (Henry Holt, Garrulities of an Octogenarian Editor, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1923. P. 52)
"From the evolutionary philosophers, I have learned little; although I admit that, however hurriedly their theories have been knocked together, and however antiquated and ignorant Spencer's First Principles and general doctrines, yet they are under the guidance of a great and true idea, and are development it by methods that are in their main features sound and scientific." (Charles Peirce, Philosophical Writings of Peirce, selected and edited with an introduction by Justus Buchler, Dover Publications, Inc., New York, 1955. P. 2)
"In his search for an understanding of his country's difficulties he turned to the evolutionary science of Darwin and Spencer, which was then, apparently, providing answers to the problems in so many fields of knowledge." (Thornton Anderson, Brooks Adams, Constructive Conservative, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, N.Y., 1951. P. 191)

"The intellectual history of the last quarter of the nineteenth century—in America as well as elsewhere—in its teleological aspects is the history of the shift from the benevolent evolutionism of Spencer to the mechanistic materialism of Haeckel, with all the dislocations and readjustments involved in the cataclysmic change; and The Education of Henry Adams, that curiously suggestive study in disillusion, is saturated with the pessimism that followed upon the transition—a pessimism exuding from the contemplation of the bleak unity of a mechanistic universe." (Vernon L. Parrington, Main Currents in American Thought, Vol. 3: The Beginnings of Critical Realism in America: 1860-1920, Harcourt, Brace & Co., Inc., New York, 1936. P. 203)

"After talking of Herbert Spencer for an entire evening with a very literary transcendental commission-merchant, she could not see that her time had been better employed than when in former days she had passed it in flirting with a very agreeable young stockbroker ...." (Henry Adams, Democracy, An American Novel. A Meridian Classic, New York, 19 . P. 13. [The character described is Mrs. Lightfoot Lee, perhaps the heroine of the novel])

"I return the Spencer. The "Philosophy of Style" has disappointed me. If his other works are not better thought out, they must have very little sound method to recommend them." (p. 261) (After taking specific issue with some of Spencer's contentions in that work Adams says:) "In short Spencer's essay seems to me to be neither philosophical nor accurate. I am not encouraged to read his larger works." (p. 262) (Letter from Henry Adams to Henry Cabot Lodge dated June 25, 1874. In Letters of Henry Adams (1858-1891), edited by Worthington Chauncey Ford, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1930)
"Ever the tendency is towards congruity between beliefs and requirements. Either the social arrangements are gradually changed until they come into harmony with prevailing ideas and sentiments; or, if surrounding conditions prevent change in the social arrangements, the necessitated habits of life modify the prevailing ideas and sentiments to the requisite extent." (Herbert Spencer, The Principles of Ethics, Vol. 1, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1904. P. 136)

"... the biological truth that everywhere faculties adjust themselves to the conditions of existence, in such wise that the activities those conditions require become pleasurable." (Herbert Spencer, "Replies to Criticisms on The Data of Ethics," Mind, Vol. 6, pp. 82-98, 1881. P. 85)

"Spencer called that same day, before the dinner, and spent an hour with me. He said I was not a bit too hard on Agassiz in my article. He said, as Huxley did, that while Agassiz deserves great credit as an indefatigable collector and observer, he is of no weight at all as a philosophical naturalist. And Spencer says to put him as high as Dr. Asa Gray or Jeffries Wyman is to put him too high, and Spencer "ought to know." This is the general opinion over here; they wonder why it is that Americans think so much of Agassiz. They all think Agassiz was in a way an obstruction to science in America." (Letter from John Fiske to Abby Morgan, November 22, 1873. Quoted in The Letters of John Fiske, edited by Ethel F. Fiske, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1940. Pp. 274-75)
"This difference was to furnish towards the close of the nineteenth century with the triumph of the world of heterogeneous quality and subjective valuation over that of quantity, of the historic vision over the mechanical conception. In the system of Spencer we find the welding of the two worlds and the attempt to make the historical process of development fit into the Procrustean bed of formulae of universal mechanics. In this welding of two opposite conceptions which are ill-fitted for lying together, lies the crisis of scientific intellectualism, which finds its expression in agnosticism. At bottom it is a confession of the impossibility of enclosing within mechanical schemes the life of the experience in its richness, and of comprehending and exhausting in one finite concept the inexhaustible dynamic infinity of the spirit and of the universe." (Antonio Aliotta, "Science and Religion in the Nineteenth Century," in Science Religion and Reality, ed. by Joseph Needham, pp. 149-186, Kennikat Press, Port Washington, N.Y., 1970. [Originally published in 1925] P. 160)

"The general effect of his philosophy was in the direction of agnosticism and materialism, in spite of the fact that somewhere in his work these extreme positions were relieved by qualifying statements ...." (p. 181) "Even though he was thus ultimately an agnostic, his agnosticism was of the comfortable sort which finds so much of interest and value in the knowable that the outlying marginal region may be neglected and forgotten." (p. 182) (George Perrigo Conger, New Views of Evolution, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1929. Conger was Associate Professor of Philosophy at the U. of Minnesota when he wrote this.)

But Spencer always thought of himself as an agnostic, not an atheist. (See his The Unknowable in First Principles.)

"Atheism is just the negation of all Theisms, and is thus fundamentally on all fours with Agnosticism.... And, in view of that other polemic about the word Religion, one is forced to conclude that again a prepossession in words, a touch of the passion for aureities (that is, empty phrases) and vital principles, led the philosopher [Herbert Spencer] to argue down a doctrine whose name he did not like, though it was scientifically identical with his own." (John M. Robertson, Modern Humanists, Swan Sonnenschein & Co., London, 1891. P. 232)
"In a few years, [Joseph] McCabe had moved a long way. Under the banner of agnosticism, he was now advocating what is clearly an atheist philosophy. He was critical of some of the foundational arguments of agnosticism. For example, he criticized Herbert Spencer's distinction between the knowable and the unknowable. This device was second in influence only to T.H. Huxley's own writings of agnosticism, and enable Spencer to sideline theological questions and get on with what interested him more. McCabe thought Spencer's ploy "an arbitrary distinction which led to an unsatisfactory Agnosticism" [ref.]." (Bill Cooke, A Rebel to His Last Breath. Prometheus Books. Amherst, N.Y., 2001. P. 246)

"It is one of the queerest anomalies in modern doctrine that Spencer, the Agnostic, should in effect represent Religion to have been heretofore, or to be at bottom, essentially Agnostic ...." (J. M. Robertson, Modern Humanists Reconsidered. Watts & Co., London, 1927. P. 178)
"The expression "survival of the fittest" (said to have been coined by Spencer) does not imply that the environment is a controlling mechanism in evolution. For Spencer progress does not depend upon conditions." (Alexander Alland, Jr., Evolution and Human Behavior, The Natural History Press, Garden City, 1967, P. 173)
"Above all, he [Spencer] has reduced the phenomena of life, of mind, of human thought and society and action, to common factors with all the rest of organic and inorganic nature." (Grant Allen, "The Gospel According to Herbert Spencer," Part I, The Pall Mall Gazette, April 26, 1890, pp. 1-2, P. 2)
"While an average increase of juvenile freedom is to be anticipated, there is reason to think that here and there it has already gone too far. I refer to the United States." (Herbert Spencer, Principles of Sociology, Sec. 341, Vol. 1 or 2. As quoted by F. W. Maitland)
Frederick Jackson "Turner arrived at Johns Hopkins in 1888 to study for a Ph.D. under Herbert Baxter Adams. He brought with him the conviction that the present age surpassed all previous eras, that its glorious hallmarks were science and democracy, and that its heroes were Darwin, Spencer, and Lincoln." (John Higham, History; Professional Scholarship in America. The Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 1969. P. 174)


"The reaction from the greatest age the world ever saw (unless Shakespeare was tremendous enough to make his age the greatest) has included a reaction against the greatest philosopher the world ever saw." (Henry Holt, Garrulities of an Octogenarian Editor, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1923. P. 52)

"Herbert Spencer's impact upon American thought was profound. Serious philosophers, among them James, Dewey, and Royce, had to clear their paths of Spencer before proceeding on their own way." (Cynthia Eagle Russett, Darwin in America, The Intellectual Response 1865-1912, W. H. Freeman and Company, San Francisco, 1976. P. 16)


"During the 1860's in California, the poet Edward R. Sill found himself in a cultural wasteland, and wrote: "one's only companions are Shakespeare, Shelley and Mill and Browning and Spencer and the others." (Quoted in San Francisco's Literary Frontier by Franklin Walker, Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1939. P. 235)

"... Herbert Spencer, was discovered and appreciated by American readers before he was recognized at home." (Andrew Carnegie, Triumphant Democracy. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1887. P. 359)

"If Spencer's abiding impact on American thought seems impalpable to later generations, it is perhaps only because it has been so thoroughly absorbed." (Richard Hofstadter, Social Darwinism in American Thought, revised edition. The Beacon Press, Boston, 1955. P. 50)
"As the young intellectuals, trained in the school of Spencer, looked out on the universe in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, they discovered, amid all its complexities an encompassing unity, a continuous growth, a creative purpose; and from such assumptions they justified the theory of progress, cosmic in scope and plan, that opened wide the doors to a vaster future. If in the backgrounds of their minds lurked the conception of determinism, it gave them no concern, for a benevolent determinism that shapes all things to a divine end, is no monster to be feared. In the evolutionary science were the grounds of a genial optimism that nothing could shake. If they had lost something of the jauntiness of the transcendental faith that beheld God plowing furrows at Brook Farm, they were armed with a scientific faith that by tapping stones and comparing fishes they should find His plan in an evolving series of life forms." (Vernon L. Farrington, Main Currents in American Thought, Vol. 3: The Beginnings of Critical Realism in America: 1860-1920, Harcourt, Brace, & Co., Inc., New York, 1930. P. 201)

"It was no coincidence that liberal America, even more enthusiastically than England, gave a prophet's mantle to Herbert Spencer, the most optimistic of the great Victorians. Spencer's formulation of the laws of steady progression from the incoherent to the coherent, from the indefinite to the definite, fit the American habit of mind as well as the American social system. Out of the struggle and chaos emerged law, out of brutal competition self-regulation and even the rule of love." (Henry F. May, The End of American Innocence, Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1959. P. 12)

"Spencer's work took better in America than in England ...." (Henry Holt, Garrulities of an Octogenarian Editor, Houghton Mifflin Company, New York and Boston, 1923. P. 49)

"Mr. George Iles, a distinguished American friend of Mr. Spencer, sends me information of the validity of American admiration of him, on the authority of the Daily Witness: "Mr. Spencer's income is mainly drawn from the sale of his books in America, his copyrights there having yielded him 4,730 dollars in the last six months."" (George Jacob Holyoake, Bygones Worth Remembering, 2 Vols., T. Fisher Unwin, London, 1905. Vol. 2, p. 27)

"Probably there never was anywhere before or since as widespread an interest in a philosophy as the American interest at that time in Spencer's." (Henry Holt, Garrulities of an Octogenarian Editor, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1923. P. 50)

"The five years of Civil War rushed the Industrial Revolution ahead decades. A nation asked to accustom itself rapidly to extremes of wealth and squalor fumbled for a doctrine and a large segment of America found it in the iron words of the Englishman Herbert Spencer. Drawing an analogy from scientific thinking of the day, Spencer maintained that successful businessman, by virtue of their triumph in competition, had proved superior fitness and that social legislation would disrupt the "survival of the fittest," necessary for the "evolution" of society to a better form. Spencer's role in reconciling the United States to raw industrialism was tremendous. Thousands of the educated took a credo directly from his pages, particularly his "Study of Sociology," but more important was the way Spencer's central formula became a commonplace of sermons, lectures, editorials, and crackerbarrel disquisitions." (Eric F. Goldman, "Books That Changed America," The Saturday Review, July 4, 1953, pp. 7-9, 37-38. P. 8)


"Partly through the vigorous advocacy of Prof. Youmans, of New York, and partly through the wider prevalence of liberal or philosophic ideas in America than in England, Mr. Spencer's writings have met with a wider and more appreciative reception in the United States than at home." (Van Buren Denslow, Modern Thinkers Principally upon Social Science, Belford, Clarke, & Co., Chicago, 1880. P. 208)

"... Mr. Spencer became known to men of mark in America, who made his fame before his countrymen recognised him. If it was England who "raised" Mr. Spencer, it was America that discovered him." (George Jacob Holyoake, Byrones Worth Remembering, 2 Vols., T. Fisher Unwin, London, 1905. Vol. 2, p. 27)

"The last time I saw Spencer was in his bedroom at Brighton, and amid the details of our conversation, every one of which is naturally fresh in my memory, there is one that I specially recall. Just back from America, I told him of the deep interest I found everywhere taken there in his work, and spoke of the immense range of his influence upon the world's thought. His reply was: "I am satisfied; I am satisfied!"" (William Henry Hudson, An Introduction to the Philosophy of Herbert Spencer, revised edition, Watts & Co., London, 1906. P. 24)

"I expect to go to England in about a month. I wish you could send me some letters of introduction. I should like especially to know Herbert Spencer.--I am such an intense admirer of his writings that it would be a great delight to me to converse with him ...." (Letter from Steele Mackaye to William R. Alger dated November 1, 1872. Quoted in Epoch: The Life of Steele Mackaye, Genius of the Theatre, A Memoir by his Son Percy Mackaye, 2 Vols., Boni & Liveright, New York, 1927. Vol. 1, p. 183)

"It would be difficult to overemphasize the influence of Spencer on Herndon's thinking. Herndon carefully annotated and indexed his copy of Spencer's The Principles of Psychology (London, 1855) and evidently used it frequently. It is now owned by Mrs. Bertie Trainer of Springfield, Illinois." (William Herndon was Abraham Lincoln's friend and law partner. He had the best private library in Springfield, and one of the best in the West. (p. 54)) (Donald David Donald, Lincoln's Herndon, Alfred A Knopf, New York, 1948. P. 59n.)

"Evidently the American mind is more plastic than the average English mind, which is so much more restrained by institutions and traditions." (Letter from Herbert Spencer to Edward L. Youmans dated December 17, 1863. Quoted in John Fiske, Edward Livingston Youmans, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. P. 170)

"At a time when the states were abandoning many of their traditional controls over economic life and the federal government had not yet taken up the slack, nothing could have been more congenial to the American temper than Spencer's philosophy of liberation from the trammels of government." (Donald Fleming, "Social Darwinism," in Paths of American Thought, ed. by Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., and Morton White, pp. 123-145, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1963. P. 127)

"Herbert Spencer's impact upon American thought was profound. Serious philosophers, among them James, Dewey, and Royce, had to clear their paths of Spencer before proceeding on their own way." (Cynthia Eagle Russett, Darwin in America, The Intellectual Response 1865-1912, W. H. Freeman and Company, San Francisco, 1976. P. 16)

"Probably there never was anywhere before or since as widespread an interest in a philosophy as the American interest at that time in Spencer's." (P. 50) "Probably no other philosopher ever had such a vogue as Spencer had from about 1870 to 1890." (P. 298) (Henry Holt, Garrulities of an Octogenarian Editor. Houghton Mifflin Company. Boston, 1923.)

"... Herbert Spencer, who for a number of years was the chief influence on American political thinking." (Herbert Agar, The Price of Union. Houghton Mifflin Company. Boston, 1950. P. 551)
"It seems as if we are ready for a book-length synthesis on the influence of Herbert Spencer on American thought. Such a book would bring together the strands of Spencerism that are evident in nearly every part of American intellectual history and, in doing so, would encourage care among historians about what exactly has been Darwin's impact. Otherwise, we must continue to use loosely defined phrases to describe evolution in America—in itself a vague phrase. A monograph on Spencer would also attempt to answer the question of why Spencer was so much more popular in America than in his own country." (Michele L. Aldrich, "United States, Bibliographical Essay," in The Comparative Reception of Darwinism, ed. by Thomas F. pp. 207-226, University of Texas Press, Austin, 1974. P. 225)

"The intellectual history of the last quarter of the nineteenth century—in America as well as elsewhere—in its teleological aspects is the history of the shift from the benevolent evolutionism of Spencer to the mechanistic materialism of Haeckel, with all the dislocations and readjustments involved in the cataclysmic change; and The Education of Henry Adams, that curiously suggestive study in disillusion, is saturated with the pessimism that followed upon the transition—a pessimism exuding from the contemplation of the bleak unity of a mechanistic universe." (Vernon L. Parrington, Main Currents in American Thought, Vol. 3: The Beginnings of Critical Realism in America. Harcourt, Brace and Company. New York, 1930. P. 193. Those literary men specifically cited by Parrington as having been influenced by Spencer during their formative years include Walt Whitman, Hamlin Garland, Theodore Dreiser, and Jack London (pp. 80, 198). In his largely autobiographical novel, Martin Eden, London has the hero make an impassioned speech in which he refers to Spencer as "the man who has impressed the stamp of his genius over the whole field of scientific research and modern thought." (Dell Publishing Co., Inc. New York, 1958. P. 304)

"But the wonder of Spencerianism was its adaptability. Because the synthetic philosophy "was large enough to be all things to all men" (R. Hofstadter, Social Darwinism in American Thought, p. 187, writers as temperamentally and intellectually distinct as Sidney Lanier and Jack London could each draw upon it for his own purpose. Garland was thus no different from other American disciples of Spencer when he was selective in his use of Spencerianism and its implications. At this early stage of his career and thought he used Spencer in two simple ways: to explain the growing complexity of the novel and to equate this growth with progress." (Donald Pizer, Hamlin Garland's Early Work and Career, University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1960. P. 11)

"In all, Garland's intense preoccupation with Spencerian evolution is an important example of Spencer's extensive influence in America. This influence has been documented for social thought by Richard Hofstadter and others, but has received little attention from literary scholars." (Donald Pizer, "Herbert Spencer and the Genesis of Hamlin Garland's Critical System," Tulane Studies in English, Vol. 7, pp. 153-168, 1957. P. 168n.)
Darwin wrote in *The Descent of Man*: "The virtues which must be practised, at least generally, by rude men, so that they may associate in a body, are those which are still recognized as the most important. But they are practised almost exclusively in relation to the men of the same tribe, and their opposites (vices) are not regarded as crimes in relation to the men of other tribes. No tribe could hold together if murder, robbery, treachery &c., were common; consequently such crimes within the limits of the same tribe are branded with everlasting infamy but excite no such sentiment beyond these limits." (p. 179) "In this quotation writes Keith, Darwin recognizes that a tribesman has a double moral sense or conscience: one which comes into action when the affairs of his own community are concerned, and another which prevails when the affairs of those outside his tribal bounds are in question. In 1892, twenty-one years after Darwin, Herbert Spencer, quite independently, discovered and formulated the "dual code" which he found to prevail in all societies throughout the earth, both civilized and uncivilized. The rule or code of conduct which was exercised by a tribesman to his own folk he named the code of amity; towards those outside his fraternity, the code of enmity." (Sir Arthur Keith, *Darwin Revalued*, Watts & Co, London, 1955. P. 262)

"... groups may have some relation to each other (kin, neighborhood, alliance, connubium and commercium) which draws them together and differentiates them from others. Thus a differentiation arises between ourselves, the we-group, or in-group, and everybody else, or the others-groups, out-groups. The insiders in a we-group are in a relation of peace, order, law, government, and industry, to each other. Their relation to all outsiders, or others-groups, is one of war and plunder, except so far as agreements have modified it.... The relation of comradeship and peace in the we-group and that of hostility and war towards others-groups are correlative to each other. The exigencies of war with outsiders are what make peace inside, lest internal discord should weaken the we-group for war. These exigencies also make government and law in the in-group, in order to prevent quarrels and enforce discipline. Thus war and peace have reacted on each other and developed each other, one within the group, the other in the intergroup relation." (William Graham Sumner, *Folkways*, Ginn and Company, Boston, 1906. P. 12)

"On the one hand, there must be social self-preservation in face of external enemies. On the other hand, there must be cooperation among fellow-citizens, which can exist only in proportion as fair dealing of man with man creates mutual trust. Unless the one necessity is met, the society disappears by extinction, or by absorption into some conquering society. Unless the other necessity is met, there cannot be that division of labour, exchange of services, consequent industrial progress and increase of numbers, by which a society is made strong enough to survive. In adjustment to these two conflicting requirements, there grow up two conflicting codes of duty; which severally acquire supernatural sanctions. And thus we get the two coexisting religions—the religion of enmity and the religion of amity." (Herbert Spencer, *The Study of Sociology*, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1886. P. 178)

In *The Study of Sociology*, perhaps for the first time in print, Spencer refers to the religion of amity vs. the religion of enmity. (See Ann Arbor edition, p. 270)
"And thus we get the two coexisting religions—the religion of enmity and the religion of amity." (Herbert Spencer, *The Study of Sociology*, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1891. P. 178) "... who unites the religion of amity and the religion of enmity in startling contrast." P. 296)


**ANARCHISM**

"Mr Herbert Spencer and those who agree in his worship of Individualism ..." (pp. 72-73). "No member of Parliament has so much as introduced a Bill to give effect to the anarchist principles of Mr Herbert Spencer's 'Man versus the State.'" (p. 85). (Sidney Webb, "Historic" in *Fabian Essays*, (edited by George Bernard Shaw, pp. 62-93, George Allen & Unwin Ltd, London, 1962)

"When Vaillant ... the bomb-thrower ..." was before his judges he mentioned Herbert Spencer, among others, as one of those from whom he had derived his anarchist convictions. Anarchists refer not seldom to the gray-haired Master of Sociology as one of themselves; and still more often do the Socialists allude to him as an Anarchist." (Ernst Victor Zenker, *Anarchism A Criticism and History of the Anarchist Theory*, G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1897. P. 245)

"Though our leading American anthropologists, like Franz Boas and his students, have shown ample ground for questioning the adequacy of the Spencerian conception of social evolution, and though John Dewey has indicated the viciousness of Spencer's method of trying to prove his thesis, it still largely holds the field; and not to believe in evolution is to put oneself down as an obscurantist, fit only for backwoods Tennessee. Now, in point of fact, the concept of evolution has for some time been really eliminated from natural science (witness Jacques Loeb, who called attention to the meaninglessness of the concept of "evolution" in experimental biology)." (Morris Raphael Cohen, *American Thought: A Critical Sketch*, Collier Books, New York, 1962. Pp. 77-78. [first published Free Press, 1954])

"Laws are passed in the streets and merely ratified in Parliament."
"... Spencer has given us reasons (i.e. the mechanisms of evolution) why things should differentiate but no reasons why they should not? He merely notes that de-differentiation occurs, and regrets it as unnatural and bad. For example, in an obvious reference to trade unions and socialist agitation, he laments that 'agitation, growing into revolutionary meetings, fuses ranks that are usually separated', leading to an 'indeterminate heterogeneity', and 'loss of clearness of function.' [First Principles, Sections 128-129] The parallel growth of socialism and imperialism in the late nineteenth century, both seen by him as evidence of increased militancy, could be lamented as abnormal growths, but remained literally inexplicable on his premises. A type of evolutionary theory which provides a universal mechanism like adaptation or natural selection cannot admit regression—change must always go forward, as a cogwheel with a fixed ratchet must turn in one direction only. To admit regression is to be fair to the facts, but it abandons the theory. The process, differentiation, was tied to the mechanism, adaptation, one might admit de-differentiation, and show the particular causes of it, but could not explain it by adaptation as a general mechanism." (J.D.Y. Peel, "Spencer and the Neo-Evolutionists," Sociology, Vol. 3, pp. 173-191, 1969. P. 178)

(Among the Englishmen who rejected the notion of organic evolution were Lord Salisbury, Disraeli, Gladstone, Carlyle, Ruskin, and Newman.)
In an anti-colonial passage, Spencer speaks of "the aggressive tendencies displayed by us all over the world--sending, as pioneers, missionaries of 'the religion of love,' and then picking quarrels with native races and taking possession of their lands." (Auto. II, 375) (see also 377)

"... the cowardly conquests of bullet and shell over arrow and assegai, which demoralize the one side while slaughtering the other." (Herbert Spencer, "Evolutionary Ethics," The Athenaeum, No. 3432, pp. 193-194, August 5, 1893. P. 193)

"After that (the election of 1880), sanguine people proclaimed that the Jingoes--the party of aggression and 'Empire'--were destroyed. I was one who thought them still the most powerful force in the country, as well as the most dangerous. Herbert Spencer thought likewise. We got together a meeting at my house, with the view of setting up an Anti-aggression League. But we met with no support, the bulk of people thinking that the danger of ousting morality from public policy was past." (Note found among the writings of Lord Arthur Hobhouse. Quoted in L. T. Hobhouse and J. L. Hammond, Lord Hobhouse; A Memoir, Edward Arnold, London, 1905. P. 138)

"He [Spencer] predicted that the protectionist assault on the sacred fact and theory of Free Trade would continue, and that high tariffs would return to England. He foresaw an increasing scramble for trade and territory among the leading nations of the world, and the rise of what we now know as imperialism. He was certainly one of the numerous people who foresaw the Great War, though he wisely refused to try to date it. All this is imposing. By all ordinary tests, Spencer seems to have come off very well in his predictions." (Crane Brinton, "Spencer's Horrid Vision," Foreign Affairs, Vol. 15, pp. 695-706, 1937. P. 702)
"His Spencer's ideas were, of course, fashioned beforehand, as may be seen from the early publication of a skeletal outline of his philosophy." (Alexander A. Goldenweiser, *Early Civilization*, F. S. Crofts & Co., New York, 1922, P. 21)

"His Spencer's evolutionary stages were all worked out in considerable detail before this reading process had begun, and what his assistants were expected to do was to find illustrations for the stages of development comprised in the philosopher's scheme." (Alexander Goldenweiser, *Early Civilization*, F. S. Crofts & Co., New York, 1925, P. 22)

"... "evolution" is, with Mr. Spencer, not a theorem of inductive science, but a necessary truth deduced from axioms ..." (Chauncey Wright, "German Darwinism," in *Philosophical Discussions*, pp. 398-405, Henry Holt and Company, New York, 1877. P. 401. Reprinted from *The Nation*, September 9, 1875)

"In contrast to this principle that every cultural item must be viewed in its context, Spencer persistently removed culture items from their contexts and fitted them into his own preconceived patterns." (Nicholas S. Timasheff, *Sociological Theory: Its Nature and Growth*, third edition, Random House, New York, 1967. P. 42)

"He Spencer began with an evolutionary scheme itself arrived at deductively; from that scheme he derived the necessity of certain phases, and then he gave flesh and blood to these abstract phases by the method of illustration, by selecting examples from here and there which seemed to fit his system." (Nicholas S. Timasheff, *Sociological Theory: Its Nature and Growth*, third edition, Random House, New York, 1979. 1967. Pp. 42-43)

"But Spencer was so sure of his analogies and generalizations that their verification was to him merely a time-consuming routine. He prepared a system of investigation designed to support his generalizations and sent assistants to the anthropological and classical literatures to select the appropriate data." (Abram Kardiner and Edward Preble, *They Studied Man*, The World Publishing Company, Cleveland, 1961. P. 44)
"His sociology is at bottom deductive and aprioristic, derived by most ingenious hypothesis from the fundamentals of his philosophy and supported by masses of concrete data from the cultures of all times and places." (p. 298) (Frank, J. H. Hankins, "Sociology." In History and Prospects of the Social Sciences, ed. by Harry Elmer Barnes, pp. 255-332. Alfred A. Knopf. New York, 1925)


"He [Spencer] seems first to seize his principles and then seek out his facts; and there is in such a method a danger that the theoretic principle may act the part of a loadstone among the facts, and attract / those of them only which have affinity for it ..." (Anonymous, "Herbert Spencer's Sociology," The British Quarterly Review, Vol. 63, pp. 1-42, 1876. Pp. 41-42)

"Spencer, in fact, selected materials from most diversified cultures, widely separated in time and in space. He picked up facts here and there and brought them together in such a way as to support his evolutionary hypothesis; the materials combined in this arbitrary manner were used to confirm his hypothesis. Such a procedure, of course, is entirely out of keeping with the rules of logic and principles of scientific method." (Nicholas S. Timasheff, Sociological Theory; Its Nature and Growth, third edition, Random House, New York, 1967. P. 37)

"Investigations made during recent years into the various forms of social organization, while writing the "Principles of Sociology," have in part confirmed and in part changed the views published in 1850 [In Social Statics]." (Herbert Spencer, Letter to The Times of London, November 7, 1889. Quoted in Henry George, A Perplexed Philosopher, Robert Schalknebach Foundation, New York, 1965. P. 75)

"When he [Spencer] came to write the Principles of Sociology he had for some time pored over his collected data and, while it could not wrench him from his preconceptions, established through fifty years of assimilation and elaboration of prevailing ideas, it did render his treatment of his subject matter much more human." (L. L. Bernard, "Herbert Spencer's Work in the Light of His Life," The Monist, Vol. 31, pp. 1-35, 1921. P. 6)
Moreover, we cannot get rid of an uncomfortable feeling that, however neatly and completely the cloud of witnesses called by Mr. Spencer appear to support his general propositions, the propositions are not really the result of reflection on the facts. A suspicion is forced upon us—one of those suspicions which cannot by their nature proved, but which haunt one and will not be banished—that the generalizations have been constructed first and the facts hunted up to fit into them afterwards. (Anonymous, "Spencer's Political Institutions," The Saturday Review of Politics, Literature, Science and Art, Vol. 54, pp. 18-20, 1882. P. 19)

p. 38-39. Deduction, induction, a priori, etc. I wish you had quoted and discussed passages from Principles like the one I quoted above in this letter. My mind is not very clear on this point. I feel sure that Spencer "believed (as you state) that the only basis of knowledge was experience." But I cannot square that "belief" with the way he arrives at conclusions which he had previously reached by reason. Or why the Arapahos could not converse in the dark. What you have said on this subject does not clear up the matter in my mind.

Guided by the doctrine of evolution in general, and by the more special doctrine of mental evolution, we may help ourselves to delineate primitive ideas... Having observed a priori what must be the character of those ideas, we shall be as far as possible prepared to realize them in imagination, and then to discern them as actually existing (Vol. I, Ch. VIII, p. 111, "Primitive Ideas").

There are many statements like the above which I shall not take time to copy—you are familiar with them, of course. I find this attitude on Spencer's part rather disturbing—or opposed to my own habits of thought, scientific point of view, etc. L. A. White

I went to Kew yesterday on a scientific expedition with Herbert Spencer, who has all sorts of theories about plants—I should have said a proof-hunting expedition. Of course, if the flowers didn't correspond to the theories, we said, "tant pis pour les fleurs." (Letter from George Eliot to Sara Sophia Hennell dated June 29, 1852. Quoted in Gordon S. Haight, The George Eliot Letters, 7 Vols., Yale University Press, New Haven, 1954. Vol. 2, p. 40)

To him facts are, as it were, inconvenient annoyances, necessary but bothersome delays to the tremendous sweep of his general ideas. (Julian M. Drachman, Studies in the Literature of Natural Science, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1930. P. 153)

"While Mr. Spencer holds that common experience of matter and motion, if rightly interpreted, leads to the belief in the indestructibility of the one and the continuity of the other, I hold that common experience only raises a presumption, the belief is only rightly and firmly founded on the results of careful and exact quantitative experiments. While he holds that they are necessary truths, I still think it conceivable that they are false. While he regards them both as leading to the persistence of force as the ultimate postulate, I very much doubt whether any relation between definite ideas is a postulate. The postulates which I have used are both of them conditioned propositions. If so and so, then so and so. In fact, I suspect that the mind is provided only with machinery ready to arrange the results put into it by the senses, and that it does not contain any results ready made." (J. H. Poynting, "The Foundations of Our Belief in the Indestructibility of Matter and the Conservation of Energy; A Criticism of Spencer's "First Principles,"" The Midland Naturalist, Vol. 12, pp. 6-11, 33-38, 1889. P. 38. Poynting was Professor of Physics at Mason College, Birmingham.)

"... there is good reason to suppose that many of his ideas on this subject [sociology] were well formed before he collected the data for his generalizations." (L. L. Bernard, "Herbert Spencer's Work in the Light of His Life," The Monist, Vol. 31, pp. 1-35, 1921. P. 4)

"For though by some I am characterized as an a priori thinker, it will be manifest to any one who does / not set out with an a priori conception of myself, that my beliefs, when not suggested a posteriori, are habitually verified a posteriori" (Auto. I, 304-305).

"In the "hard sciences" the division of labor between "theoretical physicists" and "experimental physicists" is readily accepted."
"Having convinced yourself that there is an enduring power, not ourselves, that makes for righteousness, set yourself next to try to learn more about this, and to feel an enthusiasm for this. And to this end, take a course of the Bible first, and then a course of Benjamin Franklin, Horace Greeley, Jeremy Bentham, and Mr. Herbert Spencer; see which has most effect, which satisfies you most, which gives you most power. Why, the Bible has such power for teaching righteousness, that even those who come to it with all sorts of false notions about the God of the Bible, it yet teaches righteousness, and fills them with the love of it; how much more those who come to it with a true notion about the God of the Bible!" (Matthew Arnold, Literature and Dogma, An Essay Toward a Better Apprehension of the Bible, New Amsterdam Book Co., New York, 1902. P. 280)

"When our philosophical liberal friends say, that by universal suffrage, public meetings, Church disestablishment, marrying one's deceased wife's sister, secular schools, industrial development, man can very well live; and that if he studies the writings, say, of Mr. Herbert Spencer, into the bargain, he will be perfect, he will have "in modern and congenial language the truisms common to all systems of morality," and the Bible is become quite old-fashioned and superfluous for him;--when our philosophical friends now say this, the masses, far from checking them, are disposed to applaud them to the echo." (Matthew Arnold, Literature and Dogma, An Essay Toward a Better Apprehension of the Bible, New Amsterdam Book Co., New York, 1902. P. 270)

Arnold draws a parallel between the state of things at the time he was writing and the state of things in Judea when Christ came:

"The Pharisees, with their genuine concern for religion, but total want of perception of what religion really is, and by their temper, attitude, and aims doing their best to make religion impossible, are the Protestant Dissenters. The Sadducees are our friends the philosophical liberals, who believe neither in angel nor spirit but in Mr. Herbert Spencer. Even the Roman governor has his close parallel in our celebrated aristocracy, with its superficial good sense and good-nature, its thorough inaptitude for ideas, its profound helplessness in presences of all great spiritual movements." (Matthew Arnold, Literature and Dogma, An Essay Toward a Better Apprehension of the Bible, New Amsterdam Book Co., New York, 1902. P. 216)

"... the saying is not at all a grand one. We are almost ashamed to quote it to readers who may have come fresh from the last number of the North American Review, and from the great sentence there quoted as summing up Mr. Herbert Spencer's theory of evolution: "Evolution is an integration of matter and concomitant dissipation of motion during which the matter passes from an indefinite incoherent homogeneity to a definite coherent heterogeneity, and during which the retained motion undergoes a parallel transformation." Homer's poor little saying comes not in such formidable shape. It is only this:--Wide is the range of words! words may make this way or that way." (Matthew Arnold, God & The Bible, Macmillan and Co., New York, 1883. Pp. 196-197)
"... the famous "Formula of Evolution" (that rock against which Matthew Arnold's little wave of criticism shattered itself in vain), ...." (Grant Allen, "The Gospel According to Herbert Spencer," Part I, The Pall Mall Gazette, April 26, 1890, pp. 1-2. P. 2)

Yet one cannot but pause when contemplating Herbert Spencer's work in departments of research, to note with wonder how he had been enabled, by mere clearness of insight, to discern truths which escaped the notice of the very leaders in those special subjects of inquiry. To take astronomy, for example, a subject which, more perhaps than any other, requires long and special study before the facts with which it deals can be rightly interpreted, Spencer reasoned justly respecting the most difficult, as well as the highest of all subjects of astronomical research, the architecture of the stellar system, when the Herschels, Arago, and Humboldt adopted or accepted erroneous views." (Richard A. Proctor, "Herbert Spencer as a Thinker," The Open Court, Vol. 1, pp. 145-147, 1887-88. P. 145. Proctor was an English astronomer.)

"After long and careful study specially directed to that subject "the architecture of the stellar system", I advanced, in 1869, opinions which I supposed to be new respecting the architecture of the heavens,—opinions which Spencer himself, in his Study of Sociology [p. 2267], has described as "going far to help us in conceiving the constitution of our own galaxy;" yet I found that twelve years before, dealing with that part of science in his specially planned survey of the whole domain, he had seen clearly many of the points on which I insisted later, and had found in such points sufficient evidence to lead him to correct views respecting the complexity and variety of the sidereal system." (Richard A. Proctor, "Herbert Spencer as a Thinker," The Open Court, Vol. 1, pp. 145-147, 1887-88. P. 145) (Proctor was an English astronomer.)
"Less, perhaps, than any other science, has astronomy gained from Spencer's work. One timely service, however, he did it. The reader will remember the history of the nebular theory of the origin of the solar system. Originally suggested to Kant by a brilliant guess of Lucretius, and later given mathematical form by Laplace, \(^2\) (Laplace knew nothing of Kant's work in this field. His theory appeared about forty years after that of Kant, which was published in a local Königsberg paper in 1755. (See Merz's History of European Thought in the Nineteenth Century, II., 283.)) the theory received, as it appeared, a crushing blow when Lord Rosse's great telescope resolved into stars certain supposed nebulae. The natural inference was drawn that remoteness alone prevented a similar resolution of all nebulae, and this conclusion was accepted by astronomers. The spectroscope, in the hands of Sir William Huggins, the present president of the Royal Society, had not yet demonstrated by its incontrovertible evidence that true nebulae do veritably exist. Now, if some form of the nebular theory be not true, the evolution theory, as a cosmic generalization, is forthwith disposed of. Spencer was therefore led to consider the matter, which he did in an essay written for the Westminster Review. First-hand astronomical knowledge he had none, and he is certainly entitled to consider this essay, as he does, an instance of his constitutional "disregard for authority." But while the actual observations of the expert must always be provisionally accepted, it is open to any one who can to criticize the conclusions deduced by the expert therefrom. This Spencer did, advancing sundry reasons to show that the evidence of Lord Rosse's telescope could not be accepted as a refutation of the nebular theory. Later came the spectroscope and Spencer's vindication, both as to the existence of true nebulae and the nature of the sun's atmosphere." (C. W. Saleeby, Evolution The Master-Key, Harper & Brothers, London and New York, 1906. Pp. 69-71, 69n.-70n.)

"Mr. Herbert Spencer seems to have been the first to point out that the observed connection between the distribution of nebulae and luminous stars proves the nebulae to belong to our sidereal system, and that they cannot be remote galaxies, as had up to that time been the popular belief; though Sir William Herschel had pointed out at the beginning of this century\(^1\) that many of the larger nebulae cannot be accounted for as remote clusters of stars too distant to be seen as separate points of light, still it was very generally supposed that many of the smaller nebulae were galaxies more or less alike in nature to that immediately surrounding us, but so inconceivably remote that, looked at through the largest telescopes, they appeared like small faint spots of light. In a very thoughtful paper on 'The Nebular Hypotheses,' published in July/1858, in the 'Westminster Review,' Mr. Herbert Spencer wrote: ...." (Richard A. Proctor, Old and New Astronomy, Longmans, Green, and Co., London, 1892. P. 726)
"Herbert Spencer's letter [The Athenaeum, April 5, p. 446] is to my mind the most important thing in the whole controversy. It assures me that I was already aware of & had not missed his most important passages [in Principles of Psychology, 1855] --and those he gives do not enable him to claim more, even himself, than to have done the thing "by implication." As a matter of fact no one understand him to mean [in 1855] what he now implies that he did mean. The editor [of The Athenaeum] thought his [Spencer's] letter (to use the editor's own words) "without definite aim" so that I need not reply and I was very glad not to do so; so the matter will drop—but in an appendix to Life & Habit later on I will say what I think advisable." (This appeared in Butler's Luck or Cunning?, 1886, chs. 2-3.) (Letter from Samuel Butler to His Sister, May Butler, dated April 9, 1884. Quoted in The Correspondence of Samuel Butler with His Sister May, edited by Daniel F. Howard, University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1962. P. 121)

"The portrait of Herbert Spencer painted by Miss Grant, one that he preferred to Herkomer's canvas, was given to the Club by Miss Meinertzhagen in 1915. Other relics of that doughty Victorian, who worked for the Athenaeum, came into the Club's custody when the Herbert Spencer Trust was wound up. As they included diaries and letters which one or two scholars have wanted to inspect in the revival of interest in Herbert Spencer in recent years, the Club has handed them over to the University of London Library." (F(rank) R(ichard) Cowell, The Athenaeum, Club and Social Life in London, 1824-1974, Heineman, London, 1975. P. 85)

"He [Herbert Spencer] is already enrolled among the immortals." [Concluding words of the article.] ("W.", "Herbert Spencer," The Athenaeum, No. 3972, pp. 794-795, December 12, 1903. P. 795)
Herbert Spencer began to write his Autobiography in May 1875; by October 1889 both volumes were in print, though it was not published till after his death, 8 December 1903. Six copies of it were circulated among his friends for criticism after they agreed to a formidable list of conditions such as keeping the volumes under lock and key, not lending them or allowing the servants to see them, etc. See his letter to J. W. Cross, 13 October 1889. (Yale.) Later Part XIII was added to bring it down to 1893. The work was published in 1904. Most of the private letters used in it were destroyed by Spencer himself; those he reserved for his biographer, David Duncan, were "scrapped by order of the Trustees soon after the book was written." (Information given me by Mr. T. W. Hill, later secretary to the Spencer Trustees, 9 November 1943.) So far as I know no letters that passed between GE and Spencer at the time of their closest intimacy are accessible, though some have been preserved." (Gordon S. Haight, editor, The George Eliot Letters, 7 Vols., Yale University Press, New Haven, 1955. Vol. 6, pp. 310n-311n.)

"Gibbon writes of himself as he might have written of a Roman Emperor; Herbert Spencer writes of himself as he might have written of a specimen in a museum." (Francis Gribble, "Herbert Spencer: His Autobiography and His Philosophy," The Fortnightly Review, Vol. 81, pp. 984-995, 1904. P. 984)

"As against the small shortcomings of the book Spencer's An Autobiography are to be set its ruling note of high rectitude; its unflagging concentration on the life of ideas, relieved only by a few human excursions into gossip; its unfailing intellectuality; and its wonderful variety of interest. It reveals in all his less-known aspects—as inventor, as explorer, as undeveloped artist, as intimate, as man—the architect of the Synthetic Philosophy. Laying it down, one asks: If the injured and overwearied brain could produce this sustained stretch of reasoning retrospect, this long strain of recollection, reflection, and lucid commentary, what must have been its power when it grappled with the tasks to which it gave its strength, and what would have been that strength had it never been flawed?" (J. M. Robertson, Modern Humanists Reconsidered, Watts & Co., London, 1927. P. 196)

"Spencer was peculiarly well fitted for the task of self-revelation, and it may safely be said that never before have the mental processes by which a great thinker has produced a vast system of conceptions been so clearly exposed." (William McDougall, "The Mind of a Great Thinker," review of Herbert Spencer, An Autobiography, Nature, Vol. 70, pp. 265-266, 1904. P. 265)

"His Spencer's sense of achievement—for it to achievement his whole life has been devoted—passed toward death into a review of all the obstacles that he had to overcome, all the pleasures that he had to forego, all the miseries that he had to bear—the fatigues, the insomnia, the stagnation of every faculty, the monotony of the end." (Anonymous, "Review of Herbert Spencer's An Autobiography," The Athenaeum, No. 3993, pp. 583-584, May 7, 1904) (P. 584)
"The chapter of the *Autobiography* dealing with the finishing and publication of *First Principles* is unimposing, and disappointingly deficient in emotion. (Compare Gibbon in the finishing of his big work.) Nothing of real interest is recorded about the undertaking. This is a pity. But everywhere Spencer's narrative skill is very clumsy, and his little attempts to be dramatic are extraordinarily feeble." (Entry for September 15, 1910, p. 392)

"Today I finished Spencer's vast *Autobiography*. The first volume is perhaps superior to the second, but I read it all with interest, and especially the reflections of old age at the end. Its fault is lack of emotional quality, and of elevation of style. You get from it no sense of a mighty work accomplished--no sense of mightiness at all." (Entry for September 30, 1910) (The Journal of Arnold Bennett, 1896-1910, The Book League of America, New York, 1932)

"Beyond any reasonable doubt it *Spencer's Autobiography* is destined to take rank as one of the two or three most remarkable self-portrayals of a human life ever committed to posterity." (p. 964) "The only other autobiography that can be put in the same class with these two works *Spencer's and Rousseau's Autobiographies* is that of Benjamin Franklin." (p. 964) (Franklin H. Giddings, "The Autobiography of Herbert Spencer," The Independent, Vol. 56, pp. 963-968, 1904)

"From the purely personal standpoint, it is true, such a record *Spencer's Autobiography* may very probably seem deficient in those more dramatic elements of interest for which we are accustomed to look in the history of any man who has left a profound impress upon the civilisation of his age. Spencer's biography is, in fact, essentially the biography of the thinker; it is little more than the story of his preparation for his great life-work, of the growth and consolidation of his ideas, of the inception of his philosophic system, and of the gradual progress of this, through difficulties all but insuperable, stage by stage, to its long-delayed completion." (William Henry Hudson, An Introduction to the Philosophy of Herbert Spencer, revised edition, Watts & Co., London, 1906. P. 9)

"Although prolix and inorganic, devoid of literary charm and emotionally cold, it *Spencer's An Autobiography* is well worth reading as a record of Spencer's intellectual development, and as an unconscious revelation of his harmless egoism and childlike vanity. He defined it as "a natural history" of himself. It should, indeed, be classed, not with biographies, but with works of descriptive sociology." (F. J. C. Hearndow, "Herbert Spencer and the Individualists," in The Social & Political Ideas of Some Representative Thinkers of the Victorian Age, ed. by F. J. C. Hearndow, pp. 53-83, George G. Harrap & Co. Ltd., London, 1933. P. 69)

"Now Spencer was undoubtedly a man of the most rigid truthfulness. No personal record I have ever read has the marks of greater authenticity than his autobiography." (A. O. J. Cockshut, The Unbelievers, Collins, London, 1964. P. 74)
"Yet if a critic is ever safe in anticipating the verdict of
the public or posterity, certain it is that in years to come the
mass of dull, trite, and often repellent detail in these volumes
An Autobiography will outweigh whatever they possess of value
and interest, and make them as a whole unreadable. Never has a book,
of which parts at least are undeniably interesting, been so lamentably,
even painfully, encumbered with trivialities." (Anonymous, "Review of Herbert Spencer's An Autobiography," The Athenaeum,
No. 3993, pp. 583-584, May 7, 1904. P. 583)

"Last night I began Spencer's Autobiography, and this morning,
by dint of much wakefulness, I had arrived at page 224. I found it
very interesting and jolly well done. It is much better done and
much more artistic than J. S. Mill's autobiography. Nevertheless
Spencer's little attempts at narrative in the manner of a novelist
--beginning, for example, with a fragment of conversation, or with
such a phrase as "If on such a day any one had been looking at
such a spot they might have been surprised to see," etc., are fun-
nier than he intended." (Arnold Bennett, The Journal of Arnold Ben-
for September 7, 1910, p. 390)

"This An Autobiography, like all Spencer's works, makes a
different appeal to different minds; some find it tedious, while
to others it is of absorbing interest. In any case it is a work of
genius written by a man of genius." (James McKeen Cattell, "The
Life and Letters of Herbert Spencer," The Popular Science Monthly,
Vol. 73, pp. 283-285, 1908. P. 283)

"His [Spencer's] massive Autobiography--one of those books
that is very amusing in retrospect, like a bore from whom one has
escaped--demonstrates that he took himself quite as seriously as
he took the universe, and could explain himself as exhaustively
and polysyllabically." (William Irvine, Apes, Angels, and Victor-

"... Spencer analyses himself in these pages [An Autobiography]
much as he might dissect a natural history specimen." (A. S. Frin-
gle-Pattison, "The Life and Philosophy of Herbert Spencer," The


"His [Spencer's] two-volume autobiography is at once the most conventional and one of the strangest of all the books written by the Victorian sages. Its literary value is almost nil; in that sense the oblivion of Spencer to-day is just." (A. O. J. Cockshut, The Unbelievers, Collins, London, 1964. P. 73)


"When, at the end of this year [1862], Spencer's revised Psychology came out, I made a careful reading of it, with a view to suggestions, many of which I found of great value. But, as the entire scheme of the work was based upon Evolution, his mode of reproduction and arrangement of his thoughts was distinct from mine."


"It is but a feeble expression to say that I am in close agreement with Mr. Spencer in all his cardinal doctrines as to the laws of mind, and the connexion between the subjective facts and the material organisation. I add farther /sic/ my conviction that he has thrown an immense amount of new light upon the whole subject; and rendered intelligible, and even simple, some of its greatest difficulties." (Alexander Bain, "Mr. Spencer's Psychological Congruities." (1), Mind, Vol. 6, pp. 266-270, 1881. P. 266)

His [Spencer's] philosophy is the only philosophy that satisfies an earnestly inquiring mind. All other philosophies (at least in my experience) serve more to perplex than to enlighten. As it seems to me, we have in Herbert Spencer not only the profoundest thinker of our time, but the most capacious and most powerful intellect of all time. Aristotle and his master were not more beyond the pygmies who preceded them than he is beyond Aristotle. Kant, Hegel, Fichte, and Schelling are gropers in the dark by the side of him. In all the history of science there is but one name which can be compared to his, and that is Newton's; but Newton never attempted so wide a field, and how he would have succeeded in it, had he done so, must be only matter of conjecture." (Letter from F. A. P. Barnard to Edward L. Youmans dated November 10, 1882. Quoted in Edward L. Youmans, editor, Herbert Spencer on The Americans and The Americans on Herbert Spencer, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1883. P. 87)

HENRY WARD BEECHER

"Beecher has been lecturing this summer with great acceptance and to large audiences on the religious bearings of evolution; but his work is very crude, being of the same sort as his address at the dinner. It is no doubt better than that, and Beecher is rapidly improving; but he has taken up the subject very late in life, and has not had the time, as he never had the proper preparation, for mastering the philosophy." (Letter from Edward L. Youmans to Herbert Spencer dated September 3, 1883. Quoted in John Fiske, Edward Livingston Youmans, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. P. 379)

"Then we went to see Manton Marble, Editor of the "New York World", an excellent Spencerian." (P. 122) "Henry Ward Beecher says, "We are all humble subjects; Mr. Spencer is our King."


"To my father and my mother I owe my physical being; to you, sir, I owe my intellectual being. At a critical moment you provided the safe paths through the bogs and morasses; you were my teacher." (Words addressed to Spencer by Henry Ward Beecher on the occasion of the testimonial dinner to Spencer at Delmonico's, New York, in 1882. Quoted in Autobiography of Andrew Carnegie. Houghton Mifflin Company. Boston, 1920. P. 336.)

"I began to read Mr. Spencer's works more than twenty years ago. They have been meat and bread to me. They have helped me through a great many difficulties. I desire to own my obligation personally to him, and to say that if I had the fortune of a millionaire, and I should pour all my gold at his feet, it would be no sort of compensation compared to that which I believe I owe him ...." (Rev. Henry Ward Beecher's remarks at the Spencer Farewell Dinner, pp. 58-67. In Edward L. Youmans, editor, Herbert Spencer on The Americans and The Americans on Herbert Spencer, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1883. P. 66)
"The Education was written in the 'fifties, when Spencer had not yet abandoned God for the Unknowable." (Crane Brinton, English Political Thought in the Nineteenth Century, Ernest Benn, Ltd., London, 1933. P. 236n.)

"... to divorce a cause and consequence which God has joined together—to render needless the intellect put into us for our guidance—......" (Herbert Spencer, Social Statics, John Chapman, London, 1851. P. 379)


"Merely because Spencer labeled his unknowable energy "God", [which, of course, he did not] this faded piece of metaphysical goods [the Unknowable] was greeted [by some theologians] as an important and grateful concession to the reality of the spiritual realm." (John Dewey, The Influence of Arwin on Philoso and Other Essays in Contemporary Thought, New York, 1910. P. 45)

"In the Social Statics Spencer is still vaguely theistic, with a touch of Fichte. In the chapter entitled "The Divine Idea and the Conditions of its Realisation," he assumes the greatest happiness of mankind to be "the creative purpose;" and in this harmless form the "Divine Idea" recurs in the book. How long this phase lasted is not clear. First Principles, projected in 1860, is definitely agnostic; but Education, published in 1861, has many theistic expressions. /But the essays therein contained went back to 1854./ In The Study of Sociology, published in 1873, there is frequent satire of conventional theism, of phrases about "The Great Artificer," "The Master Builder," "the hand of the almighty," "the strategy of Providence," and so forth; but in Education we have a passage on that grand epic written by the finger of God upon the strata of the earth:" /*Small ed., p. 41/* and on the thesis that play is better for children than gymnastics, we learn that whoever forbids their play "forebids the divinely appointed means to physical development." /*small ed., p. 155/*/ The presumption is that Education was written some time before its publication; for since First Principles, Spencer's vocabulary has always been sanely scientific." (John M. Robertson, Modern Humanists, Swan Sonnenschein & Co., London, 1891. P. 221)
"After failing to stick to any novels, I have read The Study of Sociology all week." (Entry for December 17, 1909, The Journal of Arnold Bennett, The Literary Guild, New York, 1933. P. 350)


"There is a long article in Le Temps on Herbert Spencer, which confirmed the view which Wells expressed to me about him in the early part of the year; namely, that as a thinker, he was "woolly." [But this was written before Bennett started reading Spencer, and his views changed as a result.] (Entry for December 11, 1903, The Journal of Arnold Bennett, The Literary Guild, New York, 1933. P.140)

"I had remained up to that time [1881 to 1883] wholly imbued with mechanistic theories, to which I had been led at an early age by the reading of Herbert Spencer, a philosopher to whom I adhered almost unreservedly." (Letter from Henri Bergson to William James dated Paris, May 9, 1908. Quoted in Ralph Barton Perry, The Thought and Character of William James, 2 Vols. Little, Brown, and Company, Boston, 1935. Vol. 2, p. 623.)

"Let us say merely that the usual device of the Spencerian method consists in reconstructing evolution with fragments of the evolved." (p. 396) "He takes reality in its present form; he breaks it to pieces, he scatters it in fragments which he throws to the winds; then he "integrates" these fragments and "dissipates their movement." Having imitated the Whole by a work of mosaic, he imagines he has retraced the design of it, and made the genesis." (p. 396) (Henri Bergson, Creative Evolution, translated from the French by Arthur Mitchell, The Modern Library, New York, 1944. First American edition 1911)
"... I went at half-past four and played with Herbert Spencer a game of billiards at the Athenaeum. He beat me. Being beaten, I went home and ate a turkey, and then proceeded to lay about me all round and make everybody miserable, ...." (Letter from Andrew C. Ramsay to Archibald Geikie dated December 16, 1871. Quoted in Sir Archibald Geikie, Memoir of Sir Andrew Crombie Ramsay, Macmillan and Co., London, 1895. P. 310)

"I may add that Dr. Martineau and Mr. Spencer were on friendly terms as co-members of the Athenaeum, and once Dr. Martineau told me with a smile that after he and Mr. Spencer had been discussing for some time, Mr. Spencer said: "Now, Dr. Martineau, let us drop philosophy and try our hands at a game of billiards."" (James Drummond, editor, The Life and Letters of James Martineau, 2 Vols., Dodd, Mead and Company, New York, 1902. Vol. 2, p. 366)

"Spencer is looking very well; plays billiards a great deal; disciplines himself to amusement." (Letter from Edward L. Youmans to his sister, Eliza A. Youmans, dated June 15, 1871. Quoted in John Fiske, Edward L. Youmans, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. P. 272)

"I play billiards every night with Spencer after dinner; game fifty, but one red ball, which thins out the chances. Scratches here are flukes. Spencer gives me thirty, and then I get to fifty first about as one to three. But I do a stupendous amount of fluking, sometimes to Spencer's great disgust. We started the other night and I fluked up to fifty before he got one. He stands aghast! I assure him that it is merely my general way." (Letter from Edward L. Youmans to his sister, Eliza A. Youmans, dated September 13, 1894. P. 283) Quoted in John Fiske, Edward Livingston Youmans

"In the latter part of the evening at Rushmore, the estate of General Pitt-Rivers/ we filed into the billiard room, where I observed with pleasure the skill of Herbert Spencer. All have heard that he did not like defeat, and once said to an opponent who easily vanquished him that his unusual skill "argued a wasted life." The legend was probably based on the gravity with which Herbert Spencer made every stroke." (Moncure Daniel Conway, Autobiography, Memories and Experiences, 2 Vols., Houghton, Mifflin and Company, Boston, 1904. Vol. 2, p. 339)

"Herbert Spencer, according to Mr. Tedder, 'played the game of billiards/ as an athletic or hygienic exercise, but always denied the authorship of the story told to the effect that he once said to a junior opponent who beat him that "proficiency in billiards was proof of a misspent life"'. In the History of the Savile Club he is said to have made the same remark there to Robert Louis Stevenson. Spencer's trustees gave his billiard cue and case to the Athenaeum/ Club." (Frank Richard Cowell, The Athenaeum, Club and Social Life in London, 1824-1974, Heineman, London, 1975. P. 36)
"Home Life with Herbert Spencer is a limpidly truthful account .... It has the ingenuous charm of a portrait by a Primitive ...." (Raymond Mortimer, "Books in General," The New Statesman and Nation, Vol. 24, pp. 411-412, 1942. P. 411)

"In the summer of 1886 he went for a long visit to Brighton (always a favourite place of resort with him), and, after various experiments (including a home of his own in London), finally took a house there on the East Cliff, facing the sea, "with the intention," as he wrote me at the time, "of living here for the rest of my life." This intention was fulfilled." (William Henry Hudson, An Introduction to the Philosophy of Herbert Spencer, revised edition, Watts & Co., London, 1906. Pp. 23-24)

In 1842, Spencer wrote a series of twelve letters on "The Proper Sphere of Government," which were published in The Nonconformist, a newspaper recently established as an organ for advanced Dissenters. In them he laid out the political principles that were later elaborated in Social Statics.

When not quite twenty, Spencer wrote in a letter: "I was thinking the other day that I should like to make public some of my ideas upon the state of the world and religion, together with a few remarks on education. I think, however, that I may employ my time better at present." (Auto. I, 158)

During the course of his life Spencer's ideas and inventions were of extraordinary variety. They ranged "from a doctrine of State-functions to a levelling-staff; from the genesis of religious ideas to a watch escapement; from the generation circulation in plants to an invalid bed; from the law of organic symmetry to planing machinery; from principles of ethics to a velocimeter; from a metaphysical doctrine to a binding-pin; from a classification of the sciences to an improved fishing-rod joint; from the general law of Evolution to a better mode of dressing artificial flies." (Auto. II, 435-6)

"Throughout life my time has been chiefly spent in observing and thinking, not in reading." (Herbert Spencer, Letter sent to Le Figaro, reprinted in Pall Mall Gazette, Vol. 55, No. 8606, p. 6, October 20, 1892. P. 6)
"... at the same time that Spencer lived at 37 and 38 Queen's Gardens, he had, at 2, Leinster Place, near by, an independent room, which he used as a library and study. It was there that, during the first year of my secretarial association with him, most of his work was done; his habit being to walk over about half-past nine, dictate as long as he felt able—in order to economise his strength, he had made it a practice to dictate everything, even his letters—and then leave for the day." (William Henry Hudson, An Introduction to the Philosophy of Herbert Spencer, revised edition, Watts & Co., London, 1906. P. 23)

Spencer "... lived till 1886 in boarding-houses in London, thus, under medical advice, escaping the evils of a solitary domestic existence. His home for nearly a quarter of a century was at 37 and 38, Queen's Gardens, Lancaster Gate, where I myself first knew him; though at the same time he had, at 2, Leinster Place, near by, an independent room, which he used as a library and study." (William Henry Hudson, An Introduction to the Philosophy of Herbert Spencer, revised edition, Watts & Co., London, 1906. P. 23)

"At that period when Spencer lived at 37 and 38 Queen's Gardens, he spent several hours of the afternoon and evening pretty regularly at the Athenaeum Club, returning to Queen's Gardens, however, in time to listen to some music, of which he was always extremely fond, and in which he found his principal solace as increasing ill-health made other distractions impossible." (William Henry Hudson, An Introduction to the Philosophy of Herbert Spencer, revised edition, Watts & Co., London, 1906. P. 23)

"In early summer of 1879, John Fiske and I occupied rooms together in London. John was delivering a course of lectures which were attended by many leading people. He was generally detained or captured by his admirers, but a considerable part of my way home was also Herbert Spencer's, and we often walked together. Moreover, John and I had a blissful long June day wandering and lunching with Spencer, as our guest, at Richmond. I think Spencer must have enjoyed it too: for he proposed another day at Windsor, to which we others gladly acceded." (Henry Holt, Garrulities of and Octogenarian Editor, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1923. P. 55)
"The human being is at once the terminal problem of Biology and the initial factor of Sociology." (Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1891. P. 336)

Although Spencer coined the expression "super-organic," he did not mean it in exactly the same way as Kroeber and White did. He saw the science of society rooted in psychology, as when he wrote; "without preparation in mental science there can be no social science." (Quoted in "The Relations of Biology Psychology, and Sociology." Popular Science Monthly, Vol. 50, p. 167)

"We must rather say that Spencer's 'principles' of sociology are supposed principles of biology prematurely extended to cover social relations. But the decisive factors in social relations are understood by present sociologists to be psychical, not biological." (Albion W. Small, Review of Spencer's The Principles of Sociology, Vol. 3; American Journal of Sociology, Vol. 2, pp. 741-742, 1897. P. 742)

"In the intellectual history of the last half century, the place taken by Spencer's system forms an instructive chapter. In such a history it would be especially necessary to point out the rise in America of a sociology mainly dependent upon Spencer and its gradual rejection of his biologism as a result of a new, psychologizing trend ...." (Leopold von Wiese, Systematic Sociology on the Basis of the Beziehungslehre and Gebildelehre, adapted and amplified by Howard Becker, John Wiley & Sons, Inc., New York, 1932. P. 689)

"How shall we formulate this one salient deficiency in Herbert Spencer's sociology? It may sound too dramatic to say that it consists in ignoring the human mind as a factor in sociology. True, his system embraces two volumes on psychology. Nevertheless I make bold to affirm not only that he did not base his sociology upon his psychology, but that his psychology is of a kind such that sociology could not be based upon it." (Lester F. Ward, "Herbert Spencer's Sociology," in Glimpses of the Cosmos, Vol. 6, pp. 171-177. G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1918. P. 172)
"Ward's teachings were an impressive challenge to the fatalistic implications of Spencer's rendering of the evolutionary theory; they brought into focus the psychic factors involved in social evolution—the evidence that human activity transforms the environment and perpetuates a social tradition in the interests of man." (Bernhard J. Stern, editor, "The Letters of Albion W. Small to Lester F. Ward," Social Forces, Vol. 12, pp. 163-173, 1933-34, P. 164)

"It must be noticed that Mr. Ward regards mind as the highest known power of matter. He must not be understood to treat matter and mind as antithetical. His advance upon Spencer in this respect is, therefore, analogous with that of an observer who discerns a determining vital or chemical factor in phenomena which had been treated as purely physical." (Albion W. Small and George E. Vincent, An Introduction to the Study of Society, American Book Company, New York, 1894, P. 51)

"Spencer, to be sure, generalized the law of evolution for biology so that he could extend it to social institutions also." (F. S. C. Northrop, "Evolution in Its Relation to the Philosophy of Nature and the Philosophy of Culture," in Evolutionary Thought in America, ed. by Stow Persons, pp. 44-84, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1950, P. 47)

"Mr. Herbert Spencer regards psychology as the necessary predecessor to sociology. The real MAN, capable of acquiring the power of self-direction, being, however, begotten in the societary womb, his study should follow, and not precede, that of the societary body." (Henry C. Carey, The Unity of Law, as Exhibited in the Relations of Physical, Social, Mental, and Moral Science, Henry Carey Baird, Industrial Publisher, Philadelphia, 1872, P. 125n.)

"The trouble is, as with his Spencer's whole system, that the physiological aspect of life is expounded and assumed, apparently, to be the only aspect that science can consider." (Charles Horton Cooley, Human Nature and the Social Order, revised edition, The Free Press, Glencoe, Illinois, 1956, P. 127n. Original revised edition: Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1909, P. 127n.)

"The implications of Lilienfeld's thesis were not only an advance upon the conceptions of Spencer's First Principles, but they included more definite conceptions of the function of psychical factors in social progress than Mr. Spencer has ever admitted." (Albion W. Small and George E. Vincent, An Introduction to the Study of Society, American Book Company, New York, 1894. P. 49)

"Herbert Spencer ... laid great stress on the continuity of biological with social evolution." (p. 31) (Joseph Needham, Time: The Refreshing River, George Allen & Unwin Ltd. London, 1944)

"Through his influence, mechanical analogies plagued biology, and biological analogies plagued sociology. It results everywhere in the "illusion of simplicity." The very flower and fruit of synthesis are lost in the counting of the disjecta membra of "elements."" (James Mark Baldwin, History of Psychology, 2 Vols., G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1913. Vol. 2, p. 102.)

"... Spencer habla construido la Sociología no inmediatamente sobre la Biología, como Comte, sino principalmente sobre la Psicología." (Leopold Von Wiese, Sociología, translated by Rafael Luengo Tapia, Colección Labor, Sección VIII, No. 323, Editorial Labor, Barcelona, 1932. P. 86)

According to Lester Ward, the "... one salient deficiency in Herbert Spencer's sociology ... consists in ignoring the human mind as a factor in sociology." (Lester F. Ward, "Herbert Spencer's Sociology," The Independent, Vol. 56, pp. 730-734, 1904. P. 730)


"... there can be no rational apprehension of the truths of Sociology until there has been reached a rational apprehension of the truth of Biology. The services of the two sciences are, indeed, reciprocal." (Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1891. P. 334)

"In that great work Spencer's "Synthetic Philosophy" the principles of sociology are derived from principles of psychology and of biology." (Franklin H. Giddings, The Principles of Sociology, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1911. P. 8)

"Mr. Spencer's system of sociology, as has been shown, is essentially psychological." (Franklin H. Giddings, "Modern Sociology," The International Monthly, Vol. 2, pp. 536-554, 1900. P. 549)

"Psychology underlies Sociology; and there had to be specified a number of those more special truths in Psychology which have to be handed on to Sociology as part of its data." (Auto. II, 241)

"... psychological truths underlie sociological truths, and must therefore be sought by the sociologist. ... without preparation in Mental Science there can be no Social Science." (Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1891. P. 382)

"The Science of Life yields to the Science of Society, certain great generalizations without which there can be no Science of Society at all." (Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1891. P. 328)

"Society is made up of individuals; all that is done in society is done by the combined actions of individuals; and therefore, in individual actions only can be found the solutions of social phenomena. But the actions of individuals depend on the laws of their nature; and / their actions cannot be understood until these laws are understood. These laws, however, when reduced to their simples expressions, prove to be corollaries from the laws of body and mind in general. Hence it follows, that biology and psychology are indispensable as interpreters of sociology." (Herbert Spencer, "What Knowledge Is of Most Worth?", in Herbert Spencer, Essays on Education, Etc., pp. 1-44, J. M. Dent & Sons Ltd., London, 1911. Pp. 29-30)
"... if Sociology was by me based on Biology as Giddings and Ward had asserted, biological interpretations would be manifest in all parts of the Principles of Sociology succeeding the part in which the above analogy is set forth. But they are not. The interpretations running through Parts III., IV., V., VI., VII., and VIII., though they are congruous with this analogy, are not guided by it, but have quite other guidance. They are based on the general law of Evolution, which is from time to time referred to as illustrated in the particular group of phenomena under consideration." (Herbert Spencer, "The Filiation of Ideas," in David Duncan, Life and Letters of Herbert Spencer, pp. 304-365, Vol. 2. 2 Vols. D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1908. Vol. 2, p. 357)

"What we do find, however, is a rather definite intimation that it is biology rather than psychology that forms the natural basis of sociology. How could any one be expected to doubt this when nothing is said in the first volume of the "Sociology" about its relation to psychology, while, after the long treatise on the beliefs, customs, and ideas of primitive races, belonging rather to anthropology, we find in part II. that "a society is an organism," and that social growth, social structure, social functions and social organs are treated from the strictly biological point of view?" (Lester F. Ward, "The Career of Herbert Spencer," The Popular Science Monthly, Vol. 74, pp. 5-18, 1909) (Pp. 14-15)

"Some fifty years ago M. Milne-Edwards pointed out the analogy between the division of labour in a society and the physiological division of labour in an animal, and regarded the growing complexity of structure as a concomitant in the one case as in the other. If any one had thereafter asserted that he based the science of Biology on the science of Sociology, the assertion would have been regarded as extremely absurd. But the absurdity would have been no greater than is that fallen into by some American sociologists—Prof. Giddings and Mr. Lester Ward among them—who assert that I base Sociology upon Biology because I have exhibited this same analogy under its converse aspect; and who continue to do this though I have pointed out that the analogy does not in either case furnish a foundation, but merely yields mutual illumination." ("The Filiation of Ideas," in Duncan, pp. 570n.-571n.)

"... this change from the homogeneous to the heterogeneous is usually said to result from successive differentiations. This, however, cannot be considered a complete account of the process. During the evolution of an organism [ontogenetically] there occur, not only separations of parts, but coalescences of parts. There is not only segregation, but aggregation.... This progressive integration, [is] manifest alike when tracing up the several stages passed through by every embryo, and when ascending from the lower organic forms to the higher...." (Herbert Spencer, "Transcendental Physiology," Vol. 1, pp. 63-107, Essays: Scientific, Political, & Speculative, Williams and Norgate, London, 1891. P. 67. Originally published as "The Ultimate Laws of Physiology" in The National Review for October, 1857.)
"It is a patriotic as well as a scientific duty to mention finally the most important American contribution to Systematic Sociology. Professor Lester F. Ward published, in 1883, two volumes entitled Dynamic Sociology, or Applied Social Science, as based upon Static Sociology, and the Less Complex Sciences. In 1893, an elaboration of the most original portion of the earlier work appeared under the title, The Psychic Factors of Civilization. In two respects the work of Ward is an immeasurable advance upon that of Spencer, with which it is properly to be compared. In the first place, Sociology, according to Spencer, is, as remarked above, essentially and solely descriptive. Sociology according to Ward is, on the contrary, teleological. "Dynamic Sociology aims at the organization of happiness." In the second place, social evolution, according to Spencer, is differentiated by no essential peculiarity from evolution in general. According to Ward, on the other hand, social evolution is distinctively a psychical product; "society, which is the highest product of evolution, naturally depends upon mind, which is the highest property of matter." (Albion W. Small and George E. Vincent, An Introduction to the Study of Society, American Book Company, New York, 1894. Pp. 50-51)

Spencer is sometimes said to reduce sociology to psychology, or even to biology. And it is true that he once wrote: "Society is made up of individuals; all that is done in society is done by the combined actions of individuals; and therefore, in individual actions only can be found the solutions of social phenomena. But the actions of individuals depend on the laws of their natures; and their actions cannot be understood until these laws are understood. These laws, however, when reduced to their simplest expressions, prove to be corollaries from the laws of body and mind in general. Hence it follows, that biology and psychology are indispensable as interpreters of sociology." (p. 34) (Education; Intellectual, Moral, and Physical. Thinker's Library Edition. Watts & Co. London, 1949). So far as I know, Spencer never explicitly repudiated or even modified this statement. Yet, as one reads through the 2,100 pages of Principles of Sociology he finds virtually no explanations or interpretations of social phenomena which call upon psychological or biological principles. The determinants Spencer calls upon are socio-cultural and ecological factors.

"Within their own sphere the results of Mr. Herbert Spencer are far from sterile--the application of Biology to Political Economy is already revolutionizing the Science." (Henry Drummond, Natural Law in the Spiritual World, James Pott & Co., Publishers, New York, 1887. Pp. xiii-xiv)
"What, then, is the origin of moral feeling? Some regard it as intuitive, as an original instinct implanted in the human mind. Herbert Spencer, (Bain's Mental and Moral Science, p. 722) on the contrary, maintains that moral intuitions are the result of accumulated experiences of utility: gradually organised and inherited, they have come to be quite independent of conscious experience. Just in the same way that I believe the intuition of space, possessed by any living individual, to have arisen from organised and consolidated experiences of all antecedent individuals, who bequeathed to him their slowly-developed nervous organisation; just as I believe that this intuition, requiring only to be made definite and complete by personal experiences, has practically become a form of thought apparently quite independent of experience; so do I believe that the experiences of utility, organised and consolidated through all past generations of the human race, have been producing corresponding nervous modifications, which, by continued transmission and accumulation, have become in us certain faculties of moral intuition—certain emotions responding to right and wrong conduct, which have no apparent basis in the individual experience of utility." (Sir John Lubbock, The Origin of Civilisation and the Primitive Condition of Man, third edition, Longmans, Green, and Co., London, 1875. Pp. 396-397)

After reading the first chapters of this book the reader will be able to judge how good a case Spencer makes for the analogy of biological organisms and societies. Whatever his judgment, he cannot help but be impressed at Spencer's mastery of the details of biology, but more than that, at his clear vision of the general principles of animal structure, function, and evolution.

"I was born into this biological sociology; I grew up in it; I have been accused of pernicious activity in helping to palm it off on the world; and I hereby utter my ante-mortem statement that I have nothing whatever to regret in my connection with the biological sociology. It was a thoroughly respectable attempt to express the literal reality of interrelation in human society in the most vivid terms available. I do not believe we should have been as near as we are now to critical insights into the facts, if we had not been schoolmastered up toward critical insight by these preliminary analogical representations. I have always had a lively contempt for people who could not or would not understand that this pictorial rendering of society in terms of organisms was merely a means of approaching within seeing distance of the actuality. Never for a moment have I meant anything by the device, nor have I understood anybody else whom I could take seriously to mean anything by it, which I would not in substance assert today. I have simply changed my estimate of the value of that particular device for bringing the social reality veraciously before our minds. I used to think it was a useful guide to research. I now think it is of no use whatever for strictly scientific purposes; but I believe it has a value in the earlier stages of sociological study simply as a pedagogical recourse." (Albion W. Small, The Meaning of Social Science, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1910. Pp. 79-80)
"Another instance of successful experiment in Physiological Botany is Mr. Herbert Spencer's observations on the circulation of the sap and the formation of wood in plants (Linnean Transactions, vol. xxv, p. 405). As is well known, the tissues of herbs, shrubs, and trees, from the tips of their roots to those of their petals and pistils, are permeated by tubular vessels. The functions of these have been hotly disputed, some physiologists affirming that they convey air, others fluids, others gases, and still others assigning to them far-fetched uses, of a wholly different nature. By a series of admirably contrived and conducted experiments, Mr. Spencer has not only shown that these vessels are charged at certain seasons of the year with fluid, but that they are intimately connected with the formation of wood. He further investigates the nature of the special tissues concerned in this operation, and shows not merely how they may act, but to a great extent how they do act. As this paper will, I believe, be especially alluded to by the President of the Biological Section, I need dwell no further on it here, than to quote it as an example of what may be done by an acute observer and experimentalist, versed in Physics and Chemistry, but above all, thoroughly instructed in scientific methods." (Joseph D. Hooker, "Address of the President," British Association for the Advancement of Science, Report of the Thirty-Eighth Meeting, 1868, pp. lviii-lxxv. P. lxvii)

"The functions of the spiral vessels (in plants), or of vascular tissue in general, have long been a subject of much controversy, and few matters are of more consequence as regards the real history of the distribution of sap in plants. A very able paper on the subject, to which allusion was made by Dr. Hooker, in his address, has been published by Mr. Herbert Spencer (than who few enter more profoundly into questions of physiology) in the Transactions of the Linnean Society. By a line of close argument and observation he shows, from experiments with coloured fluids capable of entering the tissues without impairing vitality, and that not only in cuttings of plants, but in individuals in which the roots were uninjured, that the sap not only ascends by the vascular tissue, but that the same tissue acts in its turn as an absorbent, returning and distributing the sap which has been modified in the leaves. That this tissue acts some important part is clear from the constancy with which it is produced at a very early stage in adventitious buds, establishing connexion between the tissues of the old and new parts. A circumstance, again, which constantly occurs in the diseases of plants confirms the views of Mr. Herbert Spencer. In diseased turnips, grapes, potatoes, &c., it is especially the vascular tissue which is first gorged with the ultimates which are so characteristic of disease." (M. J. Berkeley, "Address of the President of the Biology Section," British Association for the Advancement of Science, Report of the Thirty-Eighth Meeting, 1868, pp. 53-67. Pp. 55-56)

In his unsigned column entitled "Scientific Miscellany," published in The Galaxy of Vol. 12, 1871, there is an item entitled "Herbert Spencer" on page 709 in which Edward L. Youmans gives a good brief summary of Spencer's findings in his botanical experiments.
Joseph Hooker, the most distinguished British botanist of his day, whom Spencer consulted his research on plants, was struck by "the skill with which he seized upon facts and suggestions and the patient labour with which he sought to test them by experiments, often devised and carried out by himself unaided." (Letter from Joseph D. Hooker to Raphael Meldola, dated October 14, 1910. Quoted in Raphael Meldola, Evolution: Darwinian and Spencerian. The Herbert Spencer Lecture for 1910. The Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1910. P. 44)
"Buckle probably had not read Herbert Spencer's 'Social Statics' [before he wrote his History of Civilisation in England] ... ." (John Mackinnon Robertson, Buckle and His Critics, Swan Sonnen-schein & Co., London, 1895. P. 28)


"Long before Buckle became known as an historian, he was internationally famous as a Chess player. By the time he was only twenty he had defeated many acknowledged masters of the game, and was equally skilful at Whist and Draughts. When his book was published and he became the literary lion of the day, Herbert Spencer was taken to see him. Spencer at once recognized him as a man he had often seen in Simpson's Chess Divan in the Strand." (Giles St. Aubyn, A Victorian Eminence: The Life and Works of Henry Thomas Buckle, Barrie Books Ltd., London, 1958. P. 8)

"The title of this book gives an inadequate notion of the importance of the subjects with which it deals, and of the reach and subtlety of thought which characterize it. Though some of the generalizations appear to me rather premature, no well-instructed and disciplined intellect can consider them without admiration of the remarkable powers displayed by their author." (Henry Thomas Buckle, History of Civilization in England, new edition, 3 Vols., Longmans, Green, and Co., London, 1872. Vol. 3, p. 364n. Vol. 3 was written in 1861)

"In a work now issuing from the press, and still unfinished, it is suggested, with considerable plausibility, that Persistence of Force would be a more accurate expression than Conservation of Force. See Mr. Herbert Spencer's First Principles, London, 1861, p. 251. The title of this book gives an inadequate notion of the importance of the subjects with which it deals, and of the reach and subtlety of thought which characterizes it. Though some generalizations appear to me rather premature, no well-instructed and disciplined intellect can consider them without admiration of the remarkable powers displayed by their author." (Henry Thomas Buckle, History of Civilization in England, Second edition, 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1865. Vol. 2, p. 385n.)

"I quite think, with Grote, that the master-error of Buckle was his absurd underrating of the accidents of history; and Herbert Spencer represents the same tendency in an even more exaggerated form. Sir Henry Maine once said to me that he knew no modern reputation which had declined so much in so short a time as Buckle's, and that he believed that the reputation of everyone who, like Herbert Spencer, treated society mainly as an organisation must suffer a similar collapse." (W. E. H. Lecky, quoted in A Memoir of the Right Hon. William Edward Hartpole Lecky, by His Wife Elizabeth Lecky, Longmans, Green, and Co., New York, 1909. P. 122)
"Darwin--so human, so modest, so genuine--one loves him out and out. One wouldn't think of loving Spencer, or Mill. I would as soon think of loving a bushel of sawdust." (John Burroughs, quoted in The Life and Letters of John Burroughs, BY Clara Barrus, 2 Vols., Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1925. Vol. 2, p. 357)

"Spencer was a philosopher upon whom the spirit of science alone had descended, and we miss in his work the quickening creative atmosphere, and that light that never was on sea or land, that pervades Bergson's. One thinks of Spencer as an enormous intellectual plant, turning out philosophical products that doubtless have their uses, but are a weary weight to the spirit. His work tends to a mechanical explanation of the universe and of the evolutionary impulse which Bergson's with his finer and more imaginative endowment, helps us to escape...." (pp. 72-73) "Bergson is a kind of spiritualized Herbert Spencer." (p. 72) (John Burroughs; The Writings of John Burroughs, Vol. 15. The Summit of the Years, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1913)

"When showing Herbert Spencer one of the sights of Pittsburgh, the Soho region, he turned to me and said, "six months' residence here would justify suicide."" (Andrew Carnegie, Miscellaneous Writings of Andrew Carnegie, edited by Burton J. Hendrick, 2 Vols., Doubleday, Doran & Company, Inc., Garden City, New York, 1933. Vol. 1, p. 285)

"... his widely quoted speech at Delmonico's, and within a few months by his papers on Man vs. The State, reprinted in The Popular Science Monthly, he may be credited with having helped forward two important movements: first, that which tends to arouse public conscience with regard to the dangerous encroachments of monopolies and buccaneering corporations of all kinds;...." (John Fiske, Edward Livingston Youmans, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. P. 376)

"... what I should be inclined to call the triumph of civilization instead of the "triumph of democracy". A large part, if not the greater part, of what you, Andrew Carnegie, in his book about the successful development of the United States, Triumphant Democracy (1886) attribute to democracy, is, it seems to me, simply the result of social growth in a region furnishing abundant space and material for it, and which would have gone on in a substantially similar way under another form of government." (Letter from Herbert Spencer to Andrew Carnegie dated May 18, 1886. Quoted in Burton J. Hendrick, The Life of Andrew Carnegie, 2 Vols., Doubleday, Doran & Company, Inc., Garden City, N.Y., 1932. Vol. 1, p. 277)
"Specifically, Henry C. Carey reasoned, much as did Spencer by whom he was influenced in his later years, that man progresses through the growth of occupational and other forms of differentiation and the correlated development of such forms of association (or interhuman cooperation) as advancing differentiation makes possible and necessary." (Joseph J. Spengler, "Evolutionism in American Economics, 1800-1946," in Evolutionary Thought in America, ed. by Stow Persons, pp. 202-266, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1950. P. 210)

"I cannot close this chapter more appropriately than with an incident clipped from a letter of Youmans to Fiske of Christmas, 1864: "Henry Carey called in to blow up the Appletons for publishing Spencer's British free-trade doctrines. Spencer was an upstart; his system would soon die, like Comte's and Mill's. Said W. H. Appleton, 'I can tell you one thing--Spencer won't die as long as Youmans lives!'" (John Fiske, Edward Livingston Youmans, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. P. 184)

"Another borrowed element, in Principles of Social Science, and, like the previous, an attempt to buttress the population theory rather than to add anything essential to it, was taken from Herbert Spencer. "A Theory of Population Deduced from the General Law of Animal Fertility." The article has been attributed to Spencer, apparently on internal evidence, since it was unsigned." (pp. 78-79) "And there is definite evidence that Carey had no knowledge at the time he quoted this article that it was Spencer's. E. Peshine Smith wrote to Carey on March 29, 1858, referring to the article in question, adducing that it probably had been written by a Quaker named Dickson, and Smith added that Carey might refer to it because "you will find the article to suggest a very similar idea to yours." Carey replied that he had not seen it, and requested Smith's pamphlet copy. In this article, Spencer was aware of refuting Malthus. He stated that individuation and reproduction are antagonistic, that throughout the vertebrate tribes "the degree of fertility varies inversely with the development of the nervous system." He added that intense mental application, involving great waste of the nervous tissues, "and a corresponding consumption of nervous matter for their repair, is accompanied by a cessation in the production of sperm cells...." Spencer further argued that population pressure forces the development of intelligence, which in turn fosters morality, leading to the power of self-regulation. In short, the pressure of population "must gradually bring itself to an end." Carey argued in a similar vein, that the degree of fertility varies inversely as the development of the nervous system from one animal species to another, and that the assumed progress in human intelligence would increasingly "direct the vital energy from the generative to the nervous structure...." And so, says Carey, we have a self-regulating law of population, securing a harmony in food supply and an increase in population." (Arnold W. Green, Henry Charles Carey, Nineteenth-Century Sociologist, University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, 1951. (pp. 79-80)
"It has frequently been claimed that Carey owed much to Spencer, but there is no evidence that this is the case. The *Social Statics* (published in 1850) was written in praise of laissez faire, and certainly Carey's ideas on social evolution were developed independently of Spencer, for the *Synthetic Philosophy* (Green is referring here to *First Principles*, published in 1860, which contained Spencer's first statement of universal evolution) appeared after Carey's first volume of the *Principles of Social Science* (1858)--the only one of the three in which Carey dealt with that subject." (Arnold W. Green, *Henry Charles Carey: Nineteenth Century Sociologist*, University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, 1951. P. 79)

"To me, profoundly averse to autocracy, Carlyle's political doctrines had ever been repugnant. Much as I did, and still do, admire his marvellous style and the vigour, if not the truth, of his thought--so much so that I always enjoy any writing of his, however much I disagree with it--intercourse with him proved impracticable." (Herbert Spencer, "The Late Professor Tyndall," The Fortnightly Review, Vol. 61, pp. 141-148, 1894. P. 144)


"My chief teacher \( \text{Spencer} \), whom to have known in life is one of my crowning satisfactions, is one of the purist, most conscientious, I do not hesitate to say one of the most religious men, in the highest sense, that I ever have heard, read of, or known." (Andrew Carnegie, Miscellaneous Writings of Andrew Carnegie, edited by Burton J. Hendrick, 2 Vols., Doubleday, Doran & Company, Inc., Garden City, N.Y., 1933. Vol. 2, p. 302)

"At this period of my life \( \text{Spencer} \) was discarding the Swedenborgian religion he was raised in; I was all at sea. No creed, no system, reached me. All was chaos. I had outgrown the old and had found no substitute. Carlyle's wrestlings will give you an idea of my condition. Here came to me Spencer and Darwin, whom I read with absorbing interest, until laying down a volume one day I was able to say, "That settles the question." I had found at last the guides which led me to the temple of man's real knowledge upon earth. These works were revelations to me; here was the truth which reconciled all things as far as the finite mind can grasp them, the alembic which harmonized hitherto conflicting ideas and brought order out of chaos; what the law of gravitation did for matter, the law of evolution did for mind. I was upon firm ground, and with every year of my life since there has come less dogmatism, less theology, but greater reverence." (Andrew Carnegie, Miscellaneous Writings of Andrew Carnegie, edited by Burton J. Hendrick, Doubleday, Doran & Company, Inc., Garden City, N.Y., 1933. 2 Vols. Vol. 2, p. 297)

"Of Spencer, who invited me to luncheon at his home, I saw much. I there met Mr. Carnegie, who introduced me to the Athenaeum and had me made a member during my stay in London." (Le Conte's stay in England was in September and October, 1896 (The Autobiography of Joseph Le Conte, edited by William Dallam Armes, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1903. P. 325)
In his analysis of the militant type of society, Spencer shows (Vol. II, pp. 599-600) how it fosters the notion of personal causation in social affairs, and thus requires or prevents the scientific notion of impersonal causation.

Writing of his father Spencer said: "Always the tendency in himself, and the tendency strengthened in me, was to regard everything as naturally caused; and I doubt not that while the notion of causation was thus rendered much more definite in me than in most of my age, there was established a habit of seeking for causes, as well as a tacit belief in the universality of causation. Along with this there went absence of all suggestion of the miraculous. I do not remember my father ever referring to anything explicitly as explicable by supernatural agency. I presume from other evidence that he must at that time have still accepted the current belief in miracles; but I never perceived any trace of it in his conversation. Certainly, his remarks about the surrounding world gave no sign of any other thought than that of uniform natural law." (Auto., I, 89-90)

"There was commonly shown [by me] a faculty of seizing cardinal truths rather than accumulating detailed information. The implications of phenomena were then, as always, more interesting than the phenomena themselves." (Auto., I, 335)

"The consciousness of causation, to which there was a natural proclivity, and which had been fostered by my father, continually prompted analyses, which of course led me below the surface and made fundamental principles objects of greater attention than the various concrete illustrations of them." (Auto., I, 336)

"If there are any literary heroes, his persistence against great and painful odds entitles him to be one of them." (L. L. Bernard, "Herbert Spencer: The Man and His Age," The South Atlantic Quarterly, Vol. 21, pp. 241-251, 1922. P. 246)

"He succeeded because of the synthetic power of his mind, but also because of his indomitable will, of his tenacity, of his faith." (George Sarton, "Herbert Spencer, 1820-1920," Scribner's Magazine, Vol. 67, pp. 695-701, 1920. P. 701)


"Few publicists, indeed, can be set above him in respect of rectitude in controversy and sustained courtesy; but sheer rectitude and formal courtesy are not necessarily winning qualities." (J. M. Robertson, Modern Humanists Reconsidered, Watts & Co., London, 1927. P. 180)


"He wholly lacked a sense of humour, not so much out of moral earnestness as out of incapacity to realize the existence of anything outside himself." (Crane Brinton, English Political Thought in the Nineteenth Century, Ernest Benn, Ltd., London, 1933. P. 227)

"There is no justification whatever for the statement that Spencer was "all brains and no heart." He was not sentimental, but very sensitive." (George Sarton, "Herbert Spencer, 1820-1920," Scribner's Magazine, Vol. 67, pp. 695-701, 1920. P. 698)

"Spencer, indeed, was not so much a man as an intellectual organism, and his passage through this world was rather an existence than a life." (F. J. C. Hearnshaw, "Herbert Spencer and the Individualists," in The Social & Political Ideas of Some Representative Thinkers of the Victorian Age, ed. by F. J. C. Hearnshaw, pp. 53-63, George G. Harrap & Co., Ltd., London, 1933. P. 55)

"In Montreal, when it was proposed to drive past the new palace of a man who had made a fortune by notoriously disreputable means, Spencer not only refused to go, but on the spot he dilated upon the disastrous consequences of showing honor to such a person." (George E. Vincent, "Spencer, The Man," The American Journal of Sociology, Vol. 9, pp. 709-711, 1903-04. P. 710)

"... from first to last Mr. Spencer has shown himself singularly indifferent to the fascinations and allurements of fame. So far from seeking notoriety, he resents, as something akin to outrage, any attempt to thrust notoriety upon him." (William Henry Hudson, An Introduction to the Philosophy of Herbert Spencer, Chapman and Hall, London, 1897. Pp. 1-2)

"At Aldermaston for the Sunday meeting, amongst others, Cole and Herbert Spencer, the last a very close keeper of his cell, and very rarely to be met with in general society. At one time he used to find even an ordinary conversation at dinner too exciting." (Sir Mountstuart E. Grant Duff, Entry for March 19, 1871, Notes from a Diary 1851-1872, 2 Vols., John Murray, London, 1897. Vol. 2, p. 190)

"Later, in London, I met, of course, many eminent men .... Browning was only to me a cheerful, amusing gossip. Herbert Spencer took me in to dinner once, but he would discuss the Athenaeum cook, and on the subject he found me ill-informed." (Jane Ellen Harrison, Reminiscences of a Student's Life, Hogarth Press, London, 1925. P. 46)
"Another new acquaintance [in 1886] was Mr. Mayall, and Eng-
lish microscopist; he gave me accounts of his visit to the Louvre
with Herbert Spencer, who, after looking steadily at the "Immacu-
late Conception" of Murillo, said, "I cannot like a painted fig-
ure that has no visible means of support."" (Andrew D. White,
Autobiography of Andrew D. White, 2 Vols., The Century Company,

"But one great charm Spencer always possessed, especially
in those earlier days--a clear and silvery voice, only sur-
passed within my recollection by Edmund Gosse's and Sarah
Bernhardt's. The enunciation, in particular, had a beautiful
distinctness, every syllable being uttered, and its due value
being given to each." (Grant Allen, "Personal Reminiscences
P. 614)

"Mr. Spencer's last letter to me was in answer I to one I had
sent him on his birthday. It was so characteristic as to deserve
quoting: "Thanks for your congratulations; but I should have liked
better your condolences on my longevity." He wanted no twilight in
his life. Like the sun in America, his wish was to disappear at
once below the horizon--having amply given his share of light in
his day." (George Jacob Holyoake, Bygones Worth Remembering, 2 Vols.,

"In those days [the early 1850's] Mr. Spencer spoke with mis-
givings of his health. Mr. Edward Pigott, chief proprietor of the
Leader (afterwards Public Examiner of Plays) asked me to try to
disabuse Mr. Spencer of his apprehensiveness, which was constitu-
tional and never left his mind all his life, and I learned never
to greet him in terms which implied that he was, or could be well."
(George Jacob Holyoake, Bygones Worth Remembering, 2 Vols., T. Fish-

"Spencer is the same and not the same; his qualities abide,
but they grow; while not relaxing a jot of his theoretic laissez
faire, he is still more irritably denunciatory of people doing as
they can and may. He meddles with me, and interferes with me, and
criticises me, and takes care of me, all for my good, of course,
in the most assiduous manner." (Letter from Edward L. Youmans to
his sister, Eliza A. Youmans, dated December 27, 1878. Quoted in
John Fiske, Edward Livingston Youmans, D. Appleton and Company,
New York, 1894. P. 352)
"Another common acquaintance, Herbert Spencer, is coming to lunch with us today. He is very flourishing and, as usual, cheerful. His old objection to biography is so far dropped that he is preparing materials for his own." (Letter from George Eliot to Sara Sophia Hennell dated November 16, 1877. Quoted in Gordon S. Haight, editor, The George Eliot Letters, 7 Vols., Yale University Press, New Haven, 1955. Vol.6G, pp. 420)

"Herbert Spencer, after his visit to America, was my fellow-voyager to England. I had pleasant talks with him, rather from him, when he was well enough to be on deck. He appeared to me a very full man, full of knowledge and sure of it, and not anxious for more from me, even if I had had it at his command ..." (W. J. Linton, Threescore and Ten Years 1820 to 1890, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1894. P. 204)

"However much one may differ from Herbert Spencer in his views of the world, and however much one may be disposed to place a low estimate on the permanent value of his contributions to science and philosophy, all candid men can have only admiration for his love of truth, for his industry, and for his earnestness." (William T. Harris, "Herbert Spencer and His Influence on Education," Journal of Proceedings and Addresses of the Forty-Third Annual Meeting of the National Education Association, pp. 214-223, 1904. P. 214)

"He [Spencer] seems never to have harboured any kind of doubt. In a century surely not predisposed to scepticism, few thinkers surpass him in cock-sureness and intolerance. He was the intimate confidant of a strange and rather unsatisfactory God, whom he called the principle of Evolution. His God has betrayed him. We have evolved beyond Spencer." (Crane Brinton, English Political Thought in the Nineteenth Century, Ernest Benn, Ltd., London, 1933. P. 227)

"Spencer was gentle and admirable as always; and the reverence which all these men [Lewes, Huxley, Tyndall, etc.] feel for him was thoroughly apparent in the way in which they listened to every word that came out of his mouth." (Letter from John Fiske to Abby Morgan Brooks, November 13, 1873. Quoted in Ethel F. Fisk [sic], The Letters of John Fiske, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1940. P. 270)

"Spencer has a sort of scientific straightforwardness in his manner, which has no nonsense about it, and is very attractive." (Letter from John Fiske to Abby Morgan, October 31, 1873. Quoted in The Letters of John Fiske, edited by Ethel F. Fisk, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1940. P. 266)
"I had the pleasure of meeting Herbert Spencer whose acquaintance I was happy to make. Herbert Spencer is a younger looking man than I supposed, with an agreeable expression, good manners, but not exactly fluent of speech." (Letter from John Bigelow to W. H. Huntington, dated London, September 24, 1872. Quoted in Retrospectives of an Active Life, by John Bigelow, 5 Vols., Doubleday, Page & Company, Garden City, N.Y., 1913. Vol. 5, p. 82)

"Tyndall abounded in good humour and was then as always one of the merriest of the party. We often met, sometimes with Clifford and Lewes, at dainty little suppers in Spencer's lodgings, or at Sunday evening teas at Huxley's, on which occasions I have known men berated as materialists to join in singing psalm-tunes." (John Fiske, "John Tyndall," pp. 241-248, in Essays Historical and Literary, 2 Vols., The Macmillan Company, New York, 1902. Vol. 2, p. 247)

"Occasionally Mr. Spencer would come to my door and invite me to drive with him. Another time when he had visitors--Mrs. Sidney Webb and Prof. Masson, whom I wished to meet again--he would, if in the winter season, send me a card from "2, Lewes Crescent, Jan. 24, 1897.--I will send the carriage for you to-morrow (Sunday) at 12:40. With the hood up and the leather curtain down you will be quite warm.--H.S." He would occasionally send me grouse or pheasant for luncheon. Very pleasant were the amenities of philosophy." (George Jacob Holyoake, Bygones Worth Remembering, 2 Vols., T. Fisher Unwin, London, 1905. Vol. 2, p. 33)

"I have nothing but honour for him (Spencer); and owe too much to him to have any interest but in understanding his thought exactly as it is. I frankly told him so, and that I felt that he was not a man to let speculative differences become a ground of personal aversion. He declared himself quite satisfied; and so far as consists with his exceptional sensitiveness to dissentient criticism, I fully believe he is so." (Letter from James Martineau to W. R. Alger dated October 26, 1871. Quoted in The Life and Letters of James Martineau, edited by James Drummond, 2 Vols., Dodd, Mead and Company, New York, 1902. Vol. 2, p. 366)

"The day of his funeral I spent on the shore of the Golden Shell (at Palermo)--that famous centre of strange synthetic history--pondering less upon the synthetic than upon an indefatigable intellect, an iron love of truth, a pure and scrupulous conscience, a spirit of loyal and beneficent intention, a noble passion for knowledge and systematic thought, as the instruments for man's elevation." (John, Viscount Morley, Recollections, 2 Vols., The Macmillan Company, New York, 1917. Vol. 1, p. 116)
"Inexorable and uncompromising in his ideas, he was in life, conduct, and duty the most single-minded and unselfish of men. He had a pedantic turn, his nerves were sensitive, and he was not one of the large minds in which small outside things have no place. He could be impatient over the small mischances of club life, and he was amusingly ready to seek an instant classification of them as due to gross defects of integration, co-ordination, or whatever else the attendant molecular shortcoming might be." (John, Viscount Morley, Recollections, 2 Vols., The Macmillan Company, New York, 1917. Vol. 1, pp. 111-112)

"I had corresponded with Spencer for several years, and soon after my arrival he gave one of his exquisite little dinners at his own lodgings. Spencer's omniscience extended to the kitchen, and as composer of a menu neither Carême nor Francatelli could have surpassed him." (John Fiske, "Reminiscences of Huxley," pp. 199-226, in Essays Historical and Literary, 2 Vols., The Macmillan Company, New York, 1902. Vol. 2, p. 204)


"I had corresponded with Spencer for several years, and soon after my arrival [in 1873] he gave one of his exquisite little dinners at his own lodgings. Spencer's omniscience extended to the kitchen, and as composer of a menu neither Carême nor Francatelli could have surpassed him. The other guests were Huxley, Tyndall, Lewes, and Hughlings Jackson." (John Fiske, "Reminiscences of Huxley," Smithsonian Institution Annual Report, 1900 (1901), pp. 713-728. P. 716)

"Two rather amusing things. One was I took Pinkie to call on Herbert Spencer [in Brighton]. He was much pleased that she should play to him, but said the worst of Beethoven was he never knew when to leave off. The second movement of the Sonata he stopped. "Thank you, I'm getting flushed, that will be quite enough. Thank you." He was rather nice, very absurd, and very discursive." (Letter from Anne Thackeray Ritchie to her husband dated January 10, 1899. Quoted in Letters of Anne Thackeray Ritchie, edited by Hester Ritchie, John Murray, London, 1924. P. 248)
"I simply laugh out loud when I read [in Mrs. Barnett’s book, The Life of Canon Barnett] of Herbert Spencer with his umbrella in the desert beating the donkey boy. His brown kid gloves, his tie, his umbrella! How well I can see him at Wykehurst tripping angrily along the terrace. I told you he had been ordered [to rest] and to travel with unintellectual people, and he asked if he might join us as he thought we should not tire his brain in any way!" (Letter from Anne Thackeray Ritchie to Mrs. Gerald Ritchie dated January 6, 1919. Quoted in Letters of Anne Thackeray Ritchie, edited by Hester Ritchie, John Murray, London, 1924. P. 304)

"Spencer at no time had the appearance of a confirmed invalid. He was proud of his small hands and in his seventy-eighth year had a plaster cast made of them. He was also somewhat vain of his teeth, but, as Hugh Elliot remarks, it would have been better for him had they been filled. It was foreign to his method of thought to have one extracted, since it would have involved "a subtraction from his own personality."" (James Frederick Rogers, "The Physical Spencer," The Scientific Monthly, Vol. 10, pp. 570-580, Vol. 11, pp. 53-65, 1920. P. 64)

"But these limitations must never be allowed to blind us to his [Spencer’s] splendid positive qualities. His uprightness, purity, and scrupulous honesty, even in the pettiest details, his conscientiousness, integrity, and single-hearted devotion to truth, filled all who knew him with admiration; and it is hardly too much to say that his moral greatness did not fall short of his intellectual greatness." (William Henry Hudson, An Introduction to the Philosophy of Herbert Spencer, revised edition, Watts & Co., London, 1906. P. 26)

"Moreover, his [Spencer’s] emotional nature was kept under undue restraint by an intellect which sat in perpetual judgment upon it; the free play of feeling was repressed; and a certain consequent dryness and want of flexibility made one regret that among the sacrifices forced upon him by his life-work was that of those normal human relationships and responsibilities which would have done much to expand his feelings and give warmth and colour to the daily routine." (William Henry Hudson, An Introduction to the Philosophy of Herbert Spencer, revised edition, Watts & Co., London, 1906. P. 26)

"I have for a long time deliberately set my face against that asceticism which makes it an offence to do a thing for the pleasure of doing it; and have habitually contended that, so long as no injury is inflicted on others, nor any ulterior injury on self, and so long as the various duties of life have been discharged, the pursuit of pleasure for its own sake is perfectly legitimate and requires no apology." (Herbert Spencer, An Autobiography, 2 Vols., Watts & Co., London, 1926. Vol. 2, p. 226)

"Herbert Spencer has invited Dorothy to succeed Miss Shinner as his companion, and to my amazement and pleasure Dorothy accepts. She is delighted. She is going to play to him tomorrow, and to see if it is possible. Even if it lasts three weeks or three months, it is something to be companion to Herbert Spencer. All of your mornings to yourself, and to play the piano to him in the afternoon, never longer than ten minutes, when he feels his pulse and desires you to leave off. He is extremely cross, but also extremely kind. It is certainly very amusing and unexpected." (Letter from Anne Thackeray Ritchie to her husband dated [written in February or March] 1899. Quoted in Letters of Anne Thackeray Ritchie, edited by Hester Ritchie, John Murray, London, 1924. P. 250)

"When I first knew Mr. Herbert Spencer, he was one of the writers on the Leader newspaper. We dined at times at the Whittington Club, then recently founded by Douglas Jerrold. At this period Mr. Spencer had a half-rustic look. He was ruddy, and gave the impression of being a young country gentleman of the sporting farmer type, looking as unlike a philosopher as Thomas Henry [sic, names reversed here] Buckle looked like a historian, as he appeared to me on my first interview with him. Mr. Spencer at that time would take part in discussions in a determined tone, and was persistent in definite statement. In that he resembled William Chambers, with whom I was present at a deputation to Lord Derby on the question ...." (George Jacob Holyoake, Bygones Worth Remembering, 2 Vols., T. Fisher Unwin, London, 1905. Vol. 2, p. 25)


"I also took long walks [while in Mentone in the south of France in 1879] with Herbert Spencer. We had much talk about George Eliot and George Lewes, and he told me many things which I expected to find in his autobiography, but which are not there. He spoke of the reasons which brought about the separation between George Lewes and his wife and of the impossibility of a divorce, so that any marriage between him and George Eliot was out of the question so long as his wife was living. I found him a charming companion, full of interest and information about the more frivolous side of existence." (Oscar Browning, Memories of Sixty Years at Eton [no comma] Cambridge and Elsewhere, John Lane [no comma] The Bodley Head, London, 1910. P. 277)
"... he was the most truthful person I ever met; and he expected an equal measure of truthfulness from others."

"Many of his J. D. Hooker's/ friends were distinguished scientists, like himself, Herbert Spencer, Tyndall, Huxley among the number. I remember Herbert Spencer coming to lunch one day and my mother, who was a great student and admirer of his books, asking him what he thought on a certain subject. 'I forget what I think on that subject,' was his reply, 'but you will find it in such and such a book of mine.'" (Mrs. Calverley Bewicke, recollection of Joseph Hooker dating from the 1870's. Quoted in Leonard Huxley, Life and Letters of Sir Joseph Dalton Hooker, 2 Vols., D. Appleton & Company, New York, 1918. Vol. 2, p. 194)

"Even the abstemious Spencer drank a quart of ale—a thing which he said he had hardly ever done. Took a carriage and drove through the Park to Virginia Water and walked the rest of the way. Spencer fairly boiled over with "animal spirits"; he is a different man from what he was five years ago. Fascinating is no name for it; he was absolutely a magician that day, with sparkling wit and wonderful flashes of wisdom. I only wish I could remember it all. We walked 16 miles by Holt's pedometer. Oh, what a wonderful day!" (Letter from John Fiske to Abby Morgan, June 23, 1879. Quoted in The Letters of John Fiske, edited by Ethel F. Fiske, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1940. Pp. 402-403)

"Among men of science who served as hosts to the Leckys in London in the 1870's and thereafter were... Herbert Spencer, combining with his uncompromising logical intellect the frankness and simplicity of a child, and losing no opportunity, even in futile conversation, to cull materials for building up his all-embracing philosophy." (A Memoir of the Right Hon. William Edward Hartpole Lecky, by His Wife, Longmans, Green, and Co., New York, 1909. P. 105)

"Once when we Tait and McKay were on the Brighton road I told him a story I had heard in London from an old friend of Herbert Spencer. It seems that the old chap lived with two old maids, and they took him out for little trips from time to time. Once they all went to Brighton, and the old maids pointing out the Brighton road said to Spencer: "Sir, this is the road along which George IV. used to drive when Prince of Wales." "I take no interest in the criminal classes," replied Herbert." (W. J. Stewart McKay, Lawson Tait, His Life and Work, William Wood and Company, New York, 1922. P. 498)
CHARACTER TRAITS

"Quite equal to your transcendent mental powers is your moral straightness, that lofty independence which contents itself with doing good work and leaving it to fructify by its own vitality. No man could be less of a popularity-hunter than you are. No man could have a higher moral standard. That is one reason why I, among so many, love and reverence you so deeply. For, to my way of thinking, the grandeur of the moral nature, that part of the intellect which deals with man as man, is quite as valuable as even epoch-making thought." (Letter from Mrs. Elizabeth Lynn Linton to Herbert Spencer dated June, 1893. Quoted in George Somes Layard, Mrs. Lynn Linton, Her Life, Letters, and Opinions, Methuen & Co., London, 1901. P. 306)

"For us, the nineteenth century boasts no braver man or more typical Englishman, than Herbert Spencer. He had an infinite capacity for standing alone, for being faithful to forsaken causes, for obeying the truth he believed." (A. M. Fairbairn, "Herbert Spencer," The Contemporary Review, Vol. 85, pp. 1-11, 1904. P. 1)

"And the majority of readers, when they have got to the end of the two volumes of An Autobiography, will certainly feel that, much as they may be interested in Herbert Spencer, much as they may esteem him, and much as they may pity him, their affections are left cold." (Francis Gribble, "Herbert Spencer: His Autobiography and His Philosophy," The Fortnightly Review, Vol. 81, pp. 984-995, 1904. Pp. 984-985)

"In personal life Spencer impressed most people who met him but casually as rather cold, remote, and difficult of access; and it was only as one came to know him well that one succeeded in breaking through his reserve, and came to see and appreciate the more sympathetic aspects of his character. He was never, indeed, very easy to get on with. What he himself calls his "abnormal tendency to criticism" was too much in the ascendant; sleeplessness and nervous dyspepsia, with the hypochondria which these engendered, made him occasionally irritable and sharp of tongue; and, having little tolerance for the prejudices and conventions of everyday life, he often seemed harsh in his judgments, and sometimes even needlessly censorious." (William Henry Hudson, An Introduction to the Philosophy of Herbert Spencer, revised edition, Watts & Co., London, 1906. Pp. 25-26)

"We were to the end on most friendly terms. He became a reader of the Positivist Review, and at his death I published therein the two articles in my Realities and Ideals (pp. 410-419), in which I attempted to express my sense of his eminence. Far too much has been made of his eccentricities and his egocism. His intellectual pre-eminence almost forced him into an attitude of jealous isolation to defend his solitary citadel of thought. The same thing happened to Comte. But to say nothing about his vast intelligence, Spencer had a character of perfect simplicity, intensity, and rectitude." (Autobiographic Memoirs, by Frederic Harrison. 2 Vols. Macmillan and Co., Limited. London, 1911. Vol. 2, pp. 113-114)
"If I remember rightly, I was an early subscriber to Herbert Spencer's works. But it was not till much later, I think in 1876, that I became well acquainted with the man. We were staying at Buxton together. If a new moral world is built upon materialism, Herbert Spencer will have been one of the chief builders. In any case, he was a shining light and a power. Of his personal eccentricities plenty of stories have been told. His nervous sensibility was extreme. A game of billiards was enough to deprive him of his night's rest. He had been looking forward with pleasure to a meeting with Huxley; but he gave it up because there was a difference on some scientific question between them, and this might have given rise to an argument which Spencer's nerves could not bear." (Goldwin Smith, Reminiscences, edited by Arnold Haultain, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1910. Pp. 139-140)

"The next two letters refer to a correspondence with Herbert Spencer as to the gift to Mr Huxley mentioned in his Life, p. 366, vol. 1. Mr. Spencer wished to know from me whether my mother's memory corroborated his own view that he alone originated the idea. She, however, was quite sure that Mrs Lyell first spoke of it to herself and my father. Letters from Emma Darwin to her daughter Henrietta Litchfield: "March, 1896. Your letter just come /sic/. I remember it pretty clearly. F. /7 heard first about it from Mrs Lyell, so no doubt it was set on foot in two places. We heard nothing about Herbert Spencer. What a fuss he makes. You shall have the letter back.... It is the greatest monument of vanity I ever saw. I am quite certain my memory is just, as I remember that Mrs Lyell was affected nearly to tears when she was speaking to us on the subject. No doubt Herbert Spencer was exerting himself independently." (Emma Darwin: A Century of Family Letters 1792-1896, edited by her Daughter Henrietta Litchfield, 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1915. Vol. 2, p. 308)

"The last three weeks I have been trying to describe Herbert Spencer as an influence in my life. It is difficult to sum up in one short paragraph the greatness of his purpose and the nobility of his self-sacrifice and the pettiness of some of his little ways and the mean misery of those last years of declining strength. How much of this misery was due to a poisoned body, to unhealthy living; how much to loss of faith in the beneficent course of evolution and to the adoption of an impossible rule of conduct, it is difficult to say. Alike in physical and mental behaviour he went down the wrong turning and ended in long-drawn-out disaster. He began life as a mystical optimist; he ended it as a pessimistic materialist; the cause of this transformation being that he allowed his creed to be determined by the findings of his reason working on fanciful data he practiced neither the scientific method in the ascertainment of fact nor the will to believe in what is essential to the salvation of man." (Margaret I. Cole, editor, Beatrice Webb's Diaries 1912-1924, Longmans, Green and Co, London, 1952. P. 245, entry for June 28, 1923)
"Herbert Spencer was a member of the Committee of the London Library, on which I also was elected to serve in 1883. I sat in Committee with him only once, in that year. He sat just opposite to me at the table, and took no part in the business, until suddenly he interrupted it by saying that he had a proposition to make. He then proceeded to say that the tone of the books purchased by the L. L. had greatly deteriorated, and that he attributed it to the intrusion of "works of fiction." He pronounced these words with a kind of scorn as if he smelt a bad smell. Then he made the definite suggestion that in future no novels, "except of course those of George Eliot," should be purchased for the Library. The Committee was very respectful to him, but this was really too much, and his proposition was rejected, I think unanimously. He then rose, in dreamy dignity, and left the room, without saying Goodbye to anyone, and I never saw him at a Committee meeting again, although I do not think that he resigned until ten years later, 1893." (Letter from Edmund Gosse to E. S. P. Haynes dated December 31, 1926. Quoted in The Life and Letters of Sir Edmund Gosse by Evan Charteris, William Heinemann Ltd, London, 1931. Pp. 497-498)

"... Yesterday I had an interesting experience. It appears that Herbert Spencer expressed to J. Morley a desire to make my acquaintance. This, considering all things, I could not regard as otherwise than a high compliment, so off we set together in a hansom to call on the old philosopher (he is 76 and has just finished the endless volumes of his so-called Synthetic Philosophy) in St. John's Wood. He had put off his journey to Brighton for a day in order to see me, and we found him lying nearly at full length, with his feet on a chair, and, by his own account, in very poor health. Controversy, it appears, immediately brings on serious palpitations; we avoided, therefore, all subjects of difference and he talked interestingly of his early life as an engineer, of my brother Frank, of the new edition of his Biology, and how he is employing five young men of science to bring it up to date, and so forth. He looks like a cross between a village school-master and a farmer." (Letter from A. J. Balfour to Lady Elcho, dated December 4, 1896. Quoted in Blanche E. C. Dugdale, Arthur James Balfour, 2 Vols., G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1937. Vol. 1, p. 141)

"The opening of 1879 found me at Mentone.... I also took long walks with Herbert Spencer. [He had seen Spencer on a number of occasions at George Eliot's home in 1872, p. 192] We had much talk about George Eliot and George Lewes, and he told me many things which I expected to find in his autobiography, but which are not there. He spoke of the reasons which brought about the separation between George Lewes and his wife and of the impossibility of a divorce, so that any marriage between him and George Eliot was out of the question so long as his wife was living. I found him a charming companion, full of interest and information about the more frivolous side of existence." (Oscar Browning, Memories of Sixty Years at Eton [Cambridge and Elsewhere, John Lane The Bodley Head, London, 1910. P. 277)
"When Herbert Spencer went to live at Brighton (5 Percival Terrace) in 1898, I hastened there in the hope of seeing him. My mission was unsuccessful; but I had the good fortune to meet a man who assured me that he knew the shopkeeper who sold Herbert Spencer the cotton wool which he was accustomed, in society, to insert into his ears when the conversation did not interest him." (C. Lewis Hind, More Authors and I, Dodd, Mead and Company, New York, 1922. P. 268)

"Mademoiselle de Peyronnet, who left us to-day, told us much of Herbert Spencer, whom she sees occasionally at Brighton. He mentioned to her, some little time ago, that he had advertised to find a family in the country who would take him in as a boarder. "You will have a great many answers from clergymen," she said. "Oh!" he rejoined, "I have provided against that. I added to my advertisement the words, 'As H. S. is an agnostic, no clergymen need reply."" (Sir Mountstuart E. Grant Duff, Notes from a Diary, 2 Vols., John Murray, London, 1905. Vol. 2, p. 263)

"Herbert Spencer is, as you know, one of the most opinionative and argumentative of men, but we have not had, and are not likely to have, any collisions." (Letter from Leonard Courtney to his sister Margaret, dated April 20, 1881. Quoted in G. P. Gooch, Life of Lord [Leonard] Courtney, Macmillan, London, 1920. P. 182)

"Herbert Spencer, on being asked why he ate strawberry jam at breakfast, said that the beneficial effects of happiness upon mankind have been much underrated, owing to the over-respect paid to asceticism. He considered pleasure an excellent digestive. He himself could not digest the same food for many days, simply from the effect that monotony would have upon his mind, and had heard of a man who went into a decline from eating nothing but mutton chops." (A. G. C. Liddell, Notes from the Life of an Ordinary Mortal. John Murray, London, 1911. Pp. 194-195)


"His erudition was prodigious. His civic conscience and his social courage both were admirable. His life was pure. He was devoted to truth and usefulness, and his character was wholly free from envy and malice / (though not from contempt), and from the perverse egoisms that so often go with greatness." (William James, Memories and Studies, Longmans, Green, and Co., New York, 1911. Pp. 110-111)
The Duke of Argyll, with whom Spencer had a number of philosophical differences of opinion, nevertheless once wrote to Spencer: "You keep the philosophic tone and temper more perfectly than any writer I know. It so happens that at the present moment—whenever I can get a moment from politics—I am engaged in a close examination of your "Biology," and I think the tone I refer to is very conspicuous there." (Letter from the Duke of Argyll to Herbert Spencer dated December 7, 1893. Quoted in George Douglas Eighth Duke of Argyll, Autobiography and Memoirs, edited by the Dowager Duchess of Argyll, 2 Vols., John Murray, London, 1906. Vol. 2, pp. 496-497)

"Rarely has Nature performed an odder or more Dickens-like feat than when she deliberately designed, or accidentally stumbled into, the personality of Herbert Spencer. Greatness and smallness surely never lived so closely in one skin together." (William James, Memories and Studies, Longmans, Green, and Co., New York, 1911. Pp. 107-108)


"Away from the contention of the moment, Spencer was as kindly and genial as man could be. He was fond of table games, in sport he was a good fisherman, and he had the blessed gift of hearty laughter. This I found in our many dinners together in company with Tyndall at the Club, followed by the theatre; the more irrational the play the better he enjoyed it, even though now and again he could not restrain testy words on a gallant comedian's flagrant psychological incoherence." (John, Viscount Morley, Recollections, 2 Vols., The Macmillan Company, New York, 1917. Vol. 1, p. 112)

"The more I see of the poor old fellow [Spencer] the more I pity him from the bottom of my heart, he is so lonely, and so curtailed from want of human sympathy." (The Letters of John Fisk, edited by Ethel F. Fisk, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1940. P. 291. Letter from John Fiske to Abby Morgan, December 22, 1873)
"Spencer saw portions of my work \textit{Werner's volume on China for Descriptive Sociology} during his lifetime, and "often spoke of it with much appreciation. It was another of the things which, he said, cheered him at a time of life when cheering things were not very common" (Duncan, \textit{Life and Letters of Herbert Spencer}). My association with this great and world-famed philosopher, a man who lived his philosophy (thus showing it to be possible), is one of the pleasanest recollections of my life. As a rule, and especially in his later years, owing to his spare time being limited and to his nervous condition, he saw few visitors. Invitations by prominent London hosts and hostesses to meet people of note (such as, on one occasion, the Emperor of Russia) were usually declined, and he generally limited interviews solicited by dukes and duchesses and others, however high their rank, who were mere celebrity-hunters, without much real knowledge of his or other philosophies, to ten minutes. I always felt a quiet pride in the fact that he never assigned any limit in his conversations with me." (E. T. c. Werner, \textit{Autumn Leaves, An Autobiography}, Kelly & Walsh, Limited, Shanghai, 1928. P. 635)

"Herbert Spencer I never saw. Richards was the nephew of Grant Allen, and often(?) visited his house. He must have been a difficult old man. Someone had to read to him for so long a time every day. To arrange that was not so difficult. It was more difficult to find a really good pianist to play high music to him for an hour or so every day. I was much chagrined that I could not attempt the job, for at that time my hero-worship knew no bounds. The object of my worship I was evidently willing to take on trust for I had never seen the philosopher; I must have been the only boy in England in whom the author of \textit{The Principles of Sociology} inspired such deep respect!" (Grant Richards, \textit{Memories of a Misspent Youth}, 1872-1896, William Heinemann Ltd, London, 1932. P. 223)

"The story of Herbert Spencer's ear-clips is well known. How it got out we never discovered. In those days there were fewer ears at key-holes. My uncle Grant Allen was furious that this eccentricity on the part of his guest should become the subject of paragraphs. But it is true nevertheless. The philosopher carried clips in his pocket so that if the conversation was not to his taste, or if he thought it unworthy of attention, he could apply them to his ears and fall back on his own thoughts for companionship." (Grant Richards, \textit{Memories of a Misspent Youth} 1872-1896, William Heinemann Ltd, London, 1932. P. 224)
"Note Laevsky's description of his romance in Chekhov's The Duel (1891): 'To begin with, we had kisses, and calm evenings, and vows, and Spencer, and ideals and interests in common,' .... (John Passmore, A Hundred Years of Philosophy, A Pelican Book, Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, 1968. P. 534)

'Vevon Koren, a young zoologist and a character in "The Duel" says: "And as for Schopenhauer and Spencer, he [Laevsky] treats them like little boys, paternally clapping them on the shoulder: 'Well, what do you say, old boy?' He hasn't read Spencer, of course, but how charming he is when he says of his lady, with light, casual irony: 'She's read Spencer!' And everyone listens to him and no one cares to realize that this charlatan hasn't the right to kiss the sole of Spencer's foot, much less speak of him in that tone!' (Anton Chekhov, "The Duel" [1891], in Ward Six and Other Stories, translated by Ann Dunnigan, pp. 61-161, Signet Classic, The New American Library, Inc., New York, 1965. P. 81)

"My God," sighed [Ivan Andreich] Layevsky, "how we have been mutilated by civilization! I fell in love with a married woman; and she fell in love with me.... In the beginning there were kisses, quiet evenings, vows; there was Spencer, and ideals, and common interests." (p. 63) "As for love, I can tell you that living with a woman who has read Spencer and has followed you to the ends of the earth is no more interesting than living with any Anfisa or Akulina. There's the same smell of ironing, of powder, of medicines, the same curl papers every morning, the same self-deception...." (p. 64) (Anton Chekhov, "The Duel" [1891], in Ward Six and Other Stories, translated by Ann Dunnigan, pp. 61-161, Signet Classic, The New American Library, Inc., New York, 1965)"
"But even if Spencer's laissez-faire resembles the non-activity of the Taoist philosophers, neither one is compatible with Yen's hopes of achieving an immediate political goal, namely, of saving China from destruction in the struggle of the nations. The method Yen/Fu prescribed can nevertheless be reconciled with the Taoist spirit since it does not start with the political process but works from intellectual enlightenment to national coherence and strength. However, there is still a gap between Taoist non-action and Spencer's repudiation of state control, on the one hand, and Yen's political goal of saving China through government action, on the other. It is here that Huxley fits in as a bridge." (Y. C. Wang, Chinese Intellectuals and the West, University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, 1966. P. 204)

"Passing on to Spencer/I in an essay entitled, "On Strength," p. 167, Yen/Fu stressed the philosopher's rigorous application of the evolutionary theory to social phenomena. He then described in particular the First Principles (which sought "a unified theory in all fields ranging from the study of insects and plants to that of men and celestial movements"), the Study of Sociology, and Education: Intellectual, Moral, Physical." (Y. C. Wang, Chinese Intellectuals and the West, University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, 1966. P. 197)

"During his stay of slightly more than two years in England, Yen/Fu not only read Darwin, Spencer, and other writers but also developed an interest in British judicial procedure and municipal administration, which he found superior to the Chinese, and from which he believed Britain derived her strength." (Y. C. Wang, Chinese Intellectuals and the West, University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, 1966. P. 194)

"On the other hand, Yen/Fu himself dates his knowledge of Spencer's Study of Sociology from 1882, and if his statement that the aim of Huxley is to curb the excesses of Spencer has any relevance here, it is possible that he learned of Huxley only after he had studied Spencer." (Y. C. Wang, Chinese Intellectuals and the West, University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, 1966. P. 204)

"It was only because her intellectual development had been stifled since the Ch'in that China had to learn from the West; and Huxley, by correcting the excessive laissez-faire in Spencer, indicated the way to preserve a nation." (Y. C. Wang, Chinese Intellectuals and the West, University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, 1966. P. 202)

"In sociology Yen/Fu believes with Spencer that evolution is identical with progress. He deletes a passage on retrogressive metamorphosis from Huxley's Prolegomena and then comments in the second chapter: ...." (Y. C. Wang, Chinese Intellectuals and the West, University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, 1966. P. 205)
"In 1901 Spencer wrote me that he had learned some time before this from the Chinese Ambassador that two translations of his writings were in progress in China--one into the Northern and the other into the Southern dialect." (William Henry Hudson, An Introduction to the Philosophy of Herbert Spencer, revised edition, Watts & Co., London, 1906. P. 24n.)

"In these conclusions the influence of Herbert Spencer was obvious. Yet Yen [Fu] could not stop here, for his main aim was to advocate reform, through state action if necessary, and in no way could Spencer be stretched to support such a course. Clearly some other authority was needed; therefore Yen turned to Huxley's Evolution and Ethics." (Y. C. Wang, Chinese Intellectuals and the West, University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, 1966. P. 202)
"When [Kate] Chopin returned to St. Louis after her husband's death [in 1883], her family doctor, Frederick Kolbenheyer, became one of her closest friends. A radical intellectual and, according to Per Seyersted [Chopin's biographer], a "determined agnostic," he persuaded her to read Darwin, Huxley, and Spencer; to abandon in all but name the faith of her Catholic girlhood; and to begin writing fiction in earnest." (Sandra M. Gilbert, Introduction to *The Awakening and Selected Stories*, by Kate Chopin, pp.7-33. Penguin Books. New York, 1986. P. 11)
"It is evident, too, how little Spencer knew of the class conflict of his own age, and how remote he was from the struggles and bitter antagonisms which the "peaceful" industrial order has brought into increasing prominence." (Walter Greenwood Beach, The Growth of Social Thought, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1939. P. 126)
Spencer opposed the classical-humanist tradition which emphasized the study of Greek and Latin language and culture ahead of everything else. (Auto. II, 36-7)

"By nature, I am sure, I am not an archaeologist--still less an anthropologist--the "beastly devices of the heathen" weary and disgust me." (Jane Ellen Harrison, Reminiscences of a Student's Life. Hogarth Press, London, 1925. P. 83)


"What Knowledge Is of Most Worth" "... is completely subversive of the old classical traditions." (p. 276) Spencer was "... the only education writer of that country [England] to make much impression upon the times" (The 19th century. (p. 283). (Frank Pierrepont Graves, Great Educators of Three Centuries, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1912.)

"... the floods of criticism that have swept over his [Spencer's] essay on "What Knowledge Is of Most Worth?" ... (W. S. Sutton, "Herbert Spencer's Individuality as Manifested in His Educational Thinking," Journal of Proceedings and Addresses of the Forty-Third Annual Meeting of the National Education Association, pp. 226-230, St. Louis, Mo., 1904. P. 227. Sutton was Professor of the Science and Art of Education at the University of Texas)

"Now, the French have very little trouble with Spencer's treatment of religious subjects, but his irreverence for the ancient classics greatly troubles them... And so the Minister of Public Instruction in France has arranged to prepare an edition of Spencer's "Education" which the Government may approve, and in which the part dealing with science and classics is omitted." (Edward L. Youmans, "Sociology and Theology at Yale College," The Popular Science Monthly, Vol. 17, pp. 265-269, 1880. P. 269)

"Men who would blush if caught saying Iphigenia instead of Iphigenia, or would resent as an insult any imputation of ignorance respecting the fabled labours of a fabled demi-god, show not the slightest shame in confessing that they do not know where the Eustachian tubes are, what are the actions of the spinal cord, what is the normal rate of pulsation, or how the lungs are inflated." (p. 43) (Education: Intellectual, Moral, and Physical. D. Appleton and Company. New York, 1862.)
"The college [Harvard] is in the midst of a ferocious fight between the scientists and the classicists, the latter having become alarmed at the inroads of the former." (Letter from Edward L. Youmans to Herbert Spencer dated November 23, 1863. Quoted in John Fiske, Edward Livingston Youmans, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. P. 164)

"The word "evolution" has acquired such a potency that the mere fact that certain philosophies like those of Spencer or Bergson use it causes them to be regarded as scientific. But as a few drops of holy water cannot transform a sinner into a saint, so a few empirical generalizations and technical terms cannot transform mythologic pictures of the universe into genuine science." (Morris R. Cohen, The Faith of a Liberal, Henry Holt and Company, New York, 1946. P. 405)

"... the evolutionist philosophies, with their easy, sweeping generalizations about the totality of things based on a few inaccurately reported facts? If we look closely we can see beneath the scientific cosmetics the old shrew Theology. Instead of the old Providence, we have the struggle for existence, the social organism or the clan vital; instead of the far-off divine event we have the goal of progress; instead of the triumph of the will of God we have the survival of the fittest, etc.--but the substance is the same: an elaborate system of apologetics for the powers that be." (Morris R. Cohen, The Faith of a Liberal, Henry Holt and Company, New York, 1946. P. 405)

"It was Spencer who first used the argument that as thought has arisen in the biologic struggle for existence, it must serve a useful biologic purpose. Despite the fact that this argument has been accepted by Mach, Avenarius, Simmel, James, Dewey, and others, we ought to have no hesitation in denying it any force or even relevance in any discussion as to the logical nature of truth. It is but a thinly veiled form of the old theologic argument that whatever Providence or Nature brings forth must have a useful purpose." (p. 38) "Many truths are indifferent to survival-value and many that are injurious nevertheless persist.... It should also warn us against the Spenceian assumption that because thought has been evolved in the struggle for existence it must necessarily serve some use or survival value." (p. 287) (Morris R. Cohen, Reason and Nature, 2nd edition, The Free Press, Glencoe, Ill., 1953)

"When Frazer, like Spencer and others, generalizes on the basis of myths and practices drawn from different peoples, without knowing the actual history or descent of these myths, his procedure is more absurd than that of a biologist who would generalize from the conduct of animals belonging to different phyla--e.g., the flying of bats, birds, and bees. Comparisons are not significant unless we are comparing facts of the same order; an outer likeness of legends is no guarantee of similar origin." (Morris R. Cohen, The Faith of a Liberal, Henry Holt and Company, New York, 1946. Pp. 422-423)
"Nevertheless, if social evolution means anything definite, it means not only that things change but that they change in a definite direction, and Spencer is the only one who has tried to formulate that direction as one from the simple to the complex, from the homogeneous to the heterogeneous. The philosophic test of this is to ask, "What is inherently simple? Shall we deny that legal procedure today is simpler than in the barbarian codes, with their very elaborate and complicated rules? Shall we say that English syntax today is more complex than that of inflected Anglo-Saxon?" To ask these questions is to show the vagueness, if not the falsity, of the Spencerian formula. In the end, the adherents of the evolutionary philosophy of history justify themselves by saying that they mean only that everything in human affairs has a cause. But if this is so, what philosophy of history is not evolutionary?"

"... the badness of our conduct towards inferior races ...."
(Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1891. P. 211)

"So long as it is felt by colonists that when they aggress on natives and get into quarrels, the home government will come to their defence, and so long as men who initiate aggressive policies, which end in the annexation of territory, get titles and honours, notwithstanding their unauthorised actions and even their disobedience to orders, the filibustering policy with all its atrocities will continue." (Herbert Spencer to F. W. Chasson, November 18, 1880, quoted in David Duncan, Life and Letters of Herbert Spencer, 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1908. Vol. 1, p. 292)

"The experience of many other travellers similarly show us that friendly conduct on the part of uncivilized races when first visited, is very general; and that their subsequent unfriendly conduct, when it occurs, is nothing but retaliation for injuries received from the civilized." (Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1891. P. 211)

"As indicating most clearly the state of national feeling, we have the immense popularity of Mr. Rudyard Kipling, in whose writings one-tenth of nominal Christianity is joined with nine-tenths of real paganism; who idealizes the soldier and glories in the triumphs of brute force; and who, in depicting school-life, brings to the front the barbarizing activities and feelings and shows little respect for a civilizing culture." (Herbert Spencer, Facts and Comments, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1902. P. 185)

During the Negro uprising in Jamaica: "Herbert Spencer emerged for the first time in his life, so far as I know, from the rigid seclusion of a silent student's career, and appeared in public as an active, hard-working members of a political organization. The American Civil War had drawn Mill for the first time into the public arena of politics; the Jamaica massacre made a political agitator of Herbert / Spencer. The noble human sympathies of Spencer, his austere and uncompromising love of justice, his instinctive detestation of brute, blind, despotic force, compelled him to come from his seclusion, and join those who protested against the lawless and senseless massacre of the wretched blacks in Jamaica." (Justin McCarthy, M.P., Reminiscences, 2 Vols., Chatto & Windus, London, 1899. Vol. 2, pp. 318-319)
"Whereas to all other evolutionary moralists the status belli has received a new consecration from the new ideas; whereas in Germany especially the "struggle for existence" has been made the baptismal formula for the most cynical assertions of brute egoism; with Mr. Spencer the same theories have bred an almost Quakerish humanitarianism and regard for peace. Frequently in these pages /The Data of Ethics/ does his indignation at the ruling powers of Britain burst forth, for their policy of conquest over lower races. Might, in his eyes, would hardly seem to be right, even when evolution is carried on by its means." (Anonymous /William James/, "Herbert Spencer's Data of Ethics," The Nation, Vol. 28, pp. 178-179, 1879. P. 179)

Spencer referred to colonialism, including British colonialism, as "... the cowardly conquest of bullet and shell over arrow and assegai, which demoralize the one side while slaughtering the other." ("Evolutionary Ethics," Popular Science Monthly, Vol. 52, pp. 497-502, 1898. P. 499.)

"You have, I doubt not, been in a chronic state of indignation daily intensified, by our doings in Afghanistan, in Zululand, in the Transvaal, and on a smaller scale in other places. There never was, I think, an opportunity for a more scathing exposure of the contrast between our Christian creed and pagan doings, our professed philanthropy and our actual savagery ...." (Letter from Herbert Spencer to Algernon Charles Swinburne, dated March 8, 1881, quoted in David Duncan, Life and Letters of Herbert Spencer, 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1980. Vol. 1, p. 293)

"Courtney's compulsory withdrawal from Parliament he lost an election as a Liberal, opposing British policy in South Africa made at first but little immediate difference in his life, for owing to blocking motions the opportunities of speaking at Westminster on South African affairs had been rare. Herbert Spencer wrote to suggest that he should devote a part of his leisure to writing a book entitled How we came by our Possessions ...." (G. P. Gooch, Life of Lord Leonard/ Courtney, Macmillan, London, 1920. P. 415)

Brinton says that for Spencer: "Monogamy as practiced in the British Isles is the fine flower of evolution." (Crane Brinton, English Political Thought in the Nineteenth Century, Ernest Benn, Ltd., London, 1933. P. 234)

"He /Spencer/ is to be remembered, further, as the man who in his age most consistently, most powerfully, and most unweariedly wrought against the criminal proclivity to wanton war—a service naturally little recognized at / home when his countrymen were collectively among the sinners ...." (J. M. Robertson, A History of Freethought in the Nineteenth Century, Watts & Co., London, 1929. Pp. 387-388)
Spencer was not a typical Victorian in the sense of believing in his country right or wrong. He speaks of England's "late aggressive activities" (Vol. II, p. 602). He gives examples of the increase of militancy in England (Vol. II, pp. 591-592). He compares the many violations of norms of morality by Christian Englishmen to the moral conduct of many primitive peoples (Vol. II, pp. 641-642).

Spencer was a thoroughgoing champion of freedom. He wrote scathingly of the callous, self-righteous way in which the British Empire was being extended. (See Vol. II, p. 239n.)

Spencer often takes a moral stand himself. In the chapter entitled "The Bias of Patriotism" (pp. 190-193), he presents as stinging an indictment of colonialism as can be found anywhere. (The Study of Sociology, Ann Arbor.)

"Now that the white savages of Europe are overrunning the dark savages everywhere; now that the European nations are vying with one another in political burglaries; now that we have entered upon an era of social cannibalism, in which the strong nations are devouring the weaker; now that national interests, national prestige, pluck, and so forth, are alone thought of, and equity has utterly dropped out of thought, while rectitude is scorned as "uncruitous;" it is useless to resist the wave of barbarism. There is a bad time coming, and civilized mankind will (morally) be uncivilized before civilization can again advance. Such a body as that which you propose, even could its members agree, would be pooh-poohed as sentimental and visionary. The universal aggressiveness and universal culture of blood-thirst will bring back military despotism, out of which, after many generations, partial freedom may again emerge." (Letter from Herbert Spencer to Moncure D. Conway dated July 17, 1898. Quoted in Moncure Daniel Conway, Autobiography, Memories and Experiences, 2 Vols., Houghton, Mifflin and Company, Boston, 1904. Vol. 2, p. 449)
"I had read in the printing office at Leesburg, Florida, in the year 1885-86, that Herbert Spencer had recently maintained that, according to the science of physics, it was impossible to pitch a curved ball. He knew not the seams on the ball and forgot the friction of the air. His was evidently a single-track mind. Ever after, I looked for the omitted factors, or the ones taken for granted and therefore omitted, by the great leaders in the science of economics. That was how I became an economic skeptic." (John R. Commons, Myself, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1934. P. 28)

"Every one of them [his father’s cronies], in that Eastern section of Indiana [around Winchester], was a Republican, living on the battle cries of the Civil War, and everyone was a follower of Herbert Spencer, who was then the shining light of evolution and individualism. Several years later, in 1888, I was shocked, at a meeting of the American Economic Association, to hear Professor Ely denounce Herbert Spencer who had misled economists. I was brought up on Hoosierism, Republicanism, Presbyterianism, and Spencerism." (John R. Commons, Myself, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1934. P. 8)
"If societies were all of the same species and differed only in their stages of growth and structure, comparisons would disclose clearly the course of evolution; but unlikelihoods of type among them, here great and there small, obscure the results of such comparisons. Again, if each society grew and unfolded itself without the intrusion of additional factors, interpretation would be relatively easy; but the complicated processes of development are frequently re-complicated by changes in the size of the social aggregate is all at once increased or decreased by annexation or by loss of territory; and now the average character of its units is altered by the coming in of another race as conquerors or as slaves; while, as a further effect of this event, new social relations are superposed on the old. In many cases the repeated over-runnings of societies by one another, the minglings of peoples and institutions, the breakings up and reaggregations, so destroy the continuity of normal processes as to make it extremely difficult, if not impossible, to draw conclusions.... Hence we may infer that out of the complex and confused evidence, only the larger truths will emerge with clearness. While anticipating that certain general conclusions are to be positively established, we may anticipate that more special ones can be alleged only as probable." (Principles, Vol. II, pp. 242-3, N.Y., 1899)

"Again, the comparative and analytical methods which are applicable enough to people in a primitive stage of existence, who have no history, in the proper sense, fail when we come to people who have become conscious of their common life and of the significance of it. The ancient Hellenes or the modern English can hardly be traced in the same way as "the peaceful Arafuras."" (David Ritchie, The Principles of State Interference, Swan Sonnenschein & Co., London, 1891. P. 76)

"Thus was laid the beginning of what came to be known as the "comparative method," [speaking of Spencer's project leading to the volumes of Descriptive Sociology] which consisted in the utilization of customs and ideas gathered from many places and periods, to substantiate genetic schemes arrived at by speculation." (Alexander A. Goldenweiser, History, Psychology, and Culture, Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., Ltd. London, 1935. Pp. 125-126)


Speaking of Spencer's utilization of the comparative method, Goldenweiser finds "no adequate motivation for his procedure seems extant in either biographic or auto-biographical sources." This is the method of science. Spencer had absorbed it. What does Goldenweiser want?
"Every society differs specifically, if not generically, from every other. Hence it is a peculiarity of the Social Science that parallels drawn between different societies, do not afford grounds for decided conclusions—will not, for instance, show us with certainty, what is an essential phenomenon in a given society and what is a non-essential one." (Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1873. P. 92)

"But now before trying to explain these most involved phenomena, we must learn by inspection that the relations of co-existence and sequence in which they stand to one another. By comparing societies of different kinds, and societies in different stages, we must ascertain what traits of size, structure, function, etc., are associated. In other words, before deductive interpretation of the general truths, there must come inductive establishment of them." (Principles, Vol. I, pp. 442-3. 3rd ed. N.Y., 1910)

"Confidence in the use of ethnographic and other primitive evidence is heightened by the reflection that it produces results which have withstood the tests of reality as these have been developed in experience. These results are at the same time a justification of the science of society. The credit of this demonstration of results belongs, above all, to Herbert Spencer, and can never be taken from him. It has worked out, in brief, to a conception of society as a unified whole—as a great entity, self-maintaining and self-perpetuating, something more and greater than the sum of its parts, whose evolution and life are susceptible of investigation, whose forms pass from phase to phase, from the most primitive up to the most sophisticated ...." (William Graham Sumner and Albert Galloway Keller, The Science of Society, Vol. 3, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1929. Pp. 2193-2194)

"Here a passing reference must be made to Herbert Spencer, whose contribution to the thought of our subject [the comparative method] has been as considerable as it has been later ignored." (E. E. Evans-Pritchard, The Comparative Method in Social Anthropology, L. T. Hobhouse Memorial Trust Lecture No. 33, University of London, The Athlone Press, London, 1963. P. 6)
"A minor issue, but one that loomed large in Spencer's mind, was the question of priority. While there is no doubt about chronological priority [as between Comte and Spencer], the evidence for intellectual borrowing is indecisive. It is not difficult to understand why some individuals were struck by the similarities in the two systems, and in the classifications. What is certain is that Spencer was willing to say a great deal about Comte's philosophy without any real knowledge of his works, that he appropriated various terms from Comte, and that his thinking was directly influenced by the controversy—in the development of his psychology, in his definition of evolution, and even in his choice of title for his system. His oversensitivity on questions of priority and independence and, possibly, his fear of Positivism as a competing intellectual and political synthesis gave the debate an intensely personal tone which tended to confuse the issues and annoy some of his friends." (Sydney Eisen, "Herbert Spencer and the Spectre of Comte," The Journal of British Studies, Vol. 7, pp. 48-67, 1967. P. 66)

"And here we may now see what M. Comte has not failed, though under another head /Philosophie Positive, Vol. vi, p. 612/, to point out, viz., the great philosophic value of this conception as applied to true concrete science even of the most complex character, /where the ideas of co-existence and sequence become the two fundamental categories to which all phenomena are assigned. Some of the readers of Herbert Spencer, who brings this conception forward prominently in his philosophy, may imagine that these categories were original with him, and may therefore be interested to know that they had been previously recognized by Comte." /Spencer was probably introduced to them by reading John Stuart Mill's A system of Logic, where they occur, undoubtedly derived from Comte./ (Lester F. Ward, Dynamic Sociology, 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. Vol. I, pp. 109-110)

"In the third volume of the Cours, Comte had adopted deBlainville's distinction between "static" and "dynamic" points of view. The first view considers elements in their relations of simultaneous connections; the second concerns the laws of their joint evolution. In Comte's sociology, these perspectives were converted to mean the conditions of existence of social structure (statics) and the movement of social progress or evolution (dynamics). It was not simple ill-fortune that Spencer's first major work was entitled Social Statics (1850). The evidence that Spencer had not read Comte before 1852 is irrefutable; but Spencer had read Mill's Principles of Political Economy (1848), which included the concepts "statics" and "dynamics" without notation, and unconsciously assimilated the term." (Robert Alun Jones, "Comte and Spencer: A Priority Dispute in Social Science," Journal of the History of Behavioral Sciences, Vol. 6, pp. 241-254, 1970. P. 248)

"Comte, and not Mr. Spencer, was the author of the antithesis between the industrial and the militant types of society. Comte did more than merely point out this antithesis; he often developed it; he even exaggerated it." (Gabriel Tarde, The Laws of Imitation, translated from the French by Elsie Clews Parsons, Henry Holt & Company, New York, 1903. P. 303n.)
"Spencer's claim to independence from Comte appears justified both historically and doctrinally." (p. 217) "In short, Spencer's disclaimers of Comtian influence, though violent, was nonetheless warranted; and recent scholarship has for the most part not repeated with Spencer the mistake made, for example, in the case of Taine of inferring historical derivation from a few very general resemblances." (p. 219) (Walter M. Simon, European Positivism in the Nineteenth Century, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 1963)

"... they alone, of all the thinkers of the world, have the merit of having carried their generalizations from the phenomena of inorganic nature up to those of human action and social life. Of all the philosophers that humanity has forth, these two alone have conceived and built upon the broad principle of the absolute unity of Nature and her laws throughout all their manifestations, from the revolutions of celestial orbs to the rise and fall of empires and the vicissitudes of social customs and laws. This grand monistic conception is the final crown of human thought, and was required to round out philosophy into a form of symmetry, whose outlines, at least, admit of no further improvement." (Lester F. Ward, Dynamic Sociology, 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Comp any, New York, 1894. Vol. 1, pp. 142-143)

"To find the true explanation of how Spencer came to choose Social Statics as the title of his first book, it is necessary to go to the revised edition of that work published in 1892, where in a footnote to page 232 he says he met with the phrase in Mill's 'Political Economy,' Mill himself crediting it to another writer, which other writer, though Spencer did not know it, was Auguste Comte. It thus happens that, notwithstanding his strenuous efforts to disclaim all influence of Comte, three of the leading terms of his philosophy, social statics, sociology and altruism, were Comtean terms." (Lester F. Ward, "Herbert Spencer's Autobiography," Science, Vol. 19, pp. 873-879, 1904. P. 876)

"To define his own ideas upon this matter, he wrote an article on "The Classification of the Sciences," perhaps the key to his entire system. Classification at once brought him into conflict with the similar attempt of Auguste Comte. Indeed Auguste Laugel, writing in La Revue des deux Mondes, described Spencer as an unconscious follower of Comte. This aspersion had to be answered; today the answer is appended to the article on classification, and rightly." (Julian M. Drachman, Studies in the Literature of Natural Science, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1930. P. 358)

"In living beings, ... Structure and Activity are bound up with each other within the due limits of intensity and duration peculiar to each case. Their structure is only developed, and indeed is only preserved, by the appropriate degree of activity. The extent and the complexity of the one correspond to those of the other, as we rise through the scale of beings." (Auguste Comte, System of Positive Polity, 4 Vols., translated by John Henry Bridges, Longmans, Green and Co., London, 1879. Vol. 2, p. 277)
Tell Cara she is pronounced to be quite wrong about Miss Martineau's rendering of Comte. Herbert Spencer, who never praises but upon compulsion and who has no knowledge of the original to help him, says that it appears to him perfectly lucid, and that the difficulty lies in the matter, not in the form. (Letter from George Eliot to Charles Bray dated February 6, 1854. Quoted in Charles S. Haight, The George Eliot Letters, 7 Vols., Yale University Press, New Haven, 1954. Vol. 2, p. 140, 140n.)

On the other hand it is hard to agree entirely with Spencer in his attempt to prove his complete independence of Comte and his fundamental divergence from the views of the latter. Rather it seems that one may accept the verdict of Michel L'Ide de l'Etat, p. 462 that, "Il ne suit pas que les Principes de Sociologie puissent être sincèrement regardés comme un livre original, par quiconque a lu les Opuscules i.e., early essays of Comte. Toutes les idées, directrices, et jusqu'a la méthode de Spencer se trouvent dans les Opuscules. Comte a trace les cadres: Spencer n'a fait que les remplir." (Harry Elmer Barnes, "Some Typical Contributions of English Sociology to Political Theory," The American Journal of Sociology, Vol. 27, pp. 289-324, 1921. P. 292)

That Comte made so slight an impression on the mind of New England was due, no doubt, to the current influence of transcendentalism with its metaphysical backgrounds. Although eager young intellectuals like John Fiske might accept it while awaiting a more adequate evolutionary philosophy, the country was not yet ripe for Positivism. When that time came it was Spencer rather than Comte who became the master of American intellectuals--Spencer and in a lesser degree John Stuart Mill. (Vernon L. Parrington, Main Currents in American Thought, Vol. 3: The Beginnings of Critical Realism in America: 1860-1920, Harcourt, Brace & Co., Inc., New York, 1930. P. 197)

I was amused by the applause of the Comtists. It is droll to see them taking the proof that religions have all arisen from ancestor worship as justification of the "religion of humanity." Hereafter I shall have to point out how odd it is that Comte should have proposed a rehabilitation of ancestor worship at the very time when our emancipation from it is becoming tolerably complete! (Letter from Herbert Spencer to Edward L. Youmans dated September 9, 1877. P. 337) Quoted in John Fiske, Edward Livingston Youmans

To me he does not seem to make it at all clear that in his admitted early reading of Mill's "Logic" he cannot have seen the sections which set forth Comte's attitude on sociology. (J. M. Robertson, Modern Humanists Reconsidered, Watts & Co., London, 1927. P. 195)
"The disciples of M. Comte think that I am much indebted to him; and so I am, but in a way widely unlike that which they mean. Save in the adoption of his word 'altruism,' which I have defended, and in the adoption of his word 'sociology,' which because there was no other available word (for both which adoptions I have been blamed), the only indebtedness I recognize is the indebtedness of antagonism." (Auto. I, 445-6)

"Harrison's reply restates his belief in Comte's influence on Spencer: "The aim, the method, the ground plan of both are practically the same." The terms "sociology," "social statics," "synthesis," and "social organism," introduced by Comte and used by Spencer, are cited." (Robert Alun Jones, "Comte and Spencer: A Priority Dispute in Social Science," Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences, Vol. 6, pp. 241-254, 1970. p. 251)

"Spencer's claim to independence from Comte's influence, though violent, was nonetheless warranted; and recent scholarship has for the most part not repeated with Spencer the mistake made, for example, in the case of Taine of inferring historical derivation from a few very general resemblances." (p. 219) (W. M. Simon, European Positivism in the Nineteenth Century, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, N.Y., 1963)

"We have, therefore, in the writings of Comte the primary division of the laws of social physics into the two great sub-sciences, social statics and social dynamics, the former of which studies the laws of co-existence--the status of society--while the latter studies those of succession--its movement." (Vol. 1, p. 128). "... he regards the study of what he denominates the development or evolution of society as the main object of sociology." (Vol. 1, p. 129) (Lester F. Ward, Dynamic Sociology, 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894)

"Comte employed an organismic analogy, the basis of most previous and succeeding functionalist positions, to elaborate his description of social statics. In this connection he introduced the terms "social anatomy," "social organism," and "social organization." Znaniecki attributes this introduction to Spencer. "In Politique Positive Comte succumbed, as Spencer was to do a number of years later, to the temptation to render the biological analogy in terms of specific (and quite incomparable) structures." (Marvin Harris, The Rise of Anthropological Theory, Thomas Y. Crowell Company, New York, 1968. P. 63)

"Previous to writing his "Study of Sociology," Mr. Spencer seems to have acquainted himself better with the Comtean system, and, as a consequence, he speaks of certain parts of it in a much more respectful tone (chap. xiv)." (Lester F. Ward, Dynamic Sociology, 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. Vol. 1, p. 144n.)
"The economic and political theories of the radical group that founded the Westminster Review had a fascination for him, a fascination which is illustrated by his refutations of them as well as by his adoption of many of their attitudes and methods. So, too, he was gripped by the overweening ambition of Comte's attempt to revise life, knowledge, and philosophy from the ground up. His associates --John Stuart Mill, George Elliot, George Henry Lewes, Harriet Martineau--were all more or less Comtists." (Julian M. Drachman, Studies in the Literature of Natural Science, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1930. P. 334)


"It requires only a little thoughtful attention to the speculations of Mr. Spencer and M. Comte to see that they are radically unlike, not only in the details of doctrine, but in their ostensible aims." (Chauncey Wright, "The Philosophy of Herbert Spencer," in Philosophical Discussions, pp. 43-96, Henry Holt and Company, New York, 1877. P. 91. First appeared in The North American Review, April, 1865)

Spencer, speaking of the notion that he was a Comtean: "... for, though I am quite ready to encounter the prejudices raised by opinions which I hold, I do not like to bear the odium of opinions which I do not hold." (Letter from Herbert Spencer to E. L. Youmans dated October 28, 1863. Quoted in John Fiske, Edward Livingston Youmans, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. P. 152)

"It will be remembered that Comte fathered sociology to guide men in the construction of a better society; Spencer, in contrast, wanted sociology to demonstrate that men should not interfere with the natural processes going on in society." (Nicholas S. Timasheff, Sociological Theory: Its Nature and Growth, third edition, Random House, New York, 1967. P. 41)

"... il ne suit pas que les Principes de Sociologie puissent être sincèrement regardés comme un livre original, par quiconque a lu les Opuscules de Comte. Toutes les idées directrices, et jusqu'à la méthode de Spencer se trouvent dans ces Opuscules. Comte a tracé les cadres: Spencer n'a fait que les remplir." (Henry Michel, L'Idée de l'État, Librairie Hachette et Cie., Paris, 1895. P. 462)

Jean Delvolvé, Réflexions sur la pensée comtienne, Paris, 1932. (Said by W. M. Simon to have connected Spencer to Comte via John Stuart Mill)
"... the usual French / regard for symmetry and disregard for fact ...." (Herbert Spencer, statement to be used for publication in the U.S. included in a letter from Spencer to Edward L. Youmans dated January 3, 1864. Quoted in John Fiske, Edward Livingston Youmans, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. Pp. 174-75)

"Herbert Spencer, tho he is very largely indebted to Comte for many of his views, and especially in their application to Sociology, has emphasized his dissent from him ...." (Noah Porter, "Herbert Spencer's Theory of Sociology: A Critical Essay," The Princeton Review, Vol. 56 (6 n.s.), pp. 268-296, 1880. P. 270)


"Spencer (Principles of Sociology) attempted to work out a system of sociology in the spirit of Comte's suggestion." (James Mark Baldwin, History of Psychology, 2 Vols., G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1913. Vol. 2, p. 100n.)


"M. Comte asserts as his first principle, that the causes of phenomena are beyond the reach of the human faculties, and that all which is accessible to us is their LAWS, or as he explains the term, their constant relations of succession or of similarity." (John Stuart Mill, A System of Logic, Harper & Brothers, Publishers, New York, 1846. P. 209)
"What is Comte's professed aim? To give a coherent account of the progress of human conceptions. What is my aim? To give a coherent account of the progress of the external world. Comte proposes to describe the necessary, and the actual, filiation of ideas. I propose to describe the necessary, and the actual, filiation of things. Comte professes to interpret the genesis of our knowledge of nature. My aim is to interpret, as far as it is possible, the genesis of the phenomena which constitute nature. The one end is subjective. The other is objective. How then can the one be the originator of the other?" (Auto. II, 488)

"... writers whose philosophy had its legitimate parent in Hume, or in themselves, were labeled "Comtists" or "Positivists" by public writers, even in spite of vehement protests to the contrary. It has cost Mr. Mill hard rubbings to get that label off; and I watch Mr. Spencer, as one regards a good man struggling with adversity, still engaged in eluding its adhesiveness, and ready to tear away skin and all, rather than let it stick." (Thomas Henry Huxley, Lay Sermons, Addresses, and Reviews. D. Appleton and Company. New York, 1895. P. 150)
"We find, then, that rules of behaviour are not results of conventions at one time or other deliberately made, as people tacitly assume. Contrariwise, they are natural products of social life which have gradually evolved." (Herbert Spencer, The Principles of Sociology, Vol. 2, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1899. P. 216)


"He [Spencer] denies free will, as a matter of course; he despises hero-worship and the tendency to ascribe social changes to individual initiative rather than to "general conditions," and in every way tends to minimise the particular concrete man. Society drags the unit along in its fatal tow. Yet in the political writings of Mr. Spencer, with their intense and absolute reliance on individuals, we find the very opposite of this." (William James, "Herbert Spencer," The Critic, Vol. 44, pp. 21-24, 1904. P. 23)

"... the whole course of modern physiological discovery tends to show, with more and more clearness, that the vascular system, or apparatus for distributing commodities in the animal organism, is eminently under the control of the cerebro-spinal nervous centres—a fact which, unless I am again mistaken, is contrary to one of Mr. Spencer's fundamental assumptions. In the animal organism, Government does meddle with trade, and even goes so far as to tamper a good deal with the currency." (Thomas Henry Huxley, Preface to Critiques and Addresses, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1873. P. vii)

"However, Spencer's organismic view of society stood in disharmony with his ideology of extreme 'laissez-faire' in all matters (be it economics or educational policy or public health) because the organic analogy suggests the inevitability (if not desirability) of centralisation of control, and of the subjugation of the parts (that is to say, individuals) to the interests of the whole as perceived by the central organ. Spencer's theory of society should have led him to espouse some form of authoritarian collectivism, rather than a fundamental liberalism ..."). (Stanislaw Andreski, Review of Herbert Spencer, The Man versus The State, ed. by Donald Macrae, Man, Vol. 6, p. 313, 1971. P. 313)

D. G. Ritchie, in his book, The Principles of State Interference, is said to put forward "... an unaswerable confutation of Mr. Spencer on his own ground, as set forth in The Man versus the State, in this matter of actual political change. In the same breath he protests that societies cannot be changed by purposive action, and that modern legislators are really making such changes." (Reference to Ritchie, p. 47) (John M. Robertson, Modern Humanists, Swan Sonnenschein & Co., London, 1891. P. 254n.)
"Spencer, as everyone knows, protested with vehemence against this legislation [restraining competition between parts of society], but I have never been able to comprehend the biological grounds on which he based his protest. For if society is in reality an organism, society must apply restraints on the undue growth of its parts analogous to that co-ordinating mechanism which controls the growth of organs in the body." (William Bateson, "Biological Fact and the Structure of Society," The Herbert Spencer Lecture, Oxford, 1912. In William Bateson, F.R.S., Naturalist; His Essays & Addresses, by Beatrice Bateson, pp. 354-355, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1928. P. 349)

"If Governments "grow" very big and strong and fierce, why blame them? "For 'tis their nature to." They cannot help it, when they growl and fight and take to legislating in excess. You need not blame the legislators / nor the constitution-makers, because on your own thesis [he's addressing Spencer] they cannot make constitutions, however much they try. All is a growth. You might as well say to a man, "You must really make your head smaller; it is far too big for the rest of your body."" (David G. Ritchie, The Principles of State Interference, Swan Sonnenschein & Co., London, 1891. Pp. 46-47)

"Here then is the dilemma: (1) If the Government is a part of the organic structure of society, and if the social organism is altogether an organism, and strictly grows, and cannot be made, Governments, like everything else, must, by necessity, be left to fight it out. The fittest will survive. If the Government is fittest, it will get the better of the individual (to assume for the moment Mr. Spencer's antithesis between them); if the individual is fittest, he will get the better of Government. Societies with much developed Governments must fight it out with stunted Governments. The fittest will survive. Whatever is, is right; and the legislator can have no sins, because he is only a part of the great movement ...." (David G. Ritchie, The Principles of State Interference, Swan Sonnenschein & Co., London, 1891. P. 47)

"... interference is spoken of by Spencer as if Government was something outside the natural structure." (p. 48) "Here then is the dilemma: (1) If the Government is a part of the organic structure of society, and if the social organism is altogether an organism, and strictly grows, and cannot be made, Government, like everything else, must, by necessity, be left to fight it out. The fittest will survive. If the Government is fittest, it will get the better of the individual (to assume for the moment Mr. Spencer's antithesis between them); if the individual is fittest, he will get the better of Government. Societies with much developed Governments must fight it out with stunted Governments. The fittest will survive. Whatever is, is right ...." (p. 47) (David G. Ritchie, The Principles of State Interference, 4th edition, Swan Sonnenschein & Co., Limited, London, 1902)
"Mr. Spencer's final general position, as is well known, is that, as it was put by Mackintosh, "Constitutions are not made, but grow." There prevails an erroneous opinion, he says, "that society is a manufacture, whereas it is a growth." As Mr. [David G.] Ritchie points out [in The Principles of State Interference], this doctrine quashes the whole of Mr. Spencer's own impeachment of modern legislative tendencies, which is one continuous protest that men are manufacturing a constitution. If all society is a growth, and if growth is independent of the efforts of legislators, then over-legislation is a "growth," and there is no more to be said. There is no escaping this dilemma; and Mr. Spencer must just reconstruct his formula." (John M. Robertson, Review of The Principles of State Interference by David G. Ritchie, The National Reformer, Vol. 52, No. 16, pp. 253-254, April 19, 1891; Vol. 52, No. 18, pp. 285-286, May 3, 1891. P. 253)

"... Spencer, with all his logic and philosophic poise, never had his feelings under complete subjection to his reason. But secondarily, in the case of topics appealing to the feelings he unfortunately imbibed a whole series of prejudices during his early youth from which he was never able to free himself. Indeed, they were so strong that he did not attempt to overcome them, but rather gloried in them to the end of his life. This, however, was not the worst consequence. They blinded him to everything that was taking place in the world around him, to the extent that social movements, which, could he have seen it, were the natural outcome of the cosmical principles he had laid down, were regarded by him as the signs and omens of social degeneracy and as portending a relapse into barbarism." (Lester F. Ward, "The Career of Herbert Spencer," The Popular Science Monthly, Vol. 74, pp. 5-18, 1909. Pp. 7-8)

"In repelling Matthew Arnold's old charge against the English, of being lacking in ideas, he reprehends the "notion that effectual practice does not depend on superiority of ideas. This," he says, "is an erroneous notion. Methods that answer are preceded by thoughts that are true." (The Study of Sociology, p. 220 [British edition of 1873]) In another chapter of the same book, criticising Comte, he writes thus:--"When, for instance, he (Comte) speaks of 'the intellectual anarchy which is the main source of our moral anarchy'--when he thus discloses the faith ... that true theory would bring right practice; it becomes clear that the relation between the attributes of citizens and the phenomena of societies is incorrectly seen by him: the relation is far too deep a one to be changed by mere change of ideas." (The Study of Sociology, p. 329.) ... But here we find Spencer in one book falling into ... a contradiction, laying it down in one chapter that right or effectual practice results from true ideas, and in another that true ideas in no way ensure right practice." (John M. Robertson, Modern Humanists, Swan Sonnenschein & Co., London, 1891. Pp. 250-251)
"Spencer viewed society from the point of organic analogy, which lent no support whatsoever to his individualistic liberalism, and which should have led him to espouse some form of authoritarianism, whether of socialist or conservative variety." (Stanislav Andreski, The Uses of Comparative Sociology, University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1969. Pp. 173-174)

"He was dominated by two leading ideas which he expressed, iterated, and reiterated with almost fanatical zeal during sixty years of authorship. These two ideas were, first, in the sphere of politics, Liberty; secondly, in the sphere of science, Evolution. Such inconsistencies as marked his thought were due to the clashings of the corollaries of these two disparate principles. Of the two, his first love was Liberty; with this love he was born, and his early environment tended to foster it. His intellectual passion for Evolution was later and an acquired characteristic. He saw in Evolution the veritable tree of knowledge; but to him Liberty was the incomparably superior tree of life." (F. J. C. Hearnshaw, "Herbert Spencer and the Individualists," in The Social & Political Ideas of Some Representative Thinkers of the Victorian Age, ed. by F. J. C. Hearnshaw, pp. 53-83, George G. Harrap & Co. Ltd., London, 1933. P. 60)
"To every problem that Spencer handled he imparted some new aspect of order." (J. M. Robertson, Modern Humanists Reconsidered, Watts & Co., London, 1927. P. 171)

An anonymous reviewer of Spencer's Autobiography wrote: "... an intellectual system ... that has entered into the very fibre of the age ...." (Anonymous, "Review of Herbert Spencer's An Autobiography, The Athenaeum, No. 3993. pp. 583-584, May 7, 1904. P. 583)

"... the vast contributions of Spencer to philosophy and science which have had such a large share in making the evolutionary standpoint dominant everywhere." (James McKeen Cattell, "The Life and Letters of Herbert Spencer," The Popular Science Monthly, Vol. 73, pp. 283-285, 1908. P. 285)

"Within their own sphere the results of Mr. Herbert Spencer are far from sterile—the application of Biology to Political Economy is already revolutionizing the Science." (Henry Drummond, Natural Law in the Spiritual World, James Pott & Co., Publishers, New York, 1887. Pp. xiii-xiv)

"In newness of conception, unity of purpose, subtlety of analysis, comprehensive grasp, thoroughness of method, and sustained force of execution, this series of labors, I believe, may challenge comparison with the highest mental work of any age." (Edward L. Youmans, "Herbert Spencer and the Doctrine of Evolution," The Popular Science Monthly, Vol. 6, pp. 20-43, 1874-75, P. 42.)

"... Mr. Herbert Spencer's masterly elucidation of the chief phenomena of Life has placed philosophy and science under many obligations ...." (Henry Drummond, Natural Law in the Spiritual World, James Pott & Co., Publishers, New York, 1887. P. 146)

"... Mr. Spencer has given the world an amount of original exposition and of new and valuable truth that are probably without a parallel in the history of human thought." (Remarks prepared by Edward L. Youmans for the Spencer Farewell Dinner, but not uttered for lack of time, pp. 67-76. In Edward L. Youmans, editor, Herbert Spencer on the Americans and The Americans on Herbert Spencer, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1883. P. 68)
"Before the days of Spencer the world of scientific thought was mostly without form and void. . . . Guided by the pole star of Evolution, Spencer sailed out alone on the ocean of Speculation and discovered a new empire of Law." (George Jacob Holyoake, Bygones Worth Remembering, 2 Vols., T. Fisher Unwin, London, 1905. Vol. 2, pp. 34-35)

"Mill had made popular the theory of science as empirical. Spencer put content into this empirical view. Moreover, Spencer gave men a vista into infinite time and space. He really replaced the old religion since he told us where we come from, how we have developed, and what is the ultimate goal of civilization. In addition, he found in this country enthusiastic disciples. And John Fiske made the gospel of evolution respectable with his two heavy tomes on Cosmic Philosophy (1874) and his repeated exposition of that gospel." (Morris Raphael Cohen, American Thought: A Critical Sketch, Collier Books, New York, 1962. P. 89. [first published by The Free Press, 1954])

"Accordingly, his [Spencer's] great contribution and his brilliancy, which dazzled the generation which corresponds to the last third of his life and filled the world with his fame, consisted not so much in the new concepts and epoch-making ideas which he brought into the world as in the infinite detail, the surprising richness of analysis and synthesis, ever improved by a most happy diction, with which he illumined every idea which he touched." (L. L. Bernard, "Herbert Spencer's Work in the Light of His Life," The Monist, Vol. 31, pp. 1-35, 1921. P. 6)

"... from the depths of his [Spencer's] own mind, he has formulated the laws of the universe, not merely in the simpler and better known departments of astronomy and physics, but throughout the new and unexplored realms of life, mind, and action." (Remarks prepared by Lester F. Ward for the Spencer Farewell Dinner, but left unspoken because of lack of time—the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher, who preceded Ward on the program, spoke longer than expected. Quoted in Edward L. Youmans, editor/ Herbert Spencer on The Americans and the Americans on Herbert Spencer, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1883. P. ??)

"Again, it is quite safe to say that his [Spencer's] system represents probably the most impressive production of a single human mind since the time of Aristotle .... When compared with the arid metaphysics of an Aquinas, a Kant, or a Hegel, its content and method appear most gratifying.... Further, there can be little doubt that for original productivity of mind Spencer is quite unequalled." (Harry Elmer Barnes, "Some Typical Contributions of English Sociology to Political Theory," The American Journal of Sociology, Vol. 27, pp. 289-324, 1921. P. 294)
"His system is not a digest, but an organon; not merely an analytic dissection, but a grand synthetic construction; not a science, but a coordination of the sciences; not a metaphysical elaboration, but a positive body of doctrine conforming to verifiable facts, and based upon the most comprehensive principle of Nature yet arrived at by the human mind." (Edward L. Youmans, "Herbert Spencer and the Doctrine of Evolution." The Popular Science Monthly, Vol. 6, pp. 20-48, 1874-75. P. 43.)

"No man ever formulated so large a number of new and brilliant truths; no man ever correlated all the facts of the universe, physical and spiritual, into so magnificent, so consistent, and so profound a synthesis." (Grant Allen, "Personal Reminiscences of Herbert Spencer," The Forum, Vol. 35, pp. 610-528, 1904. P. 611)


"We did not begin to understand ourselves as social beings until Herbert Spencer discovered the principle of social evolution and until Charles Darwin wrote his Descent of Man." (Thomas Nixon Carver and Henry Bass Hall, Human Relations, An Introduction to Sociology, D. C. Heath and Company, Boston, 1923. P. 21)

"The brilliancy of this concept [Spencer's formulation of evolution] and the comprehensive knowledge which Spencer brought to its defense, made a profound impression upon the intellectual world. It modified not only the thinking of scientists, but of theologians and literary men as well." (Thomas Nixon Carver, The Essential Factors of Social Evolution, Harvard Sociological Studies, Vol. 1, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1935. P. 105)

"Mr Spencer was also probably the first who defined in mechanical terms, applicable to cosmical, lifeless, and living phenomena alike, the process of development, adopting the term evolution." (John Theodore Merz, A History of European Thought in the Nineteenth Century, 6 Vols., William Blackwood and Sons, Edinburgh, 1912. Vol. 2, p. 355n.)
Passing on to positive considerations, it may be said that what we of today value most in him \( \text{Spencer} \) is the rich and ordered abundance of concrete data, of facts concerning the beginnings of social life." (Leopold von Wiese, Systematic Sociology on the Basis of the Beziehungslehre and Gebildelehre, adapted and amplified by Howard Becker, John Wiley & Sons, Inc., New York, 1932. P. 689)

Spencer "made greater additions to the sum of human knowledge than have ever been made by any other man since the beginning of the world ...." (John Fiske, Excursions of an Evolutionist. Houghton, Mifflin and Company. Boston, 1894. P.284.)

"The whole panorama of universal evolution is resplendent for variety and inclusiveness, and has aroused an admiration for philosophy in minds that never admired philosophy before." (William James, Memories and Studies, Longmans, Green, and Co., New York, 1911. Pp. 131-132)

"Above all, he \( \text{Spencer} \) has reduced the phenomena of life, of mind, of human thought and society and action, to common factors with all the rest of organic and inorganic nature." (Grant Allen, "The Gospel According to Herbert Spencer," Part I, The Pall Mall Gazette, April 26, 1890, pp. 1-2. P. 2)

"No man of his \( \text{Spencer} \)'s generation, or perhaps of his century, started a greater number of fruitful scientific theories in the most varied fields." (Arthur Kenyon Rogers, English and American Philosophy Since 1800, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1922. P. 150)

"... his \( \text{Spencer} \)'s genius for broad generalization and his tremendous capacity for stating abstract truth in concrete form enabled him to bring together into one articulate system ideas, doctrines, domains of experience, which had developed independently and had stood apart. This synthesis of the sciences brought to consciousness new problems and new clues. The broader relations thus revealed by mutual cross-reference between phases of experience hitherto isolated gave to scientific activity at once a new stimulus and a new leverage." (W. Rose, "Herbert Spencer as a Philosopher," Journal of Proceedings and Addresses of the Forty-Third Annual Meeting of the National Education Association, pp. 231-235, 1904. P. 233)

"... this doctrine of organic development and change or metamorphic evolution, which was, with its originators, Wallace and Darwin, a purely biological doctrine, was transported to the field of sociology by Spencer and applied with great power to all human institutions, legal, moral, economic, religious, etc. Spencer has taught the world that all social institutions are fluid and not fixed." (Robert Rives La Monte, Socialism: Positive and Negative, Charles H. Kerr & Company, Chicago, 1912. P. 19)
"He [Spencer] fills no chair in any great university, he bears no title from the English crown, he holds no high post of public honor, he boasts no classical scholarship, he speaks no language but his mother tongue, and yet, by a complete mastery of that tongue, and by the sheer power of vigorous and organized thought applied to an 'encyclopedic' acquaintance with all that is worth knowing in the world, he has forced his way into every department of human thought and action. He has invaded science, art, philosophy, literature, morals, and religion in a way and with an authority that have commanded respect and attention, until to-day the eyes of the whole thinking world are centered upon him."


"Gibbon lived to relinquish his pen in triumph at the end of years of devotion to his "History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire"—Mr. Spencer planned the history of the rise and growth of a mightier, a more magnificent, and more beneficent Empire—that of Universal Law—and for forty years he pursued his mighty story in every vicissitude of strength with unfaltering purpose, and lived to complete it amid the applause of the world and the gratitude of all who have the grand passion to understand Nature, and advance the lofty destiny of humanity." (George Jacob Holyoake, Bygones Worth Remembering, 2 Vols., T. Fisher Unwin, London, 1905. Vol. 2, pp. 22-23)

"Up to that moment, science was a mere collection of facts and rules, with no coherent body of governing truths, while the new conception of the unity of nature bound all these facts together in a web of causation. It seemed possible to write nature's history back to the primitive chaos, and one saw that all its phenomena, instead of being unrelated and produced by the Creator's personal whim, were parts of an unbroken chain of cause and effect. Suns and stars, plants and animals had followed one law of development from a common source, and man was also a part of this cosmic drama. Through all the vast sweep of time, from the primordial vapour to the multifarious world one knew today, one saw the various forms of nature evolving from previous forms.... Such was the great Spencerian vision that Fiske expounded at Harvard, with his own interpretations and amplifications." (Van Wyck Brooks, New England: Indian Summer, E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc., New York, 1965. P. 114)

"We are standing now on heights which his struggles and his labors won for us," wrote Durant, and "we seem to be above him because he has raised us on his shoulders." 179

"Again, it is quite safe to say that his [Spencer’s] system represents probably the most impressive production of a single human mind since the time of Aristotle .... When compared with the arid metaphysics of an Aquinas, a Kant, or a Hegel, its content and method appear most gratifying.... Further, there can be little doubt that for original productivity of mind Spencer is quite unequalled." (Harry Elmer Barnes, "Some Typical Contributions of English Sociology to Political Theory," The American Journal of Sociology, Vol. 27, pp. 289-324, 1921. P. 294)

"Spencer was not without honour in his own country, yet our national indifference to philosophy and to all systematic thinking, and the subserviency of a great part of our professed philosophers to the great German metaphysicians, have undoubtedly prevented his receiving from his countrymen during his lifetime the full measure of recognition that is due to his splendid services to science and philosophy." (Anonymous, "Herbert Spencer" Obituary, Nature, Vol. 69, pp. 155-156, 1903. P. 155)

"Mr. Spencer is one of the fortunate writers who, after spending years with the patience of a Benedictine friar in preparing enormous learned compendiums, can yet wield, as if for sport, a facile pen in the composition of sparkling articles for reviews." (Gabriel Compayre, Herbert Spencer and Scientific Education, translated from the French by Maria E. Findalyson, Thomas Y. Crowell & Co., New York, 1907. P. 18)

"There is hardly a general observation in all evolutionary theory which cannot be credited to Spencer." (Irving Goldman, "Evolution and Anthropology," Victorian Studies, Vol. 3, pp. 55-75, 1959. P. 58)

"Oppenheimer's judgment that Spencer "steered / the young sci-
ence back into the channel of the shallowest rationalism" (Oppen-
heimer, System der Soziologie, Vol. 1, p. 54) is indeed not wholly
false, but it is prejudiced and too severe. True, Spencer avoided
or even scorned every profound investigation. He who judges the
value of intellectual work by its profundity and its anticipations
of ineffable truth must find the philosopher of Derby trivial; he
always remains on the surface. But how magnificently the elements
of this superficial survey are integrated, how synthetically the
cosmic is viewed in relation to vital processes, to psychical and
social life! / By which I take von Wiese to mean that Spencer hab-
itaually explained social phenomena in terms of readily evident and
tangible factors instead of recondite ones like "absolute ideas,"
"zeitgeists," and the like. / / / / (Leopold von Wiese, Systematic
Sociology on the Basis of the Beziehungslehre and Gebildelehre,
adapted and amplified by Howard Becker, John Wiley & Sons, Inc.,

"In Spencer's case it is too early to speak thus definitely,
but all things point to the complete rejection of his political
ethics as outlined in "Social Statics" and perfected in his "Prin-
ciples of Ethics" and "Man Versus the State," while his cosmic
philosophy, which he regarded as little more than a / foundation
for the other, grows more solid with time, and is clearly seen to
be too massive for the flimsy superstructure that he sought to
erect upon it." (Lester F. Ward, "The Career of Herbert Spencer,"

"His mastery of all branches of human knowledge has been
justly styled "encyclopedic." His causality has never been e-
qualed. To him were thus secured the two essential condi-
tions for accomplishing the permanent object of philosophy--the syn-
thesis of science. Without the comprehensive survey which his
laborious investigations have secured for him, his great com-
bining powers would have been profitless; without those powers,
no museum of facts, however well learned, would have yielded
the broad principles of a cosmical philosophy." (Lester Frank
Ward, Dynamic Sociology, 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New
York, 1883, Vol. 1, p. 142)

Leopold von Wiese wrote in the preface of his Beziehungslehre
(1924): "Shortly after receiving my doctorate (University of Ber-
lin, 1902), I made a thorough study of Spencer in an effort to pre-
sent his system critically. / / / / (Leopold von Wiese, Zur Grundlegung
der Gesellschaftslehre: eine kritische Untersuchung von Herbert
Spencers System der synthetischen Philosophie (Jena: Fischer, 1906),
and in conscious opposition to his all-inclusive, 'cosmic,' social
philosophy, I conceived the principles fundamental to this work--
just twenty years ago. Even at that time my goal was to show sys-
tematically the interconnections of human society, the mutual de-
pendence of human beings, and how one man becomes Destiny, as it
were, to another." (Leopold von Wiese, Systematic Sociology on the
Basis of the Beziehungslehre and Gebildelehre, adapted and ampli-
Pp. 710, 710n.)
"... the synthetic system of Mr. Herbert Spencer—that colossal edifice slowly and painfully (and surely to its own detriment) constructed by the author apart from and almost independent of the professional learning of the schools—..." (Benjamin Kidd, Nineteenth Century, February, 1895)

"... the exponents of philosophy in England live in an old world of thought which has scarcely been affected by the influx of knowledge which the advancement of the lower sciences has brought." (Benjamin Kidd, Nineteenth Century, February, 1895)

"Herbert Spencer is second only to Chambers in the degree to which historians have denigrated his "scientific" status." (Robert M. Young, Darwin's Metaphor, Nature's Place in Victorian Culture, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1985. P. 91)

"The official thinker, we have seen, is swayed to evasion; but even the freelance runs the risk of being cowed into a semblance of conformity." (J. M. Robertson, A History of Freethought in the Nineteenth Century, Watts & Co., London, 1920. P. 214)


"It is no slight task to demonstrate that from force and matter have been evolved design, order, life, thought, emotion, will—the universe. It is no slight task to suppress the very protests of the human soul. The man who makes this first Herculean labor a mere preliminary of his enterprise must be in his own estimation a young god." (Anonymous, Review of Herbert Spencer's The Study of Sociology, International Review, Vol. 1, pp. 407-413, 1874. P. 409)

At Tufts College, between 1906 and 1909, "I found the clerk at the corner drugstore an interesting young medical student, who was prepared to discuss my scientific reading with me and who seemed to be acquainted with the whole of the writings of Herbert Spencer. I have since found Herbert Spencer to be one of the most colossal bores of the nineteenth century, but at that time I held him in esteem." (Norbert Wiener, Ex-Prodigy; My Childhood and Youth, Simon and Schuster, New York, 1953. P. 103)
"... Spencer does not deserve the neglect he has fallen into; many of his ideas are now being served up anew with only a patronizing nod by way of acknowledgement...." (Peter B. Medawar, The Art of the Soluble, Methuen & Co Ltd, London, 1967. P. 7)

"Spencer's criticisms of intellectualizing accounts of primitive thought, such as Tylor's, read somewhat like those of Evans-Pritchard and Gluckman, who, however include Spencer among the intellectualists." (J. D. Y. Peel, "Spencer and the Neo-Evolutionists," Sociology, Vol. 3, pp. 173-191, 1969. P. 189n.)


"It is a pity that Spencer is remembered almost exclusively for what his contemporaries objected to." (Philip Abrams, The Origins of British Sociology: 1834-1914, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1968. P. 152)

"Spencer's conceptions were rightly rejected as incompatible with evolutionary theories /by the succeeding generation/, and as misconceived formulations." (Ann Low-Beer, Herbert Spencer, Educational Thinkers Series, The Macmillan Company, London, 1969. P. 13)


Even one of Spencer's severest critics, Noah Porter, conceded ....: "We believe that most of the currency and plausibility which Spencer's materialistic Evolutionism and his antitheistic Agnosticism have gained with his confiding and admiring disciples has been reflected back from the imposing array of facts and instances that he has marshalled from his enormous reading and the brilliant hierarchies of his generalization. /Sic/ It is beyond all question that he has devised the most comprehensive and shortest way of answering many questions that has recently been invented, and therefore is admirably fitted to addle the weak and empty-headed and even intoxicate heads that are strong and self-confident." (Noah Porter, "Herbert Spencer's Theory of Sociology: A Critical Essay," The Princeton Review, Vol. 56 (6 n.s.), pp. 268-296, 1880. P. 293)
"The works of Mr. Herbert Spencer have probably aroused more opposition and elicited more criticism than those of any other living writer." (Charles Mercier, "Mr. H. Spencer's Classification of Cognitions," Mind, Vol. 8, pp. 260-267, 1883. P. 260)

I am inclined to believe that you will be accused of praising Spencer highly while you tend to overlook or play down some of his shortcomings. As a matter of fact, I feel this way myself about your paper (if you have leaned toward praise rather than adverse criticism it would be understandable; I have been criticized for doing the same thing with regard to Morgan). I felt that you had not given statements like the following the critical attention that I think they deserve:  

L.A. White

"But let us look at the ideas [of Herbert Spencer] with a straight face, even though this is never entirely an easy matter when dealing with one so full of his self-worth as Spencer." (Michael Ruse, Taking Darwin Seriously, Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 1986. P. 38)

Of Spencer's philosophy Medawar said: "... it is a philosophy for an age of steam...." (Peter B. Medawar, The Art of the Soluble, Methuen & Co Ltd, London, 1967. P. 40)

By the 1890s "Herbert Spencer had reached the stage of being much quoted and little read." (E. T. Raymond, Portraits of the Nineties, T. Fisher Unwin, Ltd., London, 1921. P. 111)

Haddon classed Spencer with the speculative writers. "But all these earlier attempts to discover a social science [including Spencer's] were speculative. The solid foundations of inductive sociology were laid by Bachofen, Morgan, McLennan, and notably by Rivers. (Alfred C. Haddon, History of Anthropology, The Thinker's Library, No. 42, Watts & Co., London, 1945. P. 126)

"At the time of their publication, the evolutionary pseudo-explanations of Spencer were obviously quite attractive to speculative intellects, but they proved useless as guides to scientific research." (Michael T. Ghiselin, The Triumph of the Darwinian Method. Dover Publications, Inc. Mineola, N.Y., 2003. P. 211)
"Thus, while Spencer held that each successive stage in the sequence of the family or in the ideology of ghosts is a result of a materialist process of selection, the selective factors do not necessarily or preponderantly act through the techno-economic, techno-environmental parameters." (This is false. Cf., for example, Spencer's account of the rise of democracy in Greece, or the origin of polygyny out of monogamy, for counter examples.) (Marvin Harris, The Rise of Anthropological Theory, Thomas Y. Crowell Company, New York, 1968. P. 215)

"The question is, whether he was a cultural materialist, that is, whether he systematically elaborated a theory which accounted for cultural differences and similarities in terms of techno-economic and techno-environmental conditions. Although Spencer came closer than Morgan to such a viewpoint, he failed ultimately to achieve it because at each approach, the principle of biological reductionism interceded ...." (Marvin Harris, The Rise of Anthropological Theory, Thomas Y. Crowell Company, New York, 1968. P. 215)
Re Victorianism: After speaking of slavery and the important role that slave labor played in the rise of civilization, Spencer remarks: "... we must abandon the point of view which our form of social life has accustomed us, and look at the facts from other points of view proper to other forms of social life." (Vol. 3, p. 465).

"Layer after layer of human perfection separates me from the central Africans who pursued Stanley with cries of "meat, meat!" (William James, "The Importance of Individuals," The Open Court, Vol. 4, pp. 2437-2440, 1890-91. P. 2438)

Spencer traces out the thread of successive differentiations and specializations in all aspects of culture.

While he almost never uses the word culture, it is evident that he is dealing with it. Unlike Tylor, who was interested in discrete culture traits, their origin, distribution, etc., and sometimes in the associations ("adhesions") between traits, Spencer was more interested in socio-cultural systems, their structure, function, and evolution.
Did Spencer avoid the use of the word culture because Tylor had coined and used it in 1871? Spencer apparently does not even mention Tylor in his Autobiography. We used the word "culture" in the Tylorian sense in Vol. 1, p. 468, but generally avoided it.

"And after having caused, as it ultimately must, the due peopling of the globe, and the bringing of all its habitable parts into the highest state of culture... the pressure of population..." (Herbert Spencer, "A Theory of Population, Deduced from the General Law of Animal Fertility," The Westminster Review, Vol. 57, pp. 468-501, 1852. P. 501)

"All organized results of social action—all supernorganic structures, pass through parallel phases. Being, as they are, objective products of subjective processes, ..." (Herbert Spencer, First Principles, FOURTH edition, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1890. P. 374)

Writing from Szczuki, Poland, when she was 19 and working as a governess to the Szczuki family, Marie Curie (then Manya Sklodowska) said: "At the moment I am reading: 1) Daniel's Physics, of which I have finished the first volume; 2) Spencer's Sociology, in French; 3) Paul Bera's Lessons on Anatomy and Physiology, in Russian." (Letter from Manya Sklodowska/Marie Curie to Henrietta Michalovska [later Mme. Jean Perrin] dated December, 1886. Quoted in Eve Curie, Madame Curie, Translated by Vincent Sheean, Doubleday, Doran & Company, Inc., Garden City, New York, 1938. P. 72)
"Such books as Tyler's "Primitive Culture," Lysle's "Geology," Draper, Lecky, Winwood Reade, Buckle, Tyndall, and Spencer all were among my father's shelves, and later were on mine, and most of them I had read. They had long been my companions." (Clarence Darrow, The Story of My Life, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1932. P. 250)
"I have now read the last No. of H. Spencer. The last volume, or last installment, of Principles of Biology I do not know whether to think it better than the previous number, but it is wonderfully clever, and I dare say mostly true. I feel rather mean when I read him; I could bear, and rather enjoy feeling that he was twice as ingenious and clever as myself, but when I feel that he is about a dozen times my superior, even in the master art of wriggling, I feel aggrieved. If he had trained himself to observe more, even if at the expense, by the law of balance, of some loss of thinking power, he would have been a wonderful man." (Letter from Charles Darwin to Joseph D. Hooker dated December 10, 1866. Quoted in The Life and Letters of Charles Darwin, edited by His Son, Francis Darwin, 2 Vols., Basic Books, Inc., New York, 1959. Vol. 2, p. 239)

"I beg permission to thank you sincerely for your very kind present of your Essays. Essays, Scientific, Political, and Speculative. I have already read several of them with much interest. Your remarks on the general argument of the so-called development theory seems to me admirable. I am at present preparing an Abstract /The Origin of Species/ of a larger work on the changes of species; but I treat the subject simply as a naturalist, and not from a general point of view, otherwise, in my opinion, your argument could not have been improved on, and might have been quoted by me with great advantage." (Letter from Charles Darwin to Herbert Spencer dated November 25, 1858. Quoted in The Life and Letters of Charles Darwin, edited by His Son, Francis Darwin, Basic Books, Inc., New York, 1959. Vol. 1, p. 497)

"Morgan also wrote to Darwin in disparagement of Spencer's work; and the ever friendly Darwin, busy with his plants, replied in a letter dated July 9, 1877, from Down, Beckenham, Kent: "I thank you kindly for your very kind, long and interesting letter. I write in fact merely to thank you, for I have nothing else to say. I have lately been working so hard on plants, that I have not had time yet to glance at H. Spencer's recent work, and hardly to do more than glance at your last work.... I am as great an admirer as any man can be of H. Spencer's genius; but his deductive style of putting almost everything never satisfies me, and the conclusion which I eventually draw is that "here is a grand suggestion for many years' work."" (Bernhard J. Stern, Lewis Henry Morgan: Social Evolutionist, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1931. P. 28)

"I always feel a malicious pleasure when a priori conclusions are knocked on the head: and therefore I felt somewhat like a devil when I read your / remarks of Herbert Spencer. I" ... "The discovery that nerves have been developed from processes of epithelial cells gives a very different conception of their genesis to that of Herbert Spencer, which makes them originate from the passage of nervous impulses through a track of mingled colloids...." (F. M. Balfour, A Treatise on Comparative Embryology, 2 Vols., London, 1880. Vol. 2, p. 644) (Letter from Charles Darwin to F. M. Balfour dated September 4, 1880. Quoted in Francis Darwin, editor, More Letters of Charles Darwin, 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1903. Vol. 2, pp. 424-425)
"Trollope in one of his novels gives as a maxim of constant use by a brickmaker—"It is dogged as does it." Tell 'ee what, Master Crawley;—and yer reverence mustn't think as I means to be preaching; there ain't nowt a man can't bear if he'll only be dogged. You go whome, Master Crawley, and think 'o that, and maybe it'll do ye a good yet. It's dogged as does it. It ain't thinking about it." (Giles Hoggett, the old Brickmaker, in The Last Chronicle of Barset, Vol. II, 1867, p. 188) --and I have often, and often thought that this is the motto for every scientific worker."

"I thank you very sincerely for your kind present of your First Principles. I earnestly hope that before long I may have the strength to study the work as it ought to be studied, for I am certain to find or re-find much that is deeply interesting. In many parts of your Principles of Biology I was fairly astonished at the prodigality of your original views." (Letter from Charles Darwin to Herbert Spencer dated December 9, 1867. Quoted in Francis Darwin, editor, More Letters of Charles Darwin, 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1903. Vol. 2, p. 442)

"It has also pleased me to see how thoroughly you appreciate (and I do not think that this is general with the men of science) H. Spencer; I suspect that hereafter he will be looked at as by far the greatest living philosopher in England; perhaps equal to any that have lived." (Letter from Charles Darwin to E. Ray Lankester dated March 15, 1870. In The Life and Letters of Charles Darwin, edited by His Son, Francis Darwin. 2 Vols., Basic Books, Inc., New York, 1959. Vol. 2, p. 301)

"In my 'Origin of Species' I have given a brief abstract of the facts bearing on this point, and have shown the influence of light on the colours of birds, and of residence near the sea on the lurid tints, of insects, and on the succulency of plants. Mr. Herbert Spencer has recently discussed with much ability this whole subject on general grounds." "The Principles of Biology,' vol. ii., 1866. The present chapters were written before I had read Mr. Herbert Spencer's work, so that I have not been able to make so much use of it as I should otherwise probably done." (Charles Darwin, The Variation of Animals and Plants under Domestication, 2nd ed., 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1892. Vol. 2, p. 270, 270n.)

"Herbert Spencer's conversation seemed to me very interesting, but I did not like him particularly, and did not feel that I could easily have become intimate with him. I think that he was extremely egotistical. After reading any of his books, I generally feel enthusiastic admiration for his transcendent talents, and have often wondered whether in the distant future he would rank with such great men as Descartes, Leibnitz, etc., about whom, however, I know very little. Nevertheless I am not conscious of having profited in my own work by Spencer's writings. His deductive manner of treating every subject is wholly opposed to my frame of mind. His conclusions never convince me: and over and over again I have said to myself, after reading one of his discussions, 'Here would be a fine subject for half-a-dozen years' work.' His fundamental generalisations (which have been compared in importance by some persons with Newton's laws!)—which I daresay may be very valuable under a philosophical point of view, are of such a nature that they do not seem to me to be of any strictly scientific use. They partake more of the nature of definitions than of laws of nature. They do not aid one in predicting what will happen in any particular case. Anyhow they have not been of any use to me." (The Autobiography of Charles Darwin, edited by his grand-daughter, Nora Barlow, Collins, London, 1958. Pp. 108-109)

In a paragraph added to the second edition of The Origin of Species which, in the Appleton edition (New York, 1864), was meant to be inserted on page 420, but which appeared instead as an addendum on pages 431-432, Darwin wrote: "... I should infer that probably all the organic beings which have ever lived on this earth have descended from some one primordial form, into which life was first breathed by the Creator."

"I have almost finished the last number of H. Spencer, and am astonished at its prodigality of original thought. But the reflection constantly recur to me that each suggestion, to be of real value to science, would require years of work." (Letter from Charles Darwin to Joseph D. Hooker dated June 30, 1866. Quoted in Francis Darwin, More Letters of Charles Darwin, 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1903. Vol. 2, p. 235)

"All forces throughout nature, as Mr. Herbert Spencer remarks, tend towards an equilibrium ...." "Mr. Spencer has fully and ably discussed this whole subject in his 'Principles of Biology,' 1864, vol. ii. ch. x." (Charles Darwin, The Variation of Animals and Plants under Domestication, 2nd ed., 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1892. Vol. 2, p. 130, 130n.)

"One of Darwin's most brilliant popularizers, Herbert Spencer, transformed Darwin's biological laws into social "laws" that made science say precisely what every conservative wanted said." (Eric F. Goldman, Rendezvous with Destiny, Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1963. P. 91)
"Though very shy, Wallace opened his own heart [to Darwin], and confessed a broken engagement. Between inquiries about East Indian pigs and Amazonian butterflies, Darwin administered comfort. Later Wallace married, and at length announced the birth of a son, whom he named "Herbert Spencer." Darwin congratulated him, hoped that "Herbert Spencer" would write better than his namesake, and in the next sentence begged Wallace to note down the date at which the child began to secrete tears." (William Irvine, Apes, Angels, and Victorians, McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., New York, 1955, P. 186)

In the first edition of First Principles (1862) Spencer had made no reference to several earlier articles of his whose ideas had been incorporated and elaborated in that book. "No clear evidence to the contrary standing in the way, there has been very generally uttered and accepted the belief that this work, and the works following it, originated after, and resulted from, the special doctrine contained in Mr. Darwin's "Origin of Species." (p. iii) Spencer goes on to point out that in "Progress: Its Law and Cause," published in the Westminster Review for April, 1857, and in "The Ultimate Laws of Physiology," published in the National Review for October, 1857, he had largely foreshadowed the evolutionism that was fully elaborated in First Principles, and that he had done so before the publication of The Origin of Species. But he concluded by saying: "I do not make this explanation in the belief that the prevailing misapprehension will thereby soon be rectified; for I am conscious that, once having become current, wrong beliefs of this kind long persist--all disproofs notwithstanding. Nevertheless, I yield to the suggestion that unless I state the facts as they stand I shall continue to countenance the misapprehension, and cannot expect it to cease." (p. iv) (Herbert Spencer, Preface to the 4th edition of First Principles, written in May, 1880, A. L. Burt Company, New York, n.d.)

"Now, however, that you have given the facts of the origin of the theory of evolution in their narrative form in a lecture to the Liberal Club in New York(?) in 1874, referring to the sources and their dates, there will be, one would think, no gainsaying your general assertion presumably, that Spencer preceded Darwin in formulating the theory of evolution--though, indeed, one must expect that with the usual perversity many will go on saying what they did before spite of its demonstrated untruth." (Letter from Herbert Spencer to Edward L. Youmans dated June 20, 1874. Quoted in John Fiske, Edward Livingston Youmans, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. P. 326)

"I have yours of October 8th, regarding the lecture in the Popular Science Monthly. I see many indications that it is doing pretty effectual work. It seems to have gone counter to current opinions regarding yourself and Darwin much more strongly than I was prepared for. I have had many letters and messages acknowledging indebtedness for its statements." (Letter from Edward L. Youmans to Herbert Spencer dated November 24, 1874. Quoted in John Fiske, Edward Livingston Youmans, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. P. 328)
"In the common speech of the day the word Darwinism is almost invariably employed as if it were absolutely synonymous with the word evolution: the one is treated as being at all points not only coextensive but also cointensive with the other. Two noteworthy results of this indiscrimination are: first, that Darwin is habitually regarded as the author of the modern doctrine of evolution at large; and, secondly, that this doctrine has, ever since the publication of his great work on the Origin of Species, become so intimately bound up with the special views therein contained, that by the correctness or incorrectness of those special views the whole theory of evolution is supposed to stand or fall."


"For example, we find the London Saturday Review remarking, in the course of an article on Prof. Tyndall's famous Belfast address, that "what Darwin has done for physiology, Spencer would do for psychology, by applying to the nervous system particularly the principles which his teacher had already enunciated for the physical system generally." (William Henry Hudson, "Herbert Spencer and the Synthetic Philosophy," The Popular Science Monthly, Vol. 41, pp. 1-16, 1892. P. 12)

"Not only is he {Spencer} thus reduced to the position of a mere aide-de-camp of Darwin ...." (William Henry Hudson, "Herbert Spencer and the Synthetic Philosophy," The Popular Science Monthly, Vol. 56, pp. 1-16, 1892. P. 12n.)

"Thus it appears that if any one man is to be looked upon as the immediate progenitor of a doctrine which, in common phraseology, may be said to have been to some extent in the air, that man is not he who first elucidated one factor of its process in one domain of phenomena—the biological; but rather he who first seized upon it as a universal law, underlying all the phenomena of creation; in a word, it is not Charles Darwin, but Herbert Spencer." (William Henry Hudson, "Herbert Spencer and the Synthetic Philosophy," The Popular Science Monthly, Vol. 41, pp. 1-16, 1892. P. 15)

The Saturday Review, in commenting on an address by John Tyndall, perpetuated the general misconception by saying: "What Darwin has done for physiology, Spencer would do for psychology by applying to the nervous system particularly the principles which his teacher (!) has already enunciated for the physical system generally." (Quoted in John Fiske, Edward Livingston Youmans, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. P. )

" ... he {Spencer} extends Darwin's hypothesis to the totality of phenomena ...." k (Count Goblet d'Alviella, The Contemporary Evolution of Religious Thought in England, America and India, translated by J. Moden, G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1886. P. 40)
"Most people imagine, I gather, that Mr. Spencer is a philosopher who has put into a higher and more abstract form Darwin's discoveries and theories. In short, they regard him as a disciple of Darwin... Nothing could be more absurdly untrue than to regard Mr. Spencer as in any way or in either department [organic evolution or evolution in general] a disciple of Darwin's. In the first place, as regards organic evolution, he was an avowed evolutionist long before the publication of Darwin's first hint on the subject." (Grant Allen, "Spencer and Darwin," Appleton's Popular Science Monthly, Vol. 50, pp. 815-828, 1896-97. P. 823. [reprinted from Fortnightly Review])

"Thus so far is it from being true that Mr. Spencer is a disciple of Darwin that he had actually arrived at the idea of organic evolution and of evolution in general, including cosmic evolution, planetary evolution, geological evolution, organic evolution, human evolution, psychological evolution, sociological evolution, and linguistic evolution, before Darwin had published one word upon the subject." (p. 825) "It is Spencer's Synthetic Philosophy certainly covered a vast world of thought which Darwin never even attempted to enter." (p. 826) (Grant Allen, "Spencer and Darwin," Appleton's Popular Science Monthly, Vol. 50, pp. 815-827, 1896-97. [reprinted from Fortnightly Review])

"He felt somewhat bitterly, though silently, in later life the injustice done him by the world, which accepted his word 'Evolution'—entirely his own, not in any way Darwin's—as well as individual phrases of his invention, such as "the survival of the fittest," and implicitly ascribed the whole credit of them to Darwin." (Grant Allen, "Personal Reminiscences of Herbert Spencer," The Forum, Vol. 35, pp. 610-628, 1904. P. 622)

"... of the men one thinks of instinctively as above all things writers and among the foremost of living writers, there were not many at Darwin's funeral. I saw neither Mr. Tennyson nor Mr. Browning, neither Mr. Froude nor Mr. Trevelyan, neither Mr. Ruskin nor Mr. Matthew Arnold. When I have mentioned Mr. Lecky, Mr. John Morley, and Sir Henry Maine, I have named all whom I saw who can be described as in the front rank. The exception to this remark is again that of a man at least as eminent in the domain of science as of literature, Mr. Herbert Spencer. That Mr. Spencer should take any part in, or even be present at, a religious ceremony might well surprise his friends. But his personal attachment to Darwin, his loyal admiration for him as a teacher, his strong wish to leave no mark of reverence unshown, overcame in the end his well-known scruples against ecclesiastical observances." (George W. Smalley, London Letters and Some Others, 2 Vols., Macmillan and Co., London, 1890. Vol. 1, p. 84)

"... When Herbert Spencer was trying to extend ideas derived from Darwin...." (Sir Oliver Lodge, Evolution and Creation, George H. Doran Company, New York, 1926. P. 21)
Darwin had explicitly recognized a primeval creation of life at the beginning of evolution: "Therefore I should infer that probably all the organic beings which have ever lived on this earth have descended from some one primordial form, into which life was first breathed by the Creator." (The Origin of Species, [what edition?], p. 431 [see also p. 424 for creationism]. Quoted in Abbot, p. 385. See also Darwin's Variation of Animals and Plants under Domestication, Vol. 1, p. 24.) Surely this was special creation, Abbot pointed out, and pressed the inconsistency: "If the arguments against special creation on which the development theory relies have any validity or logical force whatever, they are valid against the special creation of the primordial form or forms. The development theory is philosophically worthless, if it cannot altogether dispense with the help of that kind of agency, the assumption of which is its chief objection to the antagonistic theory." (p. 386) In reading Spencer's Principles of Biology, Abbot was unable to find in it a satisfactory account of how life began. He wrote: "When, however, we come to inquire what reply Mr. Spencer has really given to the first great question which a philosophical biology must answer, namely, What is the origin of life in the first instance? we find no definite reply of any sort in the volumes before us. There being but two conceivable replies to this question, special creation and spontaneous generation [did Spencer later show the speciousness of this dichotomy in the "Letter"?], we are bewildered to find that Mr. Spencer unequivocally repudiates the former, and somewhat evasively repudiates the latter, thus rejecting not only the popular view, but also the view necessitated by his own philosophy. Instead of trying to solve the problem of the first origin of life, he, like Mr. Darwin, ignores it altogether, --a procedure perfectly legitimate in the "scientist," but wholly illegitimate in the philosopher." (p. 389) It was in response to this challenge of his views regarding the origin of life in this review that Spencer wrote the "Letter" which was denied publication in the North American Review, but which Spencer later appended to subsequent editions of Principles of Biology. (See Francis Ellingwood Abbot, "Philosophical Biology," (a review of Herbert Spencer's Principles of Biology), The North American Review, Vol. 107, pp. 377-422, 1858)

In 1883, when Boas first turned his attention to ethnology, "The theory of evolution had just passed its majority [meaning that The Origin of Species had been published 21 years before, in 1859, while its application to man was only twelve years old (The Descent of Man having been published in 1871]." (Ashley Montagu evidently had no idea of Spencer's "Progress, Its Law and Cause," published in 1857.] (M. F. Ashley Montagu, "Karl Pearson and the Historical Method in Ethnology," Isis, Vol. 34, pp. 211-214, 1942-43. P. 211)

"Mr. Darwin will remain the illustrious Reformer of biology and the most distinguished naturalist of the age, but with Mr. Spencer will abide the honor of complete originality in developing this greatest conception of modern times, if not, indeed of all time." (Remarks prepared by Edward L. Youmans for the Spencer Farewell Dinner, but not spoken for lack of time, pp. 67-76. In Edward L. Youmans, editor, Herbert Spencer on The Americans and The Americans on Herbert Spencer, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1883. Pp. 75-76)
"In his introduction to the General Principles [sic] Spencer complained that Darwin had received credit for establishing biologic evolution, although, in fact, he had already revealed the truth several years before. And of course a great many people, particularly in the United States, believed him. Yet Spencer has all but disappeared from contemporary culture while the current scientific theory of biological evolution still has a firm, if partial, place for Darwin's theory of natural selection and admits and insists that the Origin was the foundation for all subsequent work. Scientifically, Spencer's theories on the subject were of no importance; they are entirely metaphysical, more complicated than Chambers' but no less naive. Spencer uttered a Law of Evolution; Darwin proposed a theory of the origin of species from pre-existent species." (Morse Peckham, "Darwinism and Darwinismism," Victorian Studies, Vol. 3, pp. 19-40, 1959. P. 26. Peckham is Associate Professor of English at the University of Pennsylvania, and is editor of the new Variorum edition of The Origin of Species.)

"Since the publication of Darwin's Descent of Man there has been a great sensation about the theory of the development of mind --essays in the magazines on Darwinism and Religion, Darwinism and Morals, Philosophy and Darwinism, all having reference to the question of mental evolution, and all proceeding on the supposition that it is Darwin's hypothesis. As no one says a word in rectification, and as Darwin himself has not indicated the fact that the Principles of Psychology was published five years before the Origin of Species, (Mr. Darwin mentioned the fact next year in the sixth edition of the Origin of Species, pp. xix, 428.) I am obliged to gently indicate it myself." (In a brief article, "just out," probably "Mental Evolution" in the Contemporary Review of June, 1871.) (Letter from Herbert Spencer to Edward L. Youmans dated June 3, 1871. Quoted in John Fiske, Edward Livingston Youmans, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. P. 267)

"Spencer's immense synthesis exerted tremendous influence on his contemporaries, but is practically forgotten now. He seized on the discovery of biological evolution by Darwin and built up a most elaborate system, half speculative, half encyclopaedic, on the basis of the potent new clue to the sequence of phenomena." (William Foxwell Albright, From the Stone Age to Christianity, second edition, Doubleday Anchor Books, Doubleday & Company, Inc., Garden City, N.Y., 1957. P. 89)

""Even a Taine could say that Spencer's merit consisted in his application of the Darwinian principles to the phenomena of nature and the mind--as if without the Origin of Species we should not have had a Synthetic Philosophy!"" (Otto Gaupp, Herbert Spencer, Stuttgart, 1897. Quoted in R. Didden, "A German Appreciation of Herbert Spencer," Westminster Review, Vol. 148, pp. 604-610, 1897. P. 609)

"With Darwin evolution was a biological law; with Spencer it was a cosmic generalization." (Ralph Barton Perry, Philosophy of the Recent Past, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1926. P. 29)
"Most people connect this great revolution in thought mainly with the name of Charles Darwin; but in that respect they are, to a great extent, mistaken. Darwin applied it only to organic life; but Spencer extended it to comprise the whole universe. To Darwin we owe only the minor principle of the origin of species by natural selection; to Herbert Spencer we owe the general doctrine of evolution as a whole. Darwin confined his attention almost entirely to the field of plant and animal life, or to human origins viewed purely from the anatomical standpoint; whereas Herbert Spencer taught us that still wider and deeper view of evolution which recognizes its actions in suns and worlds, in plants and animals, in minds and ideas, in social institutions and governments, in religions and morals, and in all the various products of human organization and human activity." (John Dietrich, The Fathers of Evolution and Other Addresses, The First Unitarian Society, Minneapolis, 1927. Pp. 73-74)

"Herbert Spencer never did quite forgive his contemporaries for overlooking his paternity of the new evolutionary movement. He was particularly chagrined because, having made the discovery, he felt that he had done so much more with it than Darwin." (Idus L. Murphree, "The Evolutionary Anthropologists: The Progress of Mankind," Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society, Vol. 105, pp. 265-300, 1961. P. 270)


"Toward the end of that book [The Origin of Species] Mr. Darwin looked forward to a "distant future" when the conception of gradual development might be applied to the phenomena of conscious intelligence. He had not then learned of the existence of such a book as the Principles of Psychology. In later editions he was obliged to modify his statement, and confess that, instead of looking so far forward, he had better have looked about him. I have more than once heard Mr. Darwin laugh merrily over this, at his own expense." (John Fiske, Edward Livingston Youmans, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. Pp. 104-105)

"The evolution which is now accepted as the true process of creation is the joint product of their [Darwin's and Spencer's] two unlike but concordant minds ...." (A. M. Fairbairn, "Herbert Spencer," The Contemporary Review, Vol. 85, pp. 1-11, 1904. P. 2)
"It is ... interesting to contrast Spencer's with Darwin's approach to the problem [of evolution], because it illustrates the difference between Darwin and his predecessors and contemporaries. Herbert Spencer's adoption of evolution (as illustrated in "The Development Hypothesis") was a theoretical deduction from the impossibility of accepting special creation, an argument of reductio ad absurdum without any observational objective basis from which inductive evidence could be derived." (Sir Gavin de Beer, Reflections of a Darwinian, Thomas Nelson and Sons Ltd, London, 1962. (Pp. 18-19)

"Herbert Spencer's adoption of evolution was a theoretical deduction from the impossibility of accepting special creation, an argument of reductio ad absurdum without any observational objective basis from which inductive evidence could be derived. [There follows a quotation from Spencer.] This is magnificent but it is not science. It may be contrasted with a passage from Darwin's Essay of 1844 ...." (Sir Gavin de Beer, "Charles Darwin," Proceedings of the British Academy, Vol. 44, pp. 163-183, 1958)

"I have called this principle by which each slight variation, if useful, is preserved, by the term Natural Selection, in order to mark its relation to man's power of selection. But the expression often used by Mr. Herbert Spencer of the Survival of the Fittest is more accurate, and is sometimes equally convenient." (Charles Darwin, The Origin of Species, 6th edition, John Murray, London, 1872. P. 49)

"Toward the end of the first edition of the "Origin of Species," published in 1859, Mr. Darwin looked forward to a distant future when the conception of gradual development might be applied to the phenomena of intelligence. But the first edition of [Spencer's] the "Principles of Psychology," in which this was so successfully done, had already been published four years before,--in 1855,--so that Mr. Darwin in later editions was obliged to modify his statement, and confess that, instead of looking so far forward, he had better have looked about him. I remember hearing Mr. Darwin laugh merrily over this at his own expense." (John Fiske, A Century of Science and Other Essays, Houghton, Mifflin and Company. Boston, 1899. P. 49.)

"In the future I see open fields for far more important researches. Psychology will be securely based on the foundation already well laid by Mr. Herbert Spencer, that of the necessary acquirement of each mental power and capacity by gradation." (Charles Darwin, The Origin of Species, 6th edition, John Murray, London, 1890. P. 428)
"With regard to the relations of positivism to Science my father [Charles Darwin] wrote to Mr. Spencer in 1875: "How curious and amusing it is to see what an extent the Positivists hate all men of science; I fancy they are dimly conscious what laughable and gigantic blunders their prophet [Comte] made in predicting the course of science."" (The Life and Letters of Charles Darwin, ed., by Francis Darwin, 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1904. Vol. 2, p. 328n.)

"Evolution may be considered as a fairly straightforward metaphysical theory with a long history which was not so much confirmed by the theory of natural selection as embarrassed by it. The difference between the two is indicated by the fact that Darwin himself did not use the word until the fifth edition of the Origin (1869), and then he appears to have used it with some hesitation, almost as if he did not quite know what he was talking about." (Morse Peckham, "Darwinism and Darwinisticism," Victorian Studies, Vol. 3, pp. 19-40, 1959. P. 23)

"Darwin is said to have discovered the Law of Evolution, according to which the universe is characterized by a steady growth in richness and complexity and excellence. Now Spencer formulated a Law of Evolution, but there is no such law in the Origin. In fact, in the fourth edition there is a brief but profoundly important passage at the beginning of Chapter Four in which Darwin specifically disclaims any knowledge of and any statements about Laws of Nature, which he clearly labels mental conveniences, or constructs. He is a scientist, not a moralist and not a metaphysician, and he knows it." (Morse Peckham, "Darwinism and Darwinisticism," Victorian Studies, Vol. 3, pp. 19-40, 1959. P. 20)

"The crux of the matter is revealed by comparing Spencer's essays and books with the Origin. In his introduction the General Principles [sic!] Spencer complained that Darwin had received credit for establishing biological evolution, although, if fact, he had already revealed the truth several years before. And of course a great many people, particularly in the United States, believed him. Yet Spencer has all but disappeared from contemporary culture while the current scientific theory of biological evolution still has a firm, if partial, place for Darwin's theory of natural selection and admits and insists that the Origin was the foundation for all subsequent work. Scientifically, Spencer's theories on the subject were of no importance; they were entirely metaphysical, more complicated than Chambers' but not less naive." (Morse Peckham, "Darwinism and Darwinisticism," Victorian Studies, Vol. 3, pp. 19-40, 1959. P. 26)

"... Herbert Spencer into whose empiricism Darwin inculcated the idea of 'evolution' as a special vaccine ..." (Leon Trotsky, The Basic Writings of Trotsky, edited by Irving Howe, Random House, New York, 1963. P. 375)
"... while the greatness of Darwin's work in itself, and its importance as a contribution to scientific thought, are acknowledged without hesitation, it has still to be remembered that that work was special and limited in character, and that with the general doctrine of evolution at large it had itself nothing whatever to do." (William Henry Hudson, An Introduction to the Philosophy of Herbert Spencer, revised edition, Watts & Co., London, 1906. Pp. 38-39)

"There has perhaps never been so original a thinker as Spencer, who has had such a hard struggle to get or keep possession of the credit due to his own ideas. Not only is he thus reduced to the position of a mere aide-de-camp to Darwin, but many of his critics are never weary in insisting, in spite of all disproof of their assertions, upon his vital indebtedness to Auguste Comte." (William Henry Hudson, An Introduction to the Philosophy of Herbert Spencer, revised edition, Watts & Co., London, 1906. P. 36n.)

"Thus it appears that if any one man is to be looked upon as the immediate progenitor of a doctrine which, in common phraseology, may be said to have been to some extent in the air—a "truth of science, waiting to be caught"—that man is not he who first elucidated one factor of its process in one domain of phenomena—the biological; but rather he who first seized upon it as a comprehensive law, underlying all the phenomena of the universe. In a word, it is not Charles Darwin, but Herbert Spencer." (William Henry Hudson, An Introduction to the Philosophy of Herbert Spencer, revised edition, Watts & Co., London, 1906. P. 39)

"What Darwin did was to amass an enormous number of facts from almost every department of biological science, and by the persistent labour, patient examination, and searching thought of many studious years, to establish, once and for all, not the reality of evolution, nor even the laws and conditions of evolution, but the operation of one of the main factors of evolution—a factor which, though it had till his time entirely eluded the scientific mind, was yet required to render comprehensible a vast array of phenomena otherwise without interpretation." (William Henry Hudson, An Introduction to the Philosophy of Herbert Spencer, revised edition, Watts & Co., London, 1906. P. 38)

"In the common speech of the day the word "Darwinism" is almost invariably employed as if it were absolutely synonymous with the word "evolution"; the one is treated as being at all points not only coextensive, but also cointensive with the other. Two notable results of this indiscrimination are: first, that Darwin is habitually regarded as the author of the modern doctrine of evolution at large; ...." (William Henry Hudson, An Introduction to the Philosophy of Herbert Spencer, revised edition, Watts & Co., London, 1906. P. 36)
"I am as great an admirer as any man can be of H. Spencer's genius; but his deductive style of putting almost everything never satisfies me, and the conclusion which I eventually draw is that "here is a grand suggestion for many years' work."" (Letter from Charles Darwin to Lewis H. Morgan, dated July 9, 1877. Quoted in Bernhard J. Stern, "Darwin on Spencer," The Scientific Monthly, Vol. 26, pp. 180-181, 1928. P. 181)

"The effect of Spencer's theory on continuous evolution throughout all nature was, first, to link man with the animal world in unbroken series, though it needed publication of Darwin's Origin of Species to give this doctrine a scientific foundation and a wide acceptance." (Walter Greenwood Beach, The Growth of Social Thought, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1939. P. 119)

"I dare say you will think me a foolish fellow, but I cannot resist the wish to express my undounded admiration of your article* ('Mr. Martineau on Evolution,' by Herbert Spencer, 'Contemporary Review,' July 1872.) in answer to Mr. Martineau. It is, indeed, admirable, and hardly less so your second article on Sociology (which, however, I have not yet finished); I never believed in the reigning influence of great men on the world's progress; but if asked why I did not believe, I should have been sorely perplexed to have given a good answer. Every one with eyes to see and ears to hear (the number, I fear, are not many) ought to bow their knee to you, and I for one do." (Letter from Charles Darwin to Herbert Spencer dated June 10, 1872. Quoted in The Life and Letters of Charles Darwin, edited by His Son, Francis Darwin, 2 Vols., Basic Books, Inc., New York, 1959. Vol. 2, p. 344)

"The great law of competition, of which natural selection is the most important subordinate law, finds here another extensive application, which Mr. Darwin had overlooked, but which did not escape the vigorous generalizing powers of Mr. Spencer. This he characterizes as "the truth that each species of organism tends ever to expand its sphere of existence—to intrude on other areas, other modes of life, other media; and, through these perpetually recurring attempts to thrust itself into every accessible habitat, spreads until it reaches limits that are, for the time, insurmountable."") (Lester F. Ward, Dynamic Sociology, 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. Vol. 1, p. 174)

"I am glad to receive to-day an advertisement of your book [The Study of Sociology]. I have been wonderfully interested by the articles in the Contemporary. Those were splendid hits about the Prince of Wales and Gladstone. I never before read a good defence of Toryism." [Probably re Spencer's passage, on p. 395 of same edition: "The desirable thing is that a growth of ideas and feelings tending to produce modifications shall be joined with a continuance of ideas and feelings tending to preserve stability."] (Letter from Charles Darwin to Herbert Spencer dated October 31, 1873. In More Letters of Charles Darwin, edited by Francis Darwin, 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1903. Vol. 1, p. 351)
"For wide and immediate influence Spencer must come before even Darwin." (William James, "Herbert Spencer," The Critic, Vol. 44, pp. 21-24, 1904)

In a small biography of Darwin for the series of "English Worthies" edited by Andrew Lang for Longman's, Grant Allen had taken pains to point out the contributions of Darwin's predecessors and contemporaries to the development of the theory of evolution. Spencer wrote to Allen: "I have all the more reason to thank you for what you have done in setting forth in various places the relations in which I stand toward the evolutionary doctrine, because it is a thing which I have not been able to do myself, and which none of my friends have hitherto taken occasion to do for me. Of course, the continual misstatements publicly made or implied I have been, for these five-and-twenty years, obliged to pass in silence; because not only would it have been in bad taste for me to take any overt step in rectification of them, but doubtless by most I should have been regarded with alienated feelings rather than as one who had not been fairly dealt with. Of course, too, it has been out of the question for me to say anything about the matter to those of my friends who well know that a rectification is needed, and from whom one might fitly have been expected. To you, therefore, as having been the first to make any adequate representation of the state of the case, I feel all the more indebted." (Letter from Herbert Spencer to Grant Allen, dated October 22, 1885. Quoted in Grant Allen, "Personal Reminiscences of Herbert Spencer," The Forum, Vol. 35, pp. 610-628, 1904. P. 622)

"I fear Pangenesis is stillborn. Bates says he has read it twice and is not sure that he understands it. H. Spencer says the view is quite different from his (and this is a great relief to me, as I feared to be accused of plagiarism, but utterly failed to be sure what he meant, so thought it safest to give my view as almost the same as his), and he says he is not sure he understands it. Am I not a poor devil?" (Letter from Charles Darwin to Joseph Hooker, February, 1968. Quoted in Henshaw Ward, Charles Darwin and The Theory of Evolution, The New Home Library, New York, 1943. P. 349)


Darwin's view of organic evolution was stated thus: "That the innumerable species, genera and families of organic beings with which the world is peopled have all descended, each within its own class or group, from common parents, and have all been modified in the course of descent." (Charles Darwin, On The Origin of Species, first edition, John Murray, London, 1859, p. 457)
Spencer always enjoyed the admiration and esteem of Darwin and Huxley. (Give "hemp rope" and "dozen times" quotes here.) Huxley became known as 'Darwin's Bulldog,' but Spencer also, on more than one occasion, came to Darwin's defense in print when the latter, never a polemicist, chose to ignore it. E.g., when Darwin chose not to reply to Sir A. Grant's article, "Philosophy and Mr. Darwin," Contemporary Review, May, 1871. (See Duncan, The Life and Letters of Herbert Spencer, p. 149)

"Spencer was largely influential in making the idea of evolution a power in modern thought. Had it not been for the reinforcement that came from Darwin's application of the idea to a particular scientific problem, it is not certain how far he would have succeeded. But he was lucky in becoming possessed of the conception just at the moment when forces were preparing in the intellectual world for its favorable reception." (Arthur Kenyon Rogers, English and American Philosophy Since 1800, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1922. P. 150)


"Anthropology is the child of Darwin. Darwinism makes it possible. Reject the Darwinian point of view, and you must reject anthropology also." (R. R. Marett, Anthropology, Williams & Norgate, London, 1911. P. 8)


"Herbert Spencer laid aside his sense of the absurdity of ecclesiastical ceremony to attend [Darwin's funeral] ...." (Geoffrey West, Charles Darwin, a Portrait, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1938. P. 315)


"You ask what I think of Herbert Spencer's great book [undoubtedly *First Principles*]. I never attempted to read any except the last Part; & that *greatly* disappointed me--all words and generalities, like Sir H. Holland's writings, & I could grasp nothing clearly. But I suppose this is all my stupidity; as so many think so highly of this work." (Charles Darwin to Joseph D. Hooker, June 23, 1863. *The Correspondence of Charles Darwin* [no editor listed], Vol. 11, 1863. Cambridge University Press. Cambridge, 1999. P. 504)

"Outside the domain of religion, Darwinism had very little influence [in the Islamic area in the latter part of the 19th century]. The Origin of Species was still neither available in Arabic in a complete translation nor widely discussed. But the ideas of Comte, Mill, and Spencer were sweeping the educated Islamic world: they were more convenient for Muslim reformers than the ideas of Buchner and Haeckel." (Najm A. Bezirgan, "The Islamic World," in *The Comparative Reception of Darwinism*, ed. by Thomas F. Glick, pp. 375-387, University of Texas Press, Austin, 1972. P. 386)

"Spencer was gentle and admirable as always; and the reverence which all these men [Lewes, Huxley, Tyndall, etc.] feel for him was thoroughly apparent in the way in which they listened to every word that came out of his mouth." (p. 270) "There is no doubt that Spencer is the profoundest thinker of all these men but Darwin impresses me with his strength more than any man I have ever seen." (p. 271) (Letter from John Fiske to Abby Morgan Brooks, November 13, 1873. Quoted in Ethel F. Fisk [sic], *The Letters of John Fiske*, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1940)

"Open almost any book dealing with the problems of our time and you will find .... Darwin and Marx repeatedly coupled as the great pair whose conceptions revolutionized the modern world .... Darwin as the scientist and Marx as the sociologist." (Jacques Barzun, *Darwin, Marx, Wagner: Critique of a Heritage*, Doubleday & Company, Inc. Garden City, N.Y., 1958. P. 1.)
"The "Data of Ethics" is unquestionably the most valuable single part of the "Synthetic Philosophy," not for the reason that it makes ethics for the first time "scientific" (although this was probably its chief merit in its author's eyes), but because it gives voice with single energy to one man's ideals concerning human life." (William James, "Herbert Spencer," The Critic, Vol. 44, pp. 21-24, 1904. P. 23)

"The frankly teleological point of view from which, in this book "The Data of Ethics," Mr. Spencer contemplates the phenomena of Life generally, seems worthy of notice; since in his Principles of Biology he seems to have taken some pains to avoid "teleological implications." Cf. Pr. of Bi. c.v. p. 27." (Henry Sidgwick, "Mr. Spencer's Ethical System," Mind, Vol. 5, pp. 216-226, 1880. P. )

William James found The Data of Ethics "... decidedly the most noteworthy production of its energetic author." (Anonymous /William James/, "Herbert Spencer's Data of Ethics," The Nation, Vol. 28, pp. 178-179, 1879. P. 179)

"I was, on the whole, disappointed in Spencer's Data of Ethics, though, of course, it contains much that is acute and suggestive; but considered as the mature fruit of so distinguished a philosopher's thought, it seemed to me certainly crude and superficial. I have stated some of my objections to it in the last number of Mind." (Letter from Henry Sidgwick to Miss Cannan dated June 13, 1880. Quoted in Henry Sidgwick, A Memoir, by A. S. Arthur Sidgwick and E. M. S. [Eleanor Mildred Sidgwick], Macmillan and Co., Limited, London, 1906. P. 344)

"Readers of his works [Spencer's] had been led to suspect his loyalty to the established code of morals by frequent previous utterances. Such intimations were found in his earlier works which preceded his "Synthetic Philosophy," and throughout the latter this respect was occasionally manifested. It appeared strange that a writer whose works had cleaved so thoroughly the superstitions and traditions of his time, and acquired the reputation of being so radical and profound on most subjects, should evince so high a regard for the prevailing code of morals, and the world was prepared to expect in the "Data of Ethics" to find the elements, at least, of a new system of morality—a substitute for the existing system. In this it was destined to be disappointed." (Lester F. Ward, Dynamic Sociology, 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. Vol. 1, p. 215)
... he plants himself squarely upon utilitarian principles. Indeed, this book contains decidedly the best defense of utilitarianism that has yet been made. Its chief merit consists in the thorough and able manner in which the doctrine is pruned of its crudities, confined within its proper boundaries, and presented as a reasonable and respectable truth for acceptance."


In accordance with an announcement made at the cremation a sum of £1,000 was presented to the University of Oxford, by Mr. Shyamaji Krishnavarma to found a Herbert Spencer Lectureship. Three annual lectures have already been delivered—by Mr. Frederic Harrison in 1905, by the late Hon. Auberon Herbert in 1906, and by Mr. Francis Galton in 1907."

(Duncan, p. 483)

In accordance with his directions, his remains were cremated at Golder's Hill Crematorium, where Mr. Leonard Courtney delivered a brief but impressive address. As my friend, Mr. Hector Macpherson, and I walked away together afterwards, with the last words of the orator's tender farewell lingering in our ears, that sense of the utter indifference of cosmic things to our human losses and sorrows, which seldom fails to affect one at such a time, came upon us with singular force. The sun was shining brightly over the placid winter landscape; the air was crisp and clear.

"Nothing in Nature's aspect intimated That a great man was dead."

"... the way Spencer uses the collected ethnographic material of Descriptive Sociology is an excellent illustration of the working of his mind. The general laws which he finds are not drawn from a study of the facts gathered. The laws, so called, were formulated by Spencer through reflection upon the problem at issue, while the vast collection of factual material was then arranged to illustrate the laws. Thus the facts gathered are not the material for induction; they are examples or illustrations of assumed laws already reached by deduction." (Walter Greenwood Beach, The Growth of Social Thought, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1939. Pp. 128-129)

"Here [Viscount] Samuel quoted T. H. Huxley's famous remark: Herbert Spencer's idea of a tragedy is a deduction killed by a fact." [Samuel and Einstein had been talking about relativity.] Einstein's reply was recorded by Samuel: "Every theory is killed sooner or later in that way. But if the theory has good in it, that good is embodied and continued in the next theory." (Ronald W. Clark, Einstein, The Life and Times, Avon Books, New York, 1972. P. 481)

"Spencer was as complete a deductor as science has ever seen, documenting his preconceived theories by citing only the supporting evidence." (p. 408) (Melville J. Herskovits, "A Genealogy of Ethnological Theory." In Context and Meaning in Cultural Anthropology, ed. by Melford E. Spiro, pp. 403-415. The Free Press. New York, 1965)

"Growing complexity of subject-matter implies growing complexity of causation; and with recognition of additional factors comes proof of the inadequacy of factors previously recognised. This is manifest when tracing the filiation of ideas throughout the Principles of Sociology. The modifications resulted from evidence contained in the Descriptive Sociology and added to from various other sources. Simple induction now played a leading part." (Herbert Spencer, "The Filiation of Ideas," in David Duncan, Life and Letters of Herbert Spencer, Vol. 2, pp. 304-365, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1908. P. 354)

"His facts, in short, seem all collected for a purpose; those which help the purpose are never forgotten, those which are alien to it have never caught his eye." (William James, "Herbert Spencer," The Critic, Vol. 44, pp. 21-24, 1904. P. 22)

Spencer's Synthetic Philosophy "... pretended to be inductive, and was merely a series of deductions, based upon Spencer's prejudices and bolstered up by a mass of selected, and not always very carefully selected, evidence." (Raymond Mortimer, "Books in General," The New Statesman and Nation, Vol. 24, pp. 411-412, 1942. P. 411)
"Spencer has often been reproached that his system is based far more upon preconceived ideas than upon the observation of reality. Yet it must be admitted that he managed to marshal an enormous amount of facts to support his theories. If it be true that the latter were generally ahead of his experience, is not the same true to a certain extent of every scientific hypothesis? Never mind where a man gets his theories if he can establish them on experimental grounds. And Spencer, however biased and ignorant he may have been, took enormous pains to gather the experimental facts which he needed. Think only of the descriptive sociology whose publication under his direction began in 1873 and is not yet completed." (George Sarton, "Herbert Spencer, 1820-1920," Scribner's Magazine, Vol. 67, pp. 695-701, 1920, P. 698)

"As the carrying-out of this task single-handed was neither possible nor congenial, Spencer solved the difficulty by delegating the labour of gathering data to a number of assistants, who scanned the available literature on human society for illustrations of customs and beliefs. In this enormous task they were guided by the pigeon-holes prepared by Spencer on the basis of much preliminary thinking which was almost wholly deductive. Thus was laid the beginning of what came to be known as the "comparative method," which consisted in the utilization of customs and ideas gathered from many places and periods, to substantiate genetic schemes arrived at by speculation." (Alexander Goldenweiser, History, Psychology, and Culture, Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1933, Pp. 125-126)

"Dominant as political government is in the thoughts of all, it is naturally assumed to be the primary form of government; and this had been assumed by me, as by everybody. But the facts which the Descriptive Sociology put before me, proved that of the several kinds of control exercised over men the ceremonial control is the first. After recognition of this unexpected priority ...." (Herbert Spencer, "The Filiation of Ideas," in David Duncan, Life and Letters of Herbert Spencer, Vol. 2, pp. 304-365, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1908, P. 358)

In criticizing the mythologists of the day, Spencer speaks of "misinterpretation caused by analysis of the phenomena from above [i.e., deduction from modern, advanced societies to simpler earlier ones] downwards, instead of synthesis of them from below, upwards [i.e., induction from simpler to more complex societies]" (Vol. I, pp. 712-713).

Spencer delegated "the labor of gathering data to a number of assistants who scanned the available literature on human society for illustrations of customs and beliefs which Spencer had already constructed and arranged into stages, following, in the main, a deductive method." (pp. 214-215) (Alexander Goldenweiser, "Cultural Anthropology," In The History and Prospects of the Social Sciences, ed. by Harry Elmer Barnes, pp. 210-254. Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1925)
"If sociological generalizations are to pass out of the stage of opinion into the stage of established truth, it can only be through extensive accumulations of instances: the inductions must be wide before if the conclusions are to be accepted as valid. Especially while there continues the belief that social phenomena are not the subject-matter of a Science, it is requisite that the correlations among them should be shown to hold in multitudinous cases." (Principles, Vol. II, p. vi. New York, 1899; Spencer says this to defend himself against the criticism that was "overweighted by illustrative facts." In essence, he had been criticized for being too inductive.)

"Though my conclusions have usually been reached inductively, yet I have never been satisfied without finding how they could be reached deductively." (Auto. II, 431)

"Many have, I believe, recognized the fact that a cult of some sort, with its social embodiment, is a constituent in every society which has made any progress; and this has led to the conclusion that the control exercised over men's conduct by theological beliefs and priestly agency, has been indispensable. The masses of evidence classified and arranged in the Descriptive Sociology, have forced this belief upon me independently: if not against my will, still without any desire to entertain it." (Herbert Spencer, An Autobiography, 2 Vols., Watts & Co., London, 1926. Vol. 2, p. 467)

"But like Descartes once more, his method was deductive, or synthetic as he called it; it arose from happy subjective intuitions rather than from a deep knowledge of objective facts." (Hugh S. R. Elliot, Modern Science and the Illusions of Professor Bergson, Longmans, Green, and Co., London, 1912. P. 138)

The question of the extent to which Spencer derived his propositions about society deductively as opposed to inductively is an interesting one. It seems fair to say that a number of the statements that Spencer made about the social organization were enunciated as deductions from broader principles. But these broader principles were, it seems to me, inductions from a wider range of phenomena, of which those from human society were only a part, but a part nonetheless. Therefore Spencer's propositions cannot legitimately be said to be a priori or intuitive. The only basis of knowledge, Spencer believed, was experience. And from experience one could form certain general principles whose embodiment could then be pointed out in a large number of cases beyond those out of which it had been formulated.

"General truths again served as keys to the more special truths, and caused these to fall into coherent order." ("The Filiation of Ideas," In Duncan, p. 562)
"Having established the truth of his proposition on the basis of induction, he [Spencer] applies to it the test of deduction, which, of course, confirms the proposition. In his brilliant chapters entitled "Retrospect" and "Prospect," the hands of the great master are seen. If he holds in his left hand the weapon of induction, he is almost always certain to swing in his right that of deduction; and the two together drive home with relentless vigor the truth and the validity of the general proposition." (B. H. Meyer [University of Wisconsin], "Four Synthecists: Cross-Sections from Comte, Spencer, Lilienfeld, and Schaeffle," The American Journal of Sociology, Vol. 6, pp. 20-28, 1900. P. 21)

"The Descriptive Sociology had been for seven years in progress; making me gradually acquainted with more numerous and varied groups of social phenomena, disclosing truths of unexpected kinds, and occasionally obliging me to abandon some of my preconceptions." (Herbert Spencer, An Autobiography, 2 Vols., Watts & Co., London, 1926. Vol. 2, pp. 274-275)

"This is the method of many of Spencer's demonstrations, in sociology as in ethics; first to deduce his conclusion from some kind of first principles or general rule, and then to show how the conclusion is supported by empirical observation." (J. D. Y. Peet, Herbert Spencer, The Evolution of a Sociologist, Basic Books, Inc., Publishers, New York, 1971. P. 89)

Spencer criticized Sir Henry Maine for not making "the area of induction wide enough" (Vol. I, p. 714). Spencer points out that Maine did not make sufficient use of the available evidence on contemporary primitive peoples, and relied too heavily on data from early Barbarous people, like the Germans, in formulating his generalizations.

"All developed science may be characterised as "high priori" apparently Henry Sidgwick's clever phrase for a priori if the drawing of deductions from premisses positively ascertained by induction is to be so called." (Herbert Spencer, "Replies to Criticisms on The Data of Ethics," Mind, Vol. 6, pp. 82-98, 1881. P. 86)

"It has been seen how Herbert Spencer, one of the most "deductive" minds in the social sciences, claimed and believed that his was a completely inductive work." (Abram Kardiner and Edward Preble, They Studied Man, The World Publishing Company, Cleveland, 1961. P. 63)

Far from being a rarified theoretical treatise, the product of abstract reasoning, Principles of Sociology often amounts to a veritable catalog of ethnographic cases, piled one on another.

Spencer sought to show that actual events and changes in societies were manifestations or exemplifications of general principles, and therefore deducible from them.
"The love of completeness has been curiously shown from
the beginning by the habit of summarizing every chapter. I
could not leave a thing with loose ends: the ends must be
gathered together and tied up. This trait has been further
manifested in the tendency not to rest content with induc-
tion, but to continue an inquiry until the generalization
reached was reduced to a deduction. Leaving a truth in an
inductive form is, in a sense, leaving its parts with loose
ends; and the bringing it to a deductive form is, in a sense,
uniting its facts as all parts of one fact." ("The Filiation
of Ideas," in Duncan, p. 535)
"As with organic evolution, so with super-organic evolution. Though, taking the entire assemblage of societies, evolution may be held inevitable as an ultimate effect of the co-operating factors, intrinsic and extrinsic, acting on them all through infinite periods; yet it cannot be held inevitable in each particular society, or even probable." (Principles, Vol. I, p. 96. 3rd ed. N.Y., 1910)

"Evolution is commonly conceived to imply in everything an intrinsic tendency to become something higher. This is an erroneous conception of it. In all cases it is determined by the co-operation of inner and outer factors." (Principles, Vol. I, p. 95. 3rd ed. N.Y., 1910)

"... the tendency to progress from homogeneity to heterogeneity is not intrinsic but extrinsic. Structures become unlike in consequence of unlike exposures to incident forces." (Herbert Spencer, First Principles, 4th edition, Rand, McNally & Company, Chicago, n.d. P. 503. [17th page of Appendix])

"The doctrine of Evolution, currently regarded as referring only to the development of species, is erroneously supposed to imply some intrinsic proclivity in every species towards a higher form; and, similarly, a majority of readers make the erroneous assumption that the transformation which constitutes Evolution in its wider sense, implies an intrinsic tendency to go through those changes which the formula of Evolution expresses. But all who have fully grasped the argument of this work, will see that the process of Evolution is not necessary, but depends on conditions; and that the prevalence of it in the Universe around, is consequent on the prevalence of these conditions: the frequent occurrence of Dissolution showing us that where the conditions are not maintained, the reverse process is quite readily gone through. Bearing in mind this truth, we shall be prepared to find that the progress of a social organism toward more heterogeneous and more definite structures of a certain type, continues only as long as the actions which produce these effects continue in play. We shall expect that if these actions cease, the progressing transformation will cease." (Herbert Spencer, First Principles, 6th edition, Thinker's Library edition, Watts & Co., London, 1937. Pp. 522-523)

"Spencer's is to-day, the name to refute, to pulverize, to anathematize, to ridicule, by the opposition to the doctrine of evolution which in Darwin's case spoke through the Bishop of Oxford ...." (James Mark Baldwin, "Mr. Spencer's Psychology," The American Naturalist, Vol. 31, pp. 553-557, 1897. P. 554)

Hughes calls Spencer "... so pedestrian a thinker ...." (H. Stuart Hughes, Consciousness and Society, Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1961. P. 115)

"... it is the fashion now in England for inferior minds to sneer at Spencer," (Grant Allen, "Personal Reminiscences of Herbert Spencer," The Forum, Vol. 35, pp. 610-628, 1904. P.618)

"Great thoughts come from the heart. Spencer had very little heart, and he had no great thoughts." (Leo Tolstoi, quoted by Robert H. Lowie, "Tolstoi or Spencer?" The Liberal Review, Vol. 1, pp. 515-520, 1904. P. 515)

"But no one now supposes Spencer to have been a scientist. He was a salesman of ideas, and we no longer like his goods." (Crane Brinton, English Political Thought in the Nineteenth Century, Ernest Benn, Ltd., London, 1933. P. 239)

"Spencer supplements the thinness of his idea system by masses of data compiled from science, but does not use these for new scientific interpretation and so remains a philosopher." (Configurations of Culture Growth. A. L. Kroeber. University of California Press. Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1944. P. 98)

The anonymous reviewer of several books on philosophy (including William M. Lacy's An Examination of the Philosophy of the Unknown as Expounded by Herbert Spencer) wrote in The Nation (Vol. 38, p. 323, 1884): "The books examining or refuting Herbert Spencer now make an imposing library." (p. 323)
"Many critics, indeed, devote so much time and ability to demonstrating Spencer's incompetence, in this or that field of thought, that the reader is left with the impression that it must be a tower of strength which requires so many assaults." (J. Arthur Thomson--Herbert Spencer. J. M. Dent & Co. London, 1906, p. viii)

"From the popularity he has acquired in a dozen European countries one feels pretty certain that Mr. Herbert Spencer will be cited among the great philosophers of the future, yet I think his accomplishment small, his contribution to the sum of truth of slight importance." (Frank Harris, Contemporary Portraits, Second Series, Published by the Author, New York, 1919, P. 228) (By lowering others of greater talent and achievement, Harris sought to elevate himself.--RLC)

"... Herbert Spencer ... was really a very vague old gentleman whose Nonconformist assertiveness beguiled his generation into thinking that a loud voice speaks important truths." (Letter from Harold J. Laski to Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr., dated July 14, 1923. Quoted in Holmes-Laski Letters, The Correspondence of Mr. Justice Holmes and Harold J. Laski, 1916-1935, edited by Mark DeWolfe Howe, 2 Vols., Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1953. Vol. 1, p. 516)

Of Spencer, Julian Hawthorne, an unsympathetic and ill-informed critic said: "... after he has been hung out to dry in the winds of time, there will be little left of him ...." (Julian Hawthorne, Shapes That Pass, Memories of Old Days, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1928. P. 309)


"He [J. J. Thomson] also told me a story, which I am trying to verify, of Spencer saying that a theory X could not be true, as he had said the opposite in his Psychology and it was impossible to alter the plates!" (Letter from Harold J. Laski to Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr., dated October 4, 1925. Quoted in Holmes-Laski Letters, The Correspondence of Mr. Justice Holmes and Harold J. Laski, 1916-1935, 2 Vols., edited by Mark DeWolfe Howe, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1953. Vol. 1, p. 791)
"On the basis of such pronouncements / by Spencer, such as that evolution is not intrinsic, and that it proceeds only until an equilibriun is reached / as this, Spencer might have reached a working agreement with Ellsworth Huntington, J. Teggart, W. H. R. Rivers, and other modern ethnologists. Unfortunately, there is little evidence in the constructive elaboration of Spencer's system, of the insight and caution revealed in these passages." But nowhere in this volume does Goldenweiser consider Spencer's discussion of political evolution. (Alexander A. Goldenweiser, Early Civilization, F. S. Crofts & Co., New York, 1922. P. 337n.)

Spencer's "... sociological system—is incomplete, incoherent, imperfectly realised, and set forth with hesitations and confusions that are eloquent of intellectual uncertainty. In particular, when Spencer is asked (through his works) to say what sort of organism society is, or resembles, his various answers in their inconsistency and absurdities verge upon the comic." (F. J. C. Hearnshaw, "Herbert Spencer and the Individualists," in The Social & Political Ideas of Some Representative Thinkers of the Victorian Age, ed. by F. J. C. Hearnshaw, pp. 53-83, George G. Harrap & Co. Ltd., London, 1933. P. 73)
Descriptive Sociology is "... a pile of clippings made to order..." (Frederic Harrison, "Agnostic Metaphysics," The Nineteenth Century, Vol. 16, pp. 353-378, 1884. P. 364)

Gibson said of the seven tables in Descriptive Sociology, No. 1, "... they are of no use for any purpose whatever." (Alexander Gibson, Review of Descriptive Sociology, No. 1, The Academy, Vol. 5, pp. 27-29, 1875. P. 28)


"... Descriptive Sociology, perhaps the least successful of all Mr. Spencer's works. That work is a huge file of cuttings from various travellers of all classes, extracted by three gentlemen whom Mr. Spencer employed. Of course these intelligent gentlemen had little difficulty in clipping from hundreds of books about foreign races sentences which seem to support Mr. Spencer's doctrines. The whole proceeding is too much like that of a famous lawyer who wrote a law-book, and then gave it to his pupils / to find the 'cases' which supported his law." (Frederic Harrison, "Agnostic Metaphysics," The Nineteenth Century, Vol. 16, pp. 353-378, 1884. Pp. 363-364)

"The late nineteenth century saw a ferment of "social thought" penned by men who were intelligent and broadly educated but not yet ready to submit their ideas to objective and systematic testing. We think, for example, of the wealthy, strait-laced Englishman, Herbert Spencer, who had a corps of secretaries collecting unrelated facts from all corners of the earth while he independently / thought out what he believed were the laws of history." (Arnold M. Rose, Sociology; The Study of Human Relations, Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1956. Pp. 13-14)

"Aristotle was not satisfied to describe the constitution of Athens as it existed in his day; he introduced that description with an account of the development of the Athenian government down to that time; we must know the past evolution of an organism in order to appreciate clearly its present condition. He did in the second half of the fourth century B.C. what Herbert Spencer undertook in the second half of the nineteenth century, and Spencer's Descriptive Sociology, in spite of a more elaborate and systematic analysis, is not superior, as a synthesis, to Aristotle's Constitution of Athens." (George Sarton, A History of Science; Ancient Science through the Golden Age of Greece, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1952. P. 570)
"One of Frederic Harrison's remarks in this Pall Mall article reminds me of a little incident in my experience which may be worth preserving. In a preceding article he had alluded to Spencer's Descriptive Sociology as "a pile of clippings made to order." He now went on to say: "I have certainly cast no insinuations whatever on the three conscientious gentlemen who carried out Mr. Spencer's directions to tabulate 'all classes of facts'; but it is too much to ask me to believe either that they knew nothing of / Mr. Spencer's theories, or that they did not tabulate such facts as they judged would be most useful to him. One would as easily believe that when Mr. Gladstone's secretary is directed to tabulate electoral facts he has not the least idea whether the Premier is about to use them in favour of reform or against it." His remarks recall to me what happened one evening about twenty years ago, when I was dining at 37 Queen's Gardens with Spencer and his assistant, Dr. Richard Scheppig, a pleasant and accomplished German scholar, who compiled some parts of the Descriptive Sociology (among others the Mexican part, in which, by the way, are some grave errors). I happened to ask Dr. Scheppig for his opinion on some point involved in the doctrine of evolution, and I shall never forget his delicious reply, or think of it without laughing: "I do not know anything whatever about evolution; I am a historian!" (John Fiske, Edward Livingston Youmans, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. Pp. 388-389)

"This limitation upon his time, added to his earlier dislike for consecutive task reading, prevented him from having at his disposal a mass of concrete data and of statistical materials which would have done much to correct the a priori character of his thinking. In the later works on social subjects this deficiency was in some measure met by the large collection of data which his assistants gathered for him and which constituted the subject matter of the Descriptive Sociology. But all of this material was second hand to him in a double sense. It represented, in the first instance, the impressions of other men who often had preconceptions which warped their observational powers. Also it was selected by other men from the original sources for his own personal use and could not therefore represent his own critical choice." (L. L. Bernard, "Herbert Spencer's Work in the Light of His Life," The Monist, Vol. 31, pp. 1-35, 1921. P. 20)

"The feasibility of applying normal inductive methods to data scattered in space and time naturally varies with the scope desired by the author and the availability of reliable data. Durkheim was able to compare differences and trends in suicide rates because suicide is properly recorded. At the other extreme, one could have foreseen the lack of realism in Herbert Spencer's project for "making tabulated arrangements of historical data, showing the co-existence and succession of social phenomena of all order," which was to culminate in his proposed but never achieved Descriptive Sociology." (John Madge, The Origins of Scientific Sociology, The Free Press of Glencoe, Macmillan, New York, 1962. Pp. 537-538)

"I have made some use of these works [Descriptive Sociology], and it is my impression that they are much less known than they deserve to be." (Charles Horton Cooley, "Reflections upon the Sociology of Herbert Spencer." American Journal of Sociology, Vol. 26, pp. 129-145, 1920, p. 144)

"No words are needed to indicate the immense labour here bestowed, or the great sociological benefit which such a mass of tabulated matter done under such competent direction will confer. The work will constitute an epoch in the science of comparative sociology." (Anonymous, Review of Descriptive Sociology, Vol. 1, The English, The British Quarterly Review, Vol. 58, p. 306, 1873.

Youmans on his objectives in Germany: "... third, to get Spencer republished in German; fourth, to get a German student for Spencer to assist in carrying out his great sociological project, ..." (Letter from Edward L. Youmans to his sister, Eliza A. Youmans, dated October 21, 1871. Quoted in John Fiske, Edward Livingston Youmans, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. Pp. 284-285)


"Among our common friends I can tell you of Mr. Herbert Spencer as altogether prosperous in mind and body. You know how finely the Americans have behaved in providing him with a German amanuensis (over and above the English one) to help him in his historical inquiries? 1 The English compiler of the Descriptive Sociology, James Collier, was dealing with existing civilized races. E. L. Youmans, Spencer's American friend, offered to find funds to pay for the compiling and printing of it. Spencer declares that he secured the services of Dr. Richard Scheppig, a teacher at the Hofwyl School, through an advertisement (Autobiography, II, 266), but David Duncan says that it was through GHL. (Life and Letters of Herbert Spencer, 1908, p. 148.) And the plan is answering to his satisfaction." (Letter from George Eliot to Sara Sophia Hennell dated November 19, 1872. Quoted in Gordon S. Haight, editor. The George Eliot Letters, 7 Vols., Yale University Press, New Haven, 1955. Vol. 5, p. 328, 328n.)

"/Charles/ Peirce (of the Logic, you know) was so pleased with the article on Trophies that he bought the whole set of Descriptive Sociologies." (Letter from Edward L. Youmans to Herbert Spencer dated March 8, 1878. Quoted in John Fiske, Edward Livingston Youmans, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. P. 344)
"... the arrangement and superintendence of the Descriptive Sociology, which during the earlier stages occupied much time."

"... Mr. Spencer's own atlases of "Descriptive Sociology" the largest and most systematic collection of sociological material that has been made ...." (Franklin H. Giddings, The Principles of Sociology, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1911. P. 62)

(For a good discussion of the plan and purpose of Descriptive Sociology, as well as the division of labor between Duncan, Schep-pig, and Collier, see Youmans Preface to the American edition of The Study of Sociology.)

"So much information, encumbered with so little rubbish, has never been brought to bear on the development of English institutions." (E. B. Tylor, "Spencer's Descriptive Sociology." Nature, Vol. 8, pp. 544-547, 1873. P. 546.)

"Le peu d'usage qui a été fait de cette immense collection de faits bien établis et convenablement arrangés /Spencer's Descriptive Sociology/ est un grave reproche à notre science." (p. 43n.) Elsewhere Steinmetz calls Spencer the "... grand initiateur de la sociologie ...." (p. 91) (S. R. Steinmetz, "Classification des Types Sociaux," L'Année Sociologique, Vol. 3, pp. 43-147, 1898-99)

As early as 1898, S. R. Steinmetz observed about Spencer's Descriptive Sociology: "Le peu d'usage qui a été fait de cette immense collection de faits bien établis et convenablement arrangés est un grave reproche à notre science." (S. R. Steinmetz, "Classification des types sociaux et catalogue des peuples," L'Année Sociologique, Vol. 3, pp. 43-147, 1898-99. P. 43n.)

"It /Volume I of Spencer's Descriptive Sociology/ presents history as a social evolution, in which no factor is contemptible, because the social outcome of a nation's life is the resultant of a vast number of forces, each of which must be estimated for what it was in its day, not for what it would be now." (William Graham Sumner, Review of Volume I of Spencer's Descriptive Sociology, The Independent (New York), Vol. 26, No. 1328, p. 9, May 14, 1874. P. 9)

"In spite of disagreements with the technique and translations, however, I consider this enormous encyclopaedia [E. Torday's 1930 edition of Vol. 4 of Descriptive Sociology] of much value." (J. D. Unwin, Sex and Culture, Oxford University Press, London, 1934. P. 525)
"The work [Descriptive Sociology] is a gigantic one; its value, when complete, will be immeasurable; and its actual influence on the study of sociology, and help to that study, greater perhaps than any book yet published. It is a cyclopaedia of Social Science, but a cyclopaedia edited by the greatest of sociologists." (George W. Smalley, blurb appearing, without any bibliographic reference, at the back of Rudolph Eucken's The Fundamental Concepts of Modern Philosophic Thought, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1880. P. 306. Undoubtedly in other Appleton books too.)

"Spencer died in 1903 in his eighty-third year. By his will he constituted a trust [of 3 members] to continue the compilation and publication of his huge monographs on Descriptive Sociology. To carry out this trust he left the income of his investments (£13,000) and the income derived from the sale of his works. Thus the trustees had at their disposal an annual income of about £500." (Sir Arthur Keith, An Autobiography, Watts & Co., London, 1950. Pp. 427-428)

"But there remains a great deal in human history, which cannot be fitted into one or another of the columns of a folio of "Descriptive Sociology." If we analyse the elements of a people's life and separate them off in this way, we are apt to miss just what is most significant about them." (David G. Ritchie, The Principles of State Interference, Swan Sonnenschein & Co., London, 1891. P. 76)

"This [Descriptive Sociology, Vol. 1] is the first installment of a work which, although mechanical enough in form, is yet likely to prove practically so useful to sociologists, as to be not unworthy of the immense labour bestowed upon it by a man like Herbert Spencer." (Anonymous, Review of Descriptive Sociology, Vol. 1, The English, The British Quarterly Review, Vol. 58, p. 306, 1873. P. 306)

"... he [Spencer] and his colleagues deserve great praise (too seldom accorded) for the great collections of facts as to barbaric and modern life in the monumental "Descriptive Sociology" ...." (John Mackinnon Robertson, Buckle and His Critics, Swan Sonnenschein & Co., London, 1895. P. 383)

"No words are needed to indicate the immense labour here [in Descriptive Sociology, Vol. 1] bestowed, or the great sociological benefit which such a mass of tabulated matter done under such competent direction will confer. The work will constitute an epoch in the science of comparative sociology." (Anonymous, Review of Descriptive Sociology, Vol. 1, The English, The British Quarterly Review, Vol. 58, p. 306, 1873. P. 306)
"Though it is currently fashionable to discount his Principles of Sociology, this work contributed substantially to the definition of the subject matter of anthropology and provided the first outline of what has come to be known as the universal culture pattern, in addition to adding permanent though modest increments to our knowledge of particular aspects of culture, such as religion. Perhaps even more important in the long run has been the influence of his Descriptive Sociology. This work, so little known among sociologists that the author has encountered few who have even heard of it, inaugurated a commendable effort to organize and classify systematically the cultural data on all the peoples of the world for the advancement of cross-cultural research, and thus clearly foreshadowed the development of the present Human Relations Area Files." (George Peter Murdock, "Sociology and Anthropology," in For a Science of Social Man, edited by John Gillin, pp. 14-31. The Macmillan Company, New York, 1954. Pp. 15-16.)

"It is a pity, by the way, that the frame of these descriptions in Descriptive Sociology is so rigid and their size so awkward, but as they are, the published volumes contain an enormous amount of material and deserve greater recognition than they have ever received." (George Sarton, "Herbert Spencer, 1820-1920," Scribner's Magazine, Vol. 67, pp. 695-701, 1920. P. 698)

"Prices here /the French Riviera, where Spencer and Youmans had gone for a vacation/ are frightful. I told Spencer his frolic would turn out expensive. He replied, "It would merely make so much less to be left and spent on the Descriptive Sociology"—with which he is evidently getting tired." (Letter from Edward L. Youmans to his sister, Eliza A. Youmans, dated January 2, 1879. Quoted in John Fiske, Edward Livingston Youmans, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. P. 357)

"But the task of compiling Descriptive Sociology is one eminently fitted to be dealt with by Mr. Herbert Spencer's faculty of scientific organizing, and whatever criticisms may suggest themselves on particular points, there is at least a strong presumption that, on the whole, it could not be done better." (Anonymous, "Spencer's Descriptive Sociology," The Saturday Review of Politics, Literature, Science, and Art, Vol. 36, pp. 217-218, 1873. P. 217)

"His /Spencer's/ stupendous collection of materials known as the Descriptive Sociology, which he personally financed, and which is still much used, affords a strong testimonial to his devotion to inductive generalization. The fact that the inductive method, especially as based on anthropological materials, was applied so much earlier to sociology than to economics, or political science, is largely, if not mainly, due to the influence of Herbert Spencer." (L. L. Bernard, "Herbert Spencer: The Man and His Age," The South Atlantic Quarterly, Vol. 21, pp. 241-251, 1922. P. 250)
"... and the importance of the connexion between sociology and biology, which Mr. Herbert Spencer, both in his philosophical works and in the elaborate tabular statement of Social Facts which he had supervised, and which I earnestly recommend to your notice, is now expounding and illustrating [Descriptive Sociology, Vol. 1]. But the human element with which even Mr. Spencer has to deal is no such "meter" as that in which suns rest and planets move, or even as that terrestrial atmosphere whose composition we can analyse, and whose very storms we are learning to subject to law." (Lord Houghton, address to the British Social Science Congress, The London Times, October 2, 1873. P. 7)

"In his very suggestive little book on Education [p. 32], Mr. Spencer says, "The only history that is of practical value is what may be called Descriptive Sociology." I fear that if the dreary folios, which a British public, capable of consuming five editions of First Principles, has yet been unable to swallow, are a fair sample of this descriptive sociology, this branch of science can never have a very practical value in education. History with the human life taken out of it, dead, dried, and sliced up into columns, not even written in construable English, might indeed be "crammed up" for an examination, but with somewhat disastrous results on the intellect of the patient." (David G. Ritchie, The Principles of State Interference, Swan Sonnenschein & Co., London, 1891. Pp. 76-77)

"The President [Sir Francis Galton] felt sure that no one would have appreciated Dr. Tylor's memoir more justly, or would have welcomed it more warmly, than Mr. Herbert Spencer, whose efforts to erect a science of sociology upon an inductive basis were well known. Mr. Spencer, as we all remember, went to great cost, and much exerted himself to obtain a collection of the customs of all available nations, savage and civilised, arranged in an uniform and orderly manner for purposes of intercomparison. The result was the publication of an amount of material that filled four very large folio volumes. Unfortunately he had been obliged to delegate to others the task of compilation, and the work was not carried out as accurately as was desirable, or even as completely, notwithstanding its bulk." (Discussion following the presentation of E. B. Tylor's "On a Method of Investigating the Development of Institutions; Applied to Laws of Marriage and Descent," Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute, Vol. 18, pp. 242-289, 1889. Discussion on pp. 270-272. P. 270)

"... his [Spencer's] "Descriptive Sociology," wherein the chronological sequence of events is faithfully abided by; yet what one might call his historical blindness was appalling." (George Sarton, "Herbert Spencer, 1820-1920," Scribner's Magazine, Vol. 67, pp. 695-701, 1920. P. 699)
"Having, for the proper execution of the later volumes of my series [Principles of Sociology], to obtain information from multitudinous books, I was compelled [because a nervous breakdown left him "unable to read more than a very small amount daily"] to read by proxy, and employed assistants to extract and classify for me the materials I needed; the ultimate result being the publication of the eight folio volumes of "Descriptive Sociology," in which the classified compilations of facts are now available for others." (Herbert Spencer, Letter sent to Le Figaro, reprinted in Pall Mall Gazette, Vol. 55, No. 8606, p. 6, October 20, 1892. P. 5)

But the influence of Spencer in American anthropology hung on. As late as 1912, we find Wilson D. Wallis complaining that "... in more than one of the larger American universities, courses based on Spencer's Descriptive Sociology still flourish, and facile deductions of universal import out-Spencering Spencer himself still evolve, ...." (Wilson D. Wallis, "The Methods of English Ethnologists," American Anthropologist, Vol. 14, pp. 178-186, 1912. P. 181)

"The rigid distinction Spencer maintained between structure and function is nowhere more clearly seen than in the folio volumes of the Descriptive Sociology, where the structures and the functions of each society are detailed in columns on pages opposite one another." (J. D. Y. Peel, Herbert Spencer; The Evolution of a Sociologist, Basic Books, Inc., Publishers, New York, 1971. P. 182)

"In 1867 Herbert Spence conceived the idea of 'making tabulated arrangements of historical data, showing the co-existence and succession of social phenomena of all orders.' This resulted in the Descriptive Sociology of which the last volume was published in 1934. It may be doubted whether the general appreciation of the strenuous co-operative labour involved in the compilation of this work has been at all commensurate with the hopes of its originator. The method of tabulation has often been criticized and it probably appeals to few anthropologists to-day. Unfortunately it fails to satisfy some requirements which were better appreciated by the next notable English contributor to this problem of systematic inquiry. [E. B. Tylor] .... The method [employed by Tylor in "On a Method ..."] consisted in tabulating and classifying "the evidence found among between three and four hundred peoples, ranging from insignificant savage hordes to great cultured nations." It differed from Herbert Spencer's in making possible statistical reduction of the material collected. Diagrams illustrating the distribution and association of various customs were given, but the original data were not published then, or since, and without them it is impossible either to verify or extend the results reached." (G. M. Morant, "Cultural Anthropology and Statistics; a one-sided review of 'Sex and Culture' [by J. D. Unwin]", Man, Vol. 35, pp. 34-39, 1935. P. 34)

"The Descriptive Sociology had been for seven years (1867-1874) in progress; making me gradually acquainted with more numerous and varied groups of social phenomena, disclosing truths of unexpected kinds, and occasionally obliging me / to abandon some of my pre-conceptions." (Auto. II, 274-5)

The Trust which was established in accordance with Spencer's will, came to an end in 1934. In that year was also published the last (?) volume of the Descriptive Sociology, Vol. 15, on the Ancient Romans. The series, except for Vol. 15, consists entirely of extracts from published works. It remains an unknown and untapped lode of cultural information.

"... exhibiting sociological phenomena in such wise that comparisons of them in their coexistences and sequences, as / occurring among various peoples in different stages, were made easy, would immensely facilitate the discovery of sociological truths. (Auto. II, 264-5)

Spencer's will provided that the bulk of his assets be placed in trust for the continued publication of volumes of the Descriptive Sociology. Of volumes of this series were published after Spencer's death with these funds. During his life, the Descriptive Sociology represented a net financial loss to Spencer of almost 3,000 pounds (check this.)

Spencer was the first man to undertake an extensive cataloguing of world cultures abstracting information from available sources. This information appeared in 8 parts, all in royal folio, between 1873 and 1881. Thus he was the founder of systematic inductive comparative sociology.

"That for which he valued his [Spencer's] works most is described in a review of the "Descriptive Sociology," which he [Sumner] wrote for the Independent of May 14, 1874. "It presents history," he says, "as a social evolution in which no factor is contemptible, because the social outcome of a nation's life is a resultant of a vast number of forces, each of which must be estimated for what it was in its day, not for what it would be now." (Harris E. Starr, William Graham Sumner. Henry Holt and Company. New York, 1925. P. 345.)"
The tables in Volume 1 of Spencer's Descriptive Sociology on the English... are a sufficient answer to all disbelievers in the possibility of a science of history. Where the chronicle of individual lives often perplexes and mystifies the scholar, the generalisation of social principles from the chronicler's materials shows an order of human affairs where cause and effect take their inevitable course, as in Physics or Biology." (E. B. Tylor, "Spencer's Descriptive Sociology." Nature, Vol. 8, pp. 544-547, 1873. P. 546.)

Spencer wrote "I had long been conscious that when I came to treat of Sociology [in the writing of Synthetic Philosophy], ... there would be required an immense accumulation of facts so classified and arranged as to facilitate generalization." (Auto. II, 171) To do this he obtained the services of David Duncan, a young Scotsman.

"These evidences [derived from ethnographic data] were tabulated in the monumental Descriptive Sociology, which, so far as I know, nobody has since used for comparative purposes or would find it profitable to do so, on account both of its curious system of classification and the poverty of the ethnographic information at that period." (E. E. Evans-Pritchard, The Comparative Method in Social Anthropology, L. T. Hobhouse Memorial Trust Lecture No. 33, University of London, The Athlone Press, London, 1963. P. 7)
DETERMINISM


"You will see by the 'Fortnightly,' which you have not read, that Mr Spencer is very anxious to vindicate himself from neglect of the logical necessity that the evolution of the abstraction "society" is dependent on the modified action of the units; indeed he is very sensitive on the point of being supposed to teach an enervating fatalism." (Letter from George Eliot to Hon. Mrs. Ponsonby, February 11, 1875. Quoted in J. W. Cross, George Eliot's Life, 3 Vols., William Blackwood and Sons, Edinburgh and London, 1885. Vol. 3, p. 256)

"The men whose attention is directed chiefly to historical data will be inclined more and more to doubt the possibility of rapid social changes. They deal with series of phenomena which unfold themselves from century to century, from age to age, from epoch to epoch. These men are under powerful temptation to regard society as a mill of the gods, which grinds so exceeding slow that men cannot accelerate its motion. The principles of social economy which most impress them urge the conclusion that effort contemplating immediate social modification is an attempt to reverse the order of nature. They are likely to think of social forces as factors which, in some hundreds or thousands of years, will work out beneficent results. It will be hard for them to exercise saving faith in any programme of immediate social amelioration. Of this type of sociologists, Mr. Herbert Spencer is the most conspicuous living example." (Albion W. Small and George E. Vincent, An Introduction to the Study of Society, American Book Company, New York, 1894. Pp. 73-74)

In 1851 Spencer attended a course of lectures given by Professor Owen on comparative osteology, as the subject matter of the lectures bore on the subject of the development hypothesis, in which he was already deeply interested. (Auto. I, 368)

"He [Charles Kingsley] said amongst other things that he believed that man, as we know him, is by no means the highest creature that will be evolved. I took this as an admission of the development hypothesis; but am not sure that he meant it as such." (Herbert Spencer, journal entry for September 10, 1852. Quoted in An Autobiography, 2 Vols., Watts & Co., London, 1926. Vol. 1, p. 408)
In 1852 Spencer published his brief but well-known article, "The Development Hypothesis," in The Leader. In it Spencer rejected special creation and espoused the process of organic evolution through successive modifications. (Auto. I, 387)

"Years before the appearance of the Darwin-Wallace essay, and of the Origin, Herbert Spencer wrote on The Development Hypothesis. Although of course wanting the great motive power to evolution supplied by Natural Selection, this essay is a powerful and convincing argument for evolution as against special creation. It is astonishing that it did not produce more effect." (Edward Bagnall Poulton, "What Is a Species?", President's Address read at the Annual Meeting of the Entomological Society of London, January 20, 1904, and printed in the Proceedings of the Society, 1903, p. lxxvii; in Essays on Evolution 1889-1907, pp. 46-94, The Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1908. P. 36) The above-quoted passage is immediately preceded by: "In leaving the dogma of 'special creation', and the assumption of 'fixity of species' with which it is bound up, it is only right to point out how completely the logical foundations of both were undermined by the great thinker who has just passed away." (p. 58)

Differential Evolution

Spencer did not see a steady, uniform progression of culture: "Nor do we find that the diminution of incestuous connexions, preserves a constant ratio to social evolution" (Vol. I, p. 638, 1st ed.). "The evidence, then, does not allow us to infer, as we should naturally have done, that advance in the forms of the sexual relations and advance in social evolution, are constantly and uniformly connected" (Vol. I, p. 640, 1st ed.)
In 1851 G. H. Lewes "had brought with him a volume by Milne-Edwards, and in it for the first time I met with the expression—"the physiological division of labour." Though the conception was not new to me... yet the mode of formulating it was; and the phrase thereafter played a part in my course of thought." (Auto. I, 377)
"At this time /while he was working on the Pittsburgh Dispatch/ I had the fortune to discover Huxley and Tyndall and Herbert Spencer, whose introductory volume to his Synthetic Philosophy (First Principles) quite blew me, intellectually, to bits. Hitherto, until I had read Huxley, I had some lingering filaments of Catholicism trailing about me, faith in the existence of Christ, the soundness of his moral and sociologic deductions, the brotherhood of man. But on reading Science and Hebrew Tradition and Science and Christian Tradition, and finding both the Old and New Testaments to be not compendiums of revealed truth but mere records of religious experiences, and very erroneous ones at that, and then taking up First Principles and discovering that all I deemed substantial—man's place in nature, his importance in the universe, this too, too solid earth, man's very identity save as an infinitesimal speck of energy or a "suspended equation" drawn or blown here and there by larger forces in which he moved quite unconsciously as an atom—all questioned and dissolved into other and less understandable things, I was completely thrown down in my conceptions or non-conceptions of life." (Theodore Dreiser, A Book About Myself, Boni and Liveright, New York, 1922. Pp. 457-458)

"When I read Spencer I could only sigh. All I could think of was that nature would not or could not do anything for man, he must, if he could, do something for himself; and of this I saw no prospect, he being a product of these self-same accidental, indifferent, and bitterly cruel forces." (Theodore Dreiser, A Book About Myself, Boni and Liveright, New York, 1922. P. 459)


Frank Harris quotes Theodore Dreiser as saying to him: "About this time I read the 'Data of Ethics' and 'First Principles' of Herbert Spencer. They nearly killed me, took every shred of belief away from me; showed me that I was a chemical atom in a whirl of unknown forces; the realization clouded my mind. I felt the rhythm of life, but the central fact to me was that the whole thing was unknowable—incomprehensible. I went into the depths and I am not sure that I have ever got entirely out of them. I have not much of a creed—certainly no happy or inspiring belief to this day." (Frank Harris, Contemporary Portraits, Second Series, Published by the Author, New York, 1919. P. 91)
"For all the liberal analysis of Spencer and our modern naturalistic philosophers, we have but an infantile perception of morals. There is more in the subject than mere conformity to a law of evolution. It is yet deeper than conformity to things of earth alone. It is more involved than we, as yet, perceive. Answer, first, why the heart thrills; explain wherefore some plaintive note goes wandering about the world, undying; make clear the rose's subtle alchemy evolving its ruddy lamp in light and rain. In the essence of these facts lie the first principles of morals." (Theodore Dreiser, *Sister Carrie*, Dell Publishing Co., Inc., New York, 1959. P. 105)


"In an editorial written a couple of years after this first reading, he would [Theodore Dreiser] would recommend Spencer on the ground that he could marshal "the whole universe in review before you ... showing you how certain beautiful laws exist, and how, by these laws, all animate things have developed and arranged themselves."" (F. O. Matthiessen, *Theodore Dreiser*, William Sloane Associates. New York, 1951. Pp. 40-41.)
"The process known as living, like the process known as not-living, should be capable of a mechanical explanation. If, as Spencer admits, there is a dynamic element in life, and if that element cannot be conceived in terms of matter and motion, cannot be interpreted by physical or chemical methods, the conclusion is inevitable that in presence of living processes the Spencerian formula of evolution is defective. The effect of Spencer's admissions is to make his system of philosophy dualistic instead of monistic." (Anonymous, "The Philosophy of Herbert Spencer," The Edinburgh Review, Vol. 199, pp. 352-373, 1904. P. 362)
"The practical philosophy of Spencer [that of individualism] is of such moral poverty that it now has scarcely any supporters."


"Whenever certain elements combine and thereby produce, by the fact of their combination, new phenomenon [], it is plain that these new phenomena reside not in the original elements but in the totality formed by their union." (Emile Durkheim, The Rules of Sociological Method, The Free Press, Glencoe, Ill., 1938. P. xlvii)

"It was this formula [Spencer's formula of evolution from the homogeneous to the heterogeneous, etc.] that, I believe, underlay Durkheim's classic study of the division of labour, his account of the segmentary principle of organization in primitive societies, and the development of functional specialization and interdependence in advanced industrial communities." (Donald G. MacRae, "Darwinism and the Social Sciences," in S. A. Barnett, editor, A Century of Darwin, pp. 296-312, Heinemann, London, 1958. P. 307)

"If the hypotheses of Darwin have a moral use, it is with more reserve and measure than in other sciences. They overlook the essential elements of moral life, that is, the moderating influence that society exercises over its members, which tempers and neutralizes the brutal action of the struggle for existence and selection. Wherever there are societies, there is altruism, because there is solidarity." (Emile Durkheim, The Division of Labor in Society, translated by George Simpson, The Free Press, Glencoe, Ill., 1933. P. 197)

"Spencer has said that a society in the scientific sense of the word exists only when to the juxtaposition of individuals cooperation is added. We have just seen that this so-called axiom is contrary to the truth. Rather it is evident, as Auguste Comte points out, "that cooperation, far from having produced society, necessarily supposes, as preamble, its spontaneous existence." What bring men together are mechanical causes and impulsive forces, such as affinity of blood, attachment to the same soil, ancestral worship, community of habits, etc. It is only when the group has been formed on these bases that cooperation is organized there." (Emile Durkheim, The Division of Labor in Society, translated by George Simpson, The Free Press, Glencoe, Ill., 1933. P. 278)
"The investigations of Tylor and Bachofen, Morgan and Spencer, fixed the attention upon the data of anthropology as illustrating the gradual development and rise of civilization. The development of this side of anthropology was stimulated by the work of Darwin and his successors, and its fundamental ideas can be understood only as an application of the theory of biological evolution to mental phenomena." (Franz Boas, The Mind of Primitive Man, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1911. P. 175)

"From Spencer to Durkheim to British and British-influenced functional anthropology to structural-functional sociology in the United States' consequently may not be a drastic distortion of the actual 'who to whom' sequence." This is stated after having said: "Whether those British anthropologists who later explicitly called themselves functionalists were directly influenced by Spencer is doubtful; ..." (Howard Becker, "Anthropology and Sociology," in For a Science of Social Man, edited by John Gillin, pp. 102-159. The Macmillan Company. New York, 1954. P. 132.)


At the end of a pamphlet entitled "Anthropology: As a Science and as a Branch of University Education in the United States," Daniel G. Britton presents a "General Scheme for Instruction in Anthropology." In the brief bibliography he gives "as among the best works for the student" are listed E. B. Tylor's Anthropology and Charles Letourneau's Elements de Sociologie, among others, but nothing by Spencer. Then in a list of other "distinguished foreign living writers on various departments of Anthropology" he cites, among English writers, Buckland, Flower, Galton, and M. Müller, but not Spencer. Nor is Spencer's name listed in the index of Britton's The Basis of Social Relations, G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1902. 204 pp.

"It [anthropology] borrowed some of its early concepts, such as that of evolution ... directly from phylogenetic concepts of biology ...." (Ruth Benedict, "Anthropology and the Humanities," American Anthropologist, Vol. 50, pp. 585-593, 1948. P. 585)
Spencer's work is at the root of two of the great movements in contemporary anthropology—evolutionism and functionalism. Evolutionists are willing to acknowledge a general indebtedness to Spencer, although they are not familiar with the details of his evolutionary writings. Functionalists of today have forgotten—if they ever knew—the seminal contributions made by Spencer to their brand of anthropology. Durkheim's indebtedness to Spencer is evident from his work, especially *The Division of Labor*, although he does not freely acknowledge it. Radcliffe-Brown now and then indicated that he was influenced by Spencer; his goal of a "comparative science of society" can be traced back directly to Spencer.
"Having ventured to find fault with Spencer, I may be allowed to add that I have perhaps learned as much from him as from any other writer. If only his system did not appear at first quite so complete and final, one might more easily remain loyal to it in spite of its deficiencies. But when these latter began to appear its very completeness makes it seem a sort of a prison-wall which one must break down to get out." (Charles Horton Cooley, *Human Nature and the Social Order*, revised edition, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1909. P. 127n.)

"During my senior year at the University of Southern California, probably 1890-91, I took a course in philosophy. I was assigned the task of writing a review of Borden P. Bowne's *Review of The Philosophy of Herbert Spencer*. This forced me to read a good deal of Herbert Spencer as well as Bowne's review. Dr. W. S. Matthew, under whom I was studying and for whom I wrote the review of Bowne, liked my paper and asked if he might not submit it for publication in The Pacific Monthly, a magazine recently started in Los Angeles. Of course I consented and it was published. Thus I first broke into print." (Thomas Nixon Carver, *Recollections of an Unplanned Life*, The Ward Ritchie Press, Los Angeles, 1949. Pp. 87-88)

Franklin H. Giddings: "My interest in sociology, as I have on various occasions told, began while I was yet a youth, when accidentally a copy of the first number of the *Popular Science Monthly* fell into my hands a few days after its publication in 1872, and I read the first chapter of Spencer's *The Study of Sociology*. Before I entered college I had read a lot of Darwin, Tyndall, and Huxley, and nearly half of what Spencer had then written." (Quoted by Albion W. Small in "Fifty Years of Sociology in the United States," *The American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 21, pp. 721-864, 1916. P. 762)

"Spencer was the man who opened up the subject to Cooley, but he was not wholly satisfied with him at the time and became progressively more critical of him as he matured. He felt that Spencer was too wont to let his system, once conceived, ride roughshod over the field of facts; and this was the more serious in the sociological parts of his work because he did not see that the relations among men are mediated through the mind—that society is not mainly a biological organization but a psychological one." (Robert Cooley Angell, *Introduction to The Two Major Works of Charles H. Cooley: Social Organization, Human Nature and the Social Order*, The Free Press, Glencoe, Illinois, 1956. P. xi)

"... it is not alone in the title /Principles of Sociology, by F. H. Giddings/ that it imitates the great work of Mr. Spencer. The classification of topics is, it is true, very different, and there is some effort to avoid a similarity of method, but in the two most important respects the two treatises are in harmony. These are, first, in confining sociology chiefly to anthropology, and second, in adhering strictly to the "natural history method" of looking upon society as something absolutely passive, to be analyzed and dissected like the carcase of a dead animal." (Lester F. Ward, Review of Franklin H. Giddings' Principles of Sociology, Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, Vol. 8, pp. 1-31, 1896. P. 5)

"In my studies of American sociology teaching before 1912 I have found Spencer the single most widely recommended author." (Donald Macrae, "Introduction" to Herbert Spencer, The Man versus the State, pp. 7-54, Pelican Classic, Penguin Books, Baltimore, 1969. P. 48)

"Our texts /at Stanford University/ are Small and Vincent /An Introduction to the Study of Society/ and /Ward/ Dynamic Sociology. I have finally cut loose from Spencer for he has become so unsatisfactory it is no pleasure to put him in the hands of students. We shall work on descriptive and statical sociology till about March or April and then devote the rest of the year to progress and amelioration." (Letter from Edward A. Ross to Lester F. Ward dated November 25, 1894. Quoted in Bernhard J. Stern, editor, "The Ward-Ross Correspondence," American Sociological Review, Vol. 3, pp. 362-401, 1938. P. 386)


"Modern sociology begins with the earliest writings of Mr. Herbert Spencer." (p. 536) "... modern sociology must be said to begin with Mr. Spencer's work." (p. 543) (Franklin H. Giddings, "Modern Sociology," The International Monthly, Vol. 2, pp. 536-554, 1900)

"To Spencer I owe the same debt which a subsequent surveyor owes to a preliminary explorer of pathless common ground. To what I like to think of as my share of triumphant common sense, I owe my abomination of the laisserz faire social doctrines which Spencer first glorifies, then abandons." (Albion W. Small, Origins of Sociology, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1924, P. 316)

"But "biology," like "sociology," had no vogue until Mr. Spencer took it up. All but the youngest of our scientific men can remember when it began to creep into college and university catalogues. Neither the word nor the idea obtained recognition without a struggle." (Franklin H. Giddings, The Principles of Sociology, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1911, P. 32)

"After returning as President to Colby College, following the Sabbatical year spent at Johns Hopkins, I offered to the Seniors in the spring term of 1890, / as I then supposed, the first course in sociology ever given in the United States." (pp. 760-761) Although Small had read Sumner's What Social Classes Owe to Each Other shortly after it appeared in 1883, he was repelled by its social Darwinism, and was still able to write in 1907: "At that time (1907) he was not within my field of vision as even nominally a sociologist." (p. 733n.) But Small's attitude toward Sumner seems to have changed after reading Folkways, published in 1907. "On the other hand, his book Folkways is on a scientific level even higher above the Social Classes than Spencer's Descriptive Sociology is above the plane of Man vs. The State." (p. 733n.) (Albion W. Small, "Fifty Years of Sociology in the United States," The American Journal of Sociology, Vol. 21, pp. 721-864, 1916)
ECLIPSE OF SPENCERISM

"Long before his death the world of social science had left him in its wake; ...." (L. L. Bernard, "Herbert Spencer's Work in the Light of His Life," The Monist, Vol. 31, pp. 1-35, 1921, P. 6)

"The oblivion which has now overtaken the main treatises of his Synthetic Philosophy will perhaps prove perpetual." (p. 5) (R. C. K. Ensor--Some Reflections on Herbert Spencer's Doctrine that Progress is Differentiation. The Herbert Spencer Lecture, 1946. Oxford University Press, London, 1946)

"Although its influence far outstripped its merits, the Spencerian system serves students of the American mind as a fossil specimen from which the intellectual body of the period may be reconstructed." (Richard Hofstadter, Social Darwinism in American Thought, revised edition, The Beacon Press, Boston, 1955, P. 32)

"But both Carlyle and Spencer alike suffered swift and extensive eclipse as the twentieth century dawned." (F. J. C. Hearnshaw, "Herbert Spencer and the Individualists," in The Social & Political Ideas of Some Representative Thinkers of the Victorian Age, ed. by F. J. C. Hearnshaw, pp. 53-83, George G. Harrap & Co., London, 1933, P. 54)

Lyman Bryson: "In a half century or a little more, a man goes from being almost a worldwide symbol of omniscience into being an almost forgotten trace of something in people's minds." (Justus Buchler, Mason Gross, and Lyman Bryson, discussion of Herbert Spencer's First Principles, Invitation to Learning, Vol. 1, No. 4, pp. 402-409, 1951-52, P. 402)

Gradually, sociologists paid less and less attention to the writings of Spencer. For example, Emory S. Bogardus, in the revised edition of his textbook, Sociology, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1947/ refers to Spencer only once, and that reference is only a brief citation of Spencer's "surplus energy" theory of play among children (p. 278): "Who now reads Spencer?" (p. 226) "The Synthetic Philosophy penetrated to many a bookshelf which held nothing else quite so heavy.... And now it is a drug on the second-hand market ...." (pp. 226-227) (Crane Brinton--English Political Thought in the Nineteenth Century. Ernest Benn Limited. London, 1933)

"The Synthetic Philosophy penetrated to many a bookshelf which held nothing else quite to heavy. It lay beside the works of Buckle and Mill on the shelf of every Englishman of a radical turn of mind. It was read, discussed, fought over. And now it is a drug on the second-hand market, and hardly stirs the interest of the German or American aspirant to the doctorate in philosophy. We are more indifferent to this modern summa than to the summa of Thomas Aquinas! (Cranze Brinton, English Political Thought in the Nineteenth Century. Ernest Benn, Ltd., London, 1933. Pp. 226-227)

"In the Herbert Spencer Lecture of 1946, R. C. K. Ensor went so far as to suggest that "the oblivion which has now overtaken the main treatises of his Synthetic Philosophy will perhaps prove perpetual." (Some Reflections on Herbert Spencer's Doctrine that Progress is Differentiation, The Herbert Spencer Lecture for 1946. Oxford University Press. London, 1946. P. 5.) And Charles Singer could not resist kicking the corpse, remarking: "That the evolutionary system of Spencer is an object of derision is one of the few points on which all philosophers seem now to agree." (A Short History of Science. The Clarendon Press. Oxford, 1946. P. 385.)

"The younger generation's intellectual desertion of Spencer is very remarkable; it is apparent even in America, where twenty-five years ago Spencer dominated sociological theorizing. Students no longer take pleasure in reading even his Study of Sociology, in spite of its instructive and stimulating nature. And yet the serious study of Spencer would be of the utmost value to many contemporary sociologists—not that they should accept his teaching en bloc; they should analyze critically and utilize what they can of the work of this wholly unromantic and sober writer." (Leopold von Wiese, Systematic Sociology on the Basis of the Beziehungslehre and Gebildelehre, adapted and amplified by Howard Becker, John Wiley & Sons, Inc., New York, 1932. P. 688)

Those few social scientists who have taken the trouble to read Spencer have themselves been partisans of a social philosophy opposed to Spencer's, that they have been too concerned in refuting Spencer's philosophy of politics, than in separating from it and evaluating independently, his social science. Thus partisanship on the opposite side has been responsible for much of Spencer's contemporary oblivion. (RLC)

"Nobody now reads the works of Comte or Spencer. It is hard to believe that they were ever found readable. They scarcely even appear in modern bibliographies. In short, they are dead. Yet 60 years ago Spencer's books were read all over the world in many languages by thousands of devoted disciples." (Arthur David Ritchie, Studies in the History and Methods of the Sciences, The Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh, 1958. P. 159)
ECONOMIC DETERMINANTS

The analyses of Athenian society, the rise of democracy in it, appears on pp. 222-224; see also text pp. 93, 238.

"Practically, therefore, it was the growing industrial power which then produced, and thereafter preserved, the democratic organization [of Ancient Athens]." (Herbert Spencer, The Principles of Sociology, Vol. 2, pp. 424-425, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1899. Pp. 424-425)

Spencer has some brilliant historical analyses, e.g., of the role of commerce and industry in widening the base of Athenian oligarchy and paving the way for Greek democracy. (Vol. II, pp. 391-393).

Spencer had a keen appreciation of the importance of economic factors. Again and again he cites their importance in the origin and development of this or that practice or institution. For example, he argues that the origin of representative bodies is based upon the development of an increasing town population, and the rise of artisan and merchant classes.

Spencer's explanation of the origin of the democratic state, with representative government as being the result of the increase in economic production and commerce (Vol. II, pp. 421-423) seems to me perfectly sound, and yet completely ignored by political historians and theorists who are quick to criticize him for his personal political philosophy of individualism and laissez faire.

"In proclaiming the doctrine that science is the most important subject to be taught in schools with ample illustration, ingenious argument, and forcible reiteration, Spencer was a true educational pioneer: ...." (Charles W. Eliot, "Introduction," Essays on Education, Etc., by Herbert Spencer, Everyman's Library, J. M. Dent & Sons Ltd., London, 1911. P. viii)

"This doctrine that science was the most important thing to be taught in schools was extremely repulsive to the established profession of education in England, where Latin, Greek, and mathematics had been the staples of education for many generations, and were believed to afford the only suitable preparation for the learned professions, public life, and cultivated society." (Charles W. Eliot, "Introduction," Essays on Education, Etc., by Herbert Spencer, Everyman's Library, J. M. Dent & Sons Ltd., London, 1911. Pp. vii-viii)

"Accordingly, the ideas on education which he put forth more than fifty years ago have penetrated educational practice very slowly—particularly in England; but they are now coming to prevail in most civilised countries, and they will prevail more and more. Through him, the thoughts on education of Comenius, Montaigne, Locke, Milton, Rousseau, Pestalozzi, and other noted writers on this neglected subject are at last winning their way into practice, with the modifications or adaptations which the immense gains of the human race in knowledge and power since the nineteenth century opened have shown to be wise." (Charles W. Eliot, "Introduction" to Essays on Education, Etc., by Herbert Spencer, Everyman's Library, J. M. Dent & Sons Ltd., London, 1911. P. xiv)

"The essay on "What Knowledge is of Most Worth?" contains a hot denunciation of that kind of information which in most schools used to usurp the name of history. It is enough to say of this part of Spencer's educational doctrine that all the best historical writers since the middle of the nineteenth century seem to have adopted the principles which he declared should govern the writing of history. As a result, the teaching of history in schools and colleges has undergone a profound change. It now deals with the nature and action of government, central, local, and ecclesiastical, with social observances, industrial systems, and the customs which regulate popular life, out-of-doors and indoors. It depicts also the intellectual condition of the nation and the progress it has made in applied science, the fine arts, and legislation, and includes descriptions of the peoples' food, shelters, and amusements. To this result many authors and teachers have contributed; but Spencer's violent denunciation of history as it was taught in his time has greatly promoted this important reform." (Charles W. Eliot, "Introduction" to Essays on Education, Etc., by Herbert Spencer, Everyman's Library, J. M. Dent & Sons Ltd., London, 1911. P. xiv)
From the Journal of Lady Katherine Amberley, mother of Bertrand Russell: "Friday 31 May /1867/. It was very hot I stayed in all day. Mr. Herbert Spencer came to see me at 4 and stayed an hour /giving me quite a discourse on Education--I showed Baby /an elder sibling of Bertrand Russell, not here identified but probably John/ to him and told him I was following his plan of no unnecessary trammels." (Quoted in Bertrand and Patricia Russell, The Amberley Papers, The Letters and Diaries of Bertrand Russell's Parents, 2 Vols., W. W. Norton & Company Inc., New York, 1937. Vol. 2, pp. 39-40)


"You will not, I fear, gain much from my counsels on questions of Education. It should be borne in mind that no quite satisfactory results are at present attainable. A developed method is fully applicable to, and by, a fully-developed humanity. At present, partial benefits can /alone be looked for; and there must always be more or less of compromise between what is desirable and what is practicable." (Letter from Herbert Spencer to Lady Katherine Amberley, dated March 30, 1869. Quoted in Bertrand and Patricia Russell, The Amberley Papers, The Letters and Diaries of Bertrand Russell's Parents, 2 Vols., W. W. Norton & Company Inc., New York, 1937. Vol. 2, pp. 306-307)

"... Low gowns bring me naturally to Herbert Spencer, whose book "Education"—she had previously said she had read it/ I shd much like to read, tho' there will of course be more pain than pleasure in becoming more convinced than ever of the number of wrong things I have done & right ones left undone towards my children—Pray send it ...." (Letter from Lady Katherine Amberley to her son John, dated April 7, 1869. Quoted in Bertrand and Patricia Russell, The Amberley Papers, The Letters and Diaries of Bertrand Russell's Parents, 2 Vols., W. W. Norton & Company Inc. New York, 1937. Vol. 2, p. 264)

"I have read Herbert Spencer's book on "Education" and like it much. A great many nails he hits with wonderful accuracy square on the head." (Letter from Gail Hamilton /Mary Abigail Dodge/ to George Wood /"Peter Schlemihl"/ dated May 6, 1864. Quoted it Gail Hamilton's Life in Letters, edited by H. Augusta Dodge, 2 Vols., Lee and Shepard, Boston, 1901. Vol. 1, p. 402)

"Spencer's neglected science of education has become one of the most pretentious of sciences." (Crane Brinton, English Political Thought in the Nineteenth Century, Ernest Benn, Ltd., London, 1933. P. 236)
Of Spencer's Education: "There is scarcely a book in which a keen scent for details comes more agreeably to animate a fund of solid arguments, and from which it is more useful to extract the substance." (Gabriel Compayré, The History of Pedagogy, translated by W. H. Payne, D. C. Heath & Company, Boston, 1901. Pp. 555-556)

Of Spencer's Education: "... if it does not yet contain a perfect and fully worked out theory of education, [it] is at least a vigorous effort, and a notable step towards a rational pedagogy, towards a science of education ...." (Gabriel Compayré, The History of Pedagogy, translated by W. H. Payne, D. C. Heath & Company, Boston, 1901. P. 539)

"Every flush of life and flash of light that reinvigorates the university of today is due to the rays that purpled the dawn when Herbert Spencer said: "Let there be light in every nook and corner of the educational world."" (A. E. Winship, "Herbert Spencer as an Education Force," Journal of Proceedings and Addresses of the Forty-Third Annual Meeting of the National Education Association, pp. 230-231. P. 231. Winship editor of Journal of Education)

"What Bushnell, Beecher, and Brooks were in theology and in ecclesiastical courage, Spencer was in education. His was the fascination of personality in phrasing, of relish in thinking. In whatever he thought or said there was a nervous impulse that set the schoolmen of the world aglow with interest in proportion to the spasms created among the philosophies before which he did not bow. What Darwin and Huxley were in science, Spencer was in education." (A. E. Winship, "Herbert Spencer as an Educational Force," Journal of the Proceedings and Addresses of the Forty-Third Annual Meeting of the National Education Association, pp. 230-231, 1904. P. 230)

"Herbert Spencer was the greatest educational force of the latter half of the nineteenth century. As an individual opinion this would have no significance but it is as near an official utterance as is possible for the United States government to deliver on such a question. In the Congressional Library in Washington, our noble shrine, the government has placed the name of ten educational leaders selected from the world's history. Only one of these was chosen from the latter half of the nineteenth century, only one was alive when his name was blazoned on the roll of honor. That was Herbert Spencer." (A. E. Winship, "Herbert Spencer as an Education Force," Journal of Proceedings and Addresses of the Forty-Third Annual Meeting of the National Education Association, pp. 230-231, 1904. P. 230)

"My mother read his little work on education, and was much taken with it, though thinking it was too highly pitched for practical purposes. She told me it was the best book ever written for bachelor's children." (Letter from Joseph D. Hooker to Inglis Palgrave dated December 23, 1903. Quoted in Leonard Huxley, Life and Letters of Sir Joseph Dalton Hooker, 2 Vols., D. Appleton & Company, New York, 1918. Vol. 2, p. 454)
"No competent person can look over the history of education in the United States during the past twenty years and not see that Mr. Spencer's ideas have been among the principal forces in bringing about the great and happy changes which have taken place." (Letter from Andrew D. White to W. J. Youmans dated November 8, 1882. Quoted in Edward L. Youmans, ed., Herbert Spencer on The Americans and the Americans on Herbert Spencer, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1883. P. 85)

At a meeting of the National Education Association on February 23, 1904 there was a "Symposium on the Educational Theories and Work of Herbert Spencer." This meeting was held in Atlanta. The symposium was evidently in commemoration of Spencer, who had died the previous December.

"... nowhere, perhaps, has his influence been more pronounced than in educational thought and practice. This influence has come not so much from his Essay on Education as from his system of thought as a whole. Here again it is the genetic method and the larger synthetic view that have been effective." (W. Rose, "Herbert Spencer as a Philosopher," Journal of Proceedings and Addresses of the National Education Association, 1904, pp. 231-235. P. 234. Rose was Professor of the History and Philosophy of Education at the University of Tennessee.)


"The views he [Spencer] has very vigorously / propounded are shared by a number of distinguished scientific men; and not a few of the unscientific believe that in them is shadowed forth the education of the future." (pp.439-440) "... it [Spencer's Education] is not only one of the most readable, but also one of the most important books on education in the English language." (p. 469) The essay in which the above appears was written by Quick around 1866 or so. In a footnote to its republication in 1890 he says: "I take some credit to myself for having early recognised the importance of a book now famous. (June, 1890.)" (p. 439n.) (Robert Hebert Quick, Essays on Educational Reformers, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1904. [Copyright 1890])

"... whenever I have read Herbert Spencer I have been surprised at my interest in him, and gratified to find that I could understand a good deal. His essay on "Education" was almost a white stone in my reading career, his "Facts and Comments" was a cheerful companion for a week ...." (C. Lewis Hind, More Authors and I, Dodd, Mead and Company, New York, 1922. P. 270)


"Spencer's treatise, Education, was a best seller, both in the United States and in England. It became a favorite text for teacher training institutions." (Frederick Mayer, A History of Educational Thought, second edition, Charles E. Merrill Books, Inc., Columbus, Ohio, 1966. P. 325)

Spencer's Education was translated into French, German, Italian, Russian, Hungarian, Dutch, Danish, Spanish, Swedish, Bohemian, Greek, Japanese, Chinese, and "several of the languages of India." (Alfred W. Tillett, Spencer's Synthetic Philosophy: What It Is All About, P. S. King & Son, London, 1914. P. ix) (This book of Spencer's was also translated into Arabic and Mohawk)

"... Messrs Watts & Co. have just issued the third edition (completing 60,000 copies) of his [Spencer's] 'Education: Intellectual, Moral, Physical,' at sixpence, and inform us that the book has been translated into sixteen languages." ("W.", "Herbert Spencer," The Athenaeum, No. 3972, pp. 794-795, December 12, 1903. P. 794)
... we cannot but admire these brilliant pages of Spencer's Education, where a profound and humorous thinker has defined with extraordinary distinctness, and animated by a breath of intense life, some of the fundamental principles of the new education. If he restates theories known before, it is in order to develop them broadly and forcibly; also, it is to give to them a personal accent, the full warmth of his philosophic faith, a spirit of liberty, a sentiment of sweetness and humanity, and, finally, what may surprise us, a very noble religious tone. (Gabriel Compayre, Herbert Spencer and Scientific Education, translated from the French by Maria E. Findlayson, Thomas Y. Crowell & Co., New York, 1907. P. 108)

"Mr. A. Bertrand, the translator of Herbert Spencer's Education, and the most authentic disciple of its educational theory, has attempted to plan such a programme in his "Four Years' Lycée Course." (Gabriel Compayre, Herbert Spencer and Scientific Education, translated from the French by Maria E. Findlayson, Thomas Y. Crowell & Co., New York, 1907. P. 58)

"Under the banner of Spencerian pedagogy will be henceforth enlisted the people who prefer ... the substantial nourishment of science to the trivialities and elegancies of verbal instruction; who would open the mind to the real world, / who wish to form positive and practical men, associated ... by the general knowledge they possess to the universal life of Nature and of human societies." (Gabriel Compayre, Herbert Spencer and Scientific Education, translated from the French by Maria E. Findlayson, Thomas Y. Crowell & Co., New York, 1907. Pp. 109-110)

"... in a work claiming to be new Education, there is a certain lack of originality, which is concealed by a brilliant style and a lively imagination in details. Mr. Spencer is a clever stage manager. Thanks to an amazing gift of expression, he clothes the ideas of others magnificently; but as to education it is possibly just to say that the book contains very few really new ideas." (Gabriel Compayre, Herbert Spencer and Scientific Education, translated from the French by Maria E. Findlayson, Thomas Y. Crowell & Co., New York, 1907. P. 108)

Spencer "... borrows the greater part of his ideas on education from Pestalozzi, and from further back than Pestalozzi, from Rousseau." (Gabriel Compayre, Herbert Spencer and Scientific Education, translated from the French by Maria E. Findlayson, Thomas Y. Crowell & Co., New York, 1907. P. 51)

"In short, this book on Education shows no trace of the heaviness characteristic of didactic treatises; it has all the charm of an agreeable conversation, lively wit, and what one writer has even called "rough good humour."" (Gabriel Compayre, Herbert Spencer and Scientific Education, translated from the French by Maria E. Findlayson, Thomas Y. Crowell & Co., New York, 1907. P. 18)
"... out of all that Spencer thought and wrote, this short sketch of a theory of rational education has contributed the most, at least in foreign lands, to render his name well known and illustrious. Its success has been remarkable in every country, and especially in France, where several translations have run into ten editions: the first was published in 1878, when a reform of our scholastic institutions was just beginning. Of all the author's works it is, perhaps, this which has the greatest chance of surviving...." (Gabriel Compayre, Herbert Spencer and Scientific Education, translated from the French by Maria E. Findlayson, Thomas Y. Crowell & Co., New York, 1907. P. 5)

"No one has stronger claim to the title of scientific and philosophic educationist." (Gabriel Compayre, Herbert Spencer and Scientific Education, translated from the French by Maria E. Findlayson, Thomas Y. Crowell & Co., New York, 1907. P. 108)

"But of all his writings, the book on education has apparently been most widely influential. It has appeared in--among other tongues--modern Greek, Sanskrit, and Arabic; and education in Mexico and the South American States has been greatly moulded by it. In 1901 Spencer wrote me that he had learned some time before this from the Chinese Ambassador that two translations of his writings were in progress in China--one into the Northern and the other into the Southern dialect." (William Henry Hudson, An Introduction to the Philosophy of Herbert Spencer, revised edition, Watts & Co., London, 1906. P. 24n.)

"The idea that the child should in learning repeat the experience of the race that is, go from the particular and concrete to the general and the abstract, generally attributed to Spencer, was in fact put forward almost a hundred years earlier, by Condillac, the founder of Sensationalism, friend of Rousseau and Diderot and tutor to a grandson of Louis XIV. He wrote: "The method which I have followed does not resemble the usual manner of teaching; but it is the very way in which men were led to create the arts and the sciences." (Elizabeth Lawrence, The Origins and Growth of Modern Education, Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, 1970. P. 281)

"As late as the 1920s and 1930s, when Spencer's social philosophy was indeed discarded, his educational ideals were promoted afresh by Dewey ...." (J. D. Y. Peel, Herbert Spencer on Social Evolution, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1972. P. xl)

"If the revolution had a beginning, it was surely with the work of Herbert Spencer." (Lawrence A. Cremin, The Transformation of the School, Alfred A. Knopfe, New York, 1961. P. 91)
"It seems likely that the influence of Marcel, himself a disciple of Rousseau, accounts for the similarity between many of Spencer's ideas and those of the Émile, which Spencer had never read." (Norma T. Walker, "The Sources of Herbert Spencer's Educational Ideas," Journal of Educational Research, Vol. 22, pp. 299-308, 1930. (Shows convincingly, with quotations, that Spencer borrowed a number of his educational ideas from the Frenchman Claude Marcel (1793-1876).)

"Even his own education theories have been repeatedly traced back to Rousseau's Émile, though, as he himself informed me, he had never even heard of that work at the time his own book Education on education was written ...." (William Henry Hudson, An Introduction to the Philosophy of Herbert Spencer, revised edition, Watts & Co., London, 1906. P. 36n.)


"It has also been suggested that the publication in 1858 of Herbert Spencer's famous essay on the place of natural reactions in education acted as a stimulus to Meredith's satire of Sir Austin Feverel's despotic parental system. (If this was so, I must confess that it is a bit of enlightenment which I could have done without.)" (Siegfried Sassoon, Meredith, The Viking Press, New York, 1948. P. 25)

Spencer's Education "... obviously owes a lot to Rousseau. When this was mentioned, he protested, in angry good faith, that he had never read Rousseau. He had, however, read Pestalozzi, on whom Rousseau's influence had been powerful." (Raymond Mortimer, "Books in General," The New Statesman and Nation, Vol. 24, pp. 411-412, 1942. P. 411)

"... his [Spencer's] book on education--the only one of his books that still allows itself to be read ...." (Raymond Mortimer, "Books in General," The New Statesman and Nation, Vol. 24, pp. 411-412, 1942. P. 411)

"Mr. Spencer sacrifices here, as always, the education of the emotions to positive instruction. His citizen would be able to analyze the institutions of his country; but will he learn to love it? Will he not lack the one thing that can make all knowledge, even the fullest, of use--a reverent loyalty to the constitution, a love of humanity and patriotic enthusiasm?" (Gabriel Compayré, Herbert Spencer and Scientific Education, translated from the French by Maria E. Findlayson, Thomas Y. Crowell & Co., New York, 1907. P. 39)
Spencer's contributions have been absorbed into the bloodstream of modern thought. It was with much of Spencer's scientific writing as it was with the theories he expounded in his book, Education (1861), about which Helen Keller wrote: "It is the highest praise that can be bestowed upon this treatise, that it seems now a book of obvious if not of commonplace philosophy, whereas, when it was published, it was recognized as revolutionary in the extreme." (Helen Rex Keller, The Reader's Digest of Books. New and greatly enlarged edition. The Macmillan Company. New York, 1945. P. 250)

"It is the highest praise that can be bestowed upon this treatise [Education], that it seems now a book of obvious if not of commonplace philosophy, whereas, when it was published, it was recognized as revolutionary in the extreme. So rapidly has its wisdom become incarnated in methods if not in systems." (Helen Rex Keller, The Reader's Digest of Books. New and greatly enlarged edition. The Macmillan Company. New York, 1945.)
"Now, the French have very little trouble with Spencer’s treatment of religious subjects, but his irreverence for the ancient classics greatly troubles them.... And so the Minister of Public Instruction in France has arranged to prepare an edition of Spencer's "Education" which the Government may approve, and in which the part dealing with science and classics is omitted." (Edward L. Youmans, "Sociology and Theology at Yale College," The Popular Science Monthly, Vol. 17, pp. 265-269, 1880. P. 269)
"Your letter to the Examiner is much milder than I expected, and hardly makes apparent the severe objections you mentioned to me. But I am not sorry that there should be a little boiling of the peas shot at poor Mr. Spencer just now, for he is running the gauntlet in rather a fatiguing way between Cambridge men who are criticizing his physics and psychology, and historians who are criticizing the 'Sociological Tables' on which he has already spent £500, in the hope that he is doing the world a service. Perhaps you do not see 'the Academy,' which has been regenerated and has started on its new life with great vigour: it is in this periodical that the 'Tables' have been discussed. Then there is John Fletcher Moulton, a Cambridge mathematician, who is carrying on a venomous as well as harassing attack in the British Quarterly; and there are various bitings and snappings of metaphysicians in other directions. Such are the delights of philosophical celebrity...." (Letter from George Eliot to Sara Sophia Hennell dated February 10, 1874. Quoted in Gordon S. Haight, editor, The George Eliot Letters, 7 Vols., Yale University Press, New Haven, 1955. Vol. 6, p. 15)

George Eliot wrote in April, 1852: "I went to the opera on Saturday—*I Martiri* at Covent Garden—with my 'excellent friend, Herbert Spencer,' as Lewes calls him. We have agreed that we are not in love with each other and that there is no reason why we should not have as much of each other's society as we like. He is a good, delightful creature and I always feel better for being with him." (Anna Theresa Kitchel, George Lewes and George Eliot, The John Day Company, New York, 1933. P. 143)

"This sarcasm reflects the coolness between Spencer and GE over his betraying to Chapman her authorship of Adam Bede. GHL wrote in his Journal, 24 March 1859: "Spencer came to spend the day with us. But his coming was only pain and disappointment to Polly, on account of his coolness. He used to be one of our friends on whom we most relied; but jealousy, too patent, and too unequivocal, of our success, acting on his own bitterness at non-success, has of late cooled him visibly. He always tells us the disagreeable things he hears or reads of us and never the agreeable things. His jealousy of me has been growing these last two years; and it is more excusable than his jealousy of her. --His visit was one we were glad to see the end of." (Gordon S. Haight, The George Eliot Letters, 7 Vols., Yale University Press, New Haven, 1954. Vol. 3, p. 49n.)


"Miss Beedy’s account of the way Mr. Spencer arrived at his present point of view’ ("Three ladies—Miss Eliza Sturgis, Mrs. Ashford, and Miss Beedy—were visiting Coventry in behalf of Women’s Suffrage. Miss Beedy, an American whom Miss Sara Sophia Hennell found very congenial, told her that Spencer’s defection from their cause was owing to his friend E. L. Youmans, who had frightened him about the American women.) is not quite correct, I think. His opinions, I should say, do not take date from his acquaintance with Mr. Youmans, or with any facts about American women." (Letter from George Eliot to Sara Sophia Hennell dated April 23, 1874. Quoted in Gordon S. Haight, The George Eliot Letters, 7 Vols., Yale University Press, New Haven, 1955. Vol. 6, p. 40, 40n.)

"We were pleased to hear that you had seen Mr. Spencer. We always feel him particularly welcome when he comes back to town; there is no one like him for talking to about certain things. But I am sorry to find that he gave you a poor impression about his health. To me those future unabsehbare volumes Of the Synthetic Philosophy would be misery and madness; but I think they brighten the prospect of life to him." (Letter from George Eliot to Sophia Hennell dated September 12, 1862. Quoted in Gordon S. Haight, editor, The George Eliot Letters, 7 Vols., Yale University Press, New Haven, 1954. Vol. 4, p. 57)

"If you should see Mr. Herbert Spencer in his way from the North, pray do not allow a word to escape you that would imply your knowledge of our having been wounded by his change of manner towards us. There has been a little explanatory correspondence between him and Mr. Lewes, and I am anxious that the subject should now be left alone. He is unconscious of the change, and it is folly for people who differ widely in their susceptibilities, to raise questions concerning mutual feeling." (Letter from George Eliot to Charles Bray dated September 18, 1859. Quoted in Gordon S. Haight, editor, The George Eliot Letters, 7 Vols., Yale University Press, New Haven, 1954. Vol. 3, p. 154)

"Herbert Spencer writes me word that he has had an attack of palpitation of the heart—but is quite recovered. I am going to quote to him a passage I found in Sainte-Beuve which just fits him. "Quand j’ai dit qu’il n’avait jamais eu de passion et d’excès, je me suis trop avancé; il a eu un excès de raison.”" (Letter from George Eliot to Sara Sophia Hennell dated November 25, 1853. Quoted in Gordon S. Haight, The George Eliot Letters, 7 Vols., Yale University Press, New Haven, 1954. Vol. 2, p. 128)

"Herbert Spencer means to quit his position as sub-editor of the Economist and trust to writing. This is entre nous. I rather tremble for him—with his nature, article-writing for bread will be worse than he has just now persuaded himself to think. Still his editorship is a horrid gêne and tethers him to London all the year, with the exception of a few days’ holiday now and then." (Letter from George Eliot to Mrs. Charles Bray dated April 16, 1853. Quoted in Gordon S. Haight, The George Eliot Letters, 7 Vols., Yale University Press, New Haven, 1954. Vol. 2, p. 98)

"You have never told me what impression Mr. Spencer's book First Principles make on you as it proceeds. I am anxious to know whether the elaborate proof of generalities which are accepted as soon as stated will not cause some of the later numbers to be wearisome for the majority of readers. I hope not, for it is touching to see how his whole life and soul are being poured into his book and into keeping himself well that he may write it. The very watching against disease is becoming a disease in itself. He has had his father in London lately, and the old gentleman, seated upright on a small chair, looks almost the younger of the two." (Letter from George Eliot to Sara Sophia Hennell dated January 14, 1862. Quoted in Gordon S. Haight, editor, The George Eliot Letters, 7 Vols., Yale University Press, New Haven, 1954, Vol. 4, p. 9)

"... I cannot help regarding it a serious mistake to suppose that her George Eliot's novels were largely determined by Mr. Spencer's theory of evolution, as I find asserted by a recent critic who ends an article with the declaration that "the writings of George Eliot must be regarded, I think, as one of the earliest triumphs of the Spencerian method of studying personal character and the laws of social life." This seems to me so far from being true that many of George Eliot's characters appear like living objections to the theory of evolution." (Sidney Lanier, The English Novel: A Study in the Development of Personality, revised edition, (first edition, 1883) Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1897. P. 299)

"Mr. Spencer is coming to lodge in Harewood Square close by us, but as we exclude visitors except on a Saturday we shall not, I dare say, see the more of him. He is very delightful when we don't get on art and classical literature—subjects on which there is a great gulf fixed between us. I don't mind it when we are alone, but I am always uneasy for him when I see he is boring other people. For, to my thinking, it is more pitiable to bore than to be bored." (Letter from George Eliot to Mrs. Charles Bray dated May 27, 1852. Quoted in Gordon S. Haight, editor, The George Eliot Letters, 7 Vols., Yale University Press, New Haven, 1954, Vol. 2, p. 29)

"My brightest spot next to my love of old friends, is the deliciously calm new friendship that Herbert Spencer gives me. We see each other every day and have a delightful camaraderie in everything. But for him, my life would be desolate enough now with poor Mr. C. [Chapman] so occupied and so sad—but he runs away with a great deal of my time." (Letter from George Eliot to Mrs. Charles Bray dated May 27, 1852. Quoted in Gordon S. Haight, The George Eliot Letters, 7 Vols., Yale University Press, New Haven, 1954, Vol. 2, p. 29)
"I never saw such a woman. There is nothing a bit masculine about her; she is thoroughly feminine and looks and acts as if she were made for nothing but to mother babies. But she has a power of stating an argument equal to any man; equal to any man do I say? I have never seen any man, except Herbert Spencer, who could state a case equal to her.... Spencer thinks she is the greatest woman that has lived on the earth—the female Shakespeare, so to speak; and I imagine he is not far from right." (Letter from John Fiske to Mrs. John Fiske dated November 23, 1873. Quoted in Gordon S. Haight, editor, The George Eliot Letters, 7 Vols., Yale University Press, New Haven, 1955. Vol. 5, pp. 464, 465)

"After GE's death Spencer refused to let Cross use her letters in the Life, and, when invited to contribute a sketch of her, replied that he had already written one but was saving it for his own Autobiography. When he learned from newspaper gossip of a generally believed rumor that he had been engaged to GE only to be gilded when GHL came upon the scene, he was greatly perturbed and sent Cross a note of contradiction to be inserted in the Life: "The intimacy naturally led to rumors. It was said that Mr. Spencer was in love with her. This however was not true. I have the best possible warrant for saying that his feeling did not pass the limits of friendship." The sensitive widower, finding this "jarring," suggested a version of his own. "Much better no note at all than the one you propose," Spencer replied. Cross took him at his word ...." (Gordon S. Haight, The George Eliot Letters, 7 Vols., Yale University Press, New Haven, 1954. Vol. 1, p. lxxv)

"Except for a brief coolness caused by his [Spencer's] unintentional betrayal of the secret that GE was the author of Adam Bede and a later dispute over GHL's suggestions that his system owed something to Comte's, they remained good friends to the end. As his Synthetic Philosophy took form, the difference between their minds grew more apparent. He was always seeking a simple formula to explain the multiform complexity of human life; GE, no less critical, more powerful in intellect, tempered her judgment with deep human sympathy, finding in the dullest and most perverse an individual spirit to be respected." (Gordon S. Haight, The George Eliot Letters, 7 Vols., Yale University Press, New Haven, 1954. Vol. 1, p. lxxvi)

"Herbert Spencer's article on the Genesis of Science is a good one. He will stand in the Biographical Dictionaries of 1954 as "Spencer, Herbert, an original and profound philosophical writer, especially known by his great work,... which gave a new impulse to psychology, and has mainly contributed to the present advanced position of that science, compared with that which it had attained in the middle of the last century. The life of this philosopher, like that of the great Kant, offers little material for the narrator. Born in the year 1820," &c." (Letter from George Eliot to Miss Sara Hennell, July 10, 1854. Quoted in J. W. Cross, George Eliot's Life, 3 Vols., William Blackwood and Sons, Edinburgh and London, 1885. Vol. 1, p. 325)
"My brightest spot, next to my love of old friends, is the deliciously calm new friendship that Herbert Spencer gives me. We see each other every day, and have a delightful camaraderie in everything. But for him my life would be desolate enough." (George Eliot, letter to Miss Sara Hennell, May 27, 1852. Quoted in J. W. Cross, George Eliot's Life, 3 Vols., William Blackwood and Sons, Edinburgh and London, 1885. Vol. 1, p. 281)

"But I want to tell you that you must not interpret H. S.'s indifference to your ideas and authorship as any special negation towards you because you are a woman. He has, whenever it was possible, shown just the same blank towards Mr. Lewes, who certainly has more claims on him as an older friend very generous to him in the days of his obscurity. With regard to not reading books or listening to ideas, I must again plead for him, as I have done before, that he is not a reader, and that his mind both "spontanément and systematiquement" rejects everything that cannot be wrought into the web of his own production. He has this in common with many productive minds. And you must not regard him in the light of a person who will be moved by sympathies. We have long given up vain expectations from him and can therefore enjoy our regard for him without disturbance by his negations. He comes and consults us about his own affairs, and that is his way of showing friendship. We never dream of telling him our affairs, which would certainly not interest him." (Letter from George Eliot to Sara Sophia Hennell dated November 23, 1877. Quoted in Gordon S. Haight, editor, The George Eliot Letters, 7 Vols., Yale University Press, New Haven, 1955. Vol. 6, p. 426)

"That evening [conversing with Spencer] showed me that George Eliot was to be congratulated on her escape from Spencer; his companionship developed the rationalistic side of her nature and so harmed her as an artist beyond all telling. If anyone cares to compare "The Scenes from Clerical Life," 1858, or even "Adam Bede", 1859, or "The Mill on the Floss," 1860, with "Daniel Deronda," 74 Vols., 1874-76, he will realize the full extent of the artistic injury done her by long and close association with Spencer. She ought to have been brought to feel more and think less; whereas she was encouraged to think and reason and debate instead of living and loving." (Frank Harris, Contemporary Portraits, Second Series, Published by the Author, New York, 1919. P. 238)

in 1880, "She [George Eliot] had been re-reading [at the time of her death], with Mr. Cross, the Data of Ethics and the Study of Sociology (the last, indeed, for the third time) ...." (Herbert Spencer, letter to Edward L. Youmans written probably early in 1881. Quoted in Herbert Spencer, An Autobiography, 2 Vols., Watts & Co., London, 1926. Vol. 2, p. 364)

Read Bain, "Spencer's Love for George Eliot," The Psychoanalytic Review, Vol. 14, pp. 37-55, 1927. (Bain argues strongly that it was Spencer who was in love with George Eliot, and she who turned him down, and his later neurasthenia stemmed from this.)
"I regard George Eliot not only as the greatest woman novelist, but as the greatest woman that ever lived. A woman of masculine understanding and intelligence, a woman who makes one hope that in time women may come to be the equals of men." (Herbert Spencer, as quoted by Frank Harris in Contemporary Portraits, Second Series, Published by the Author, New York, 1919. P. 229)

George Eliot "was something very unlike the typical Victorian novelists, she was an 'intellectual' writer. Her mind was always active; experience set in immediately and instinctively analysing and generalising, to discovering why and how things happened. And when she turned her attention to the world around her it was this analysis that started her creative imagination working." (David Cecil, Early Victorian Novelists, Pelican Books, Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, 1948. P. 215)

"I must tell you a characteristic trait of Herbert Spencer. I happened to say in reference to a criticism I had given of a passage in his article on the Universal Postulate, which passage he expunged in consequence, that the better form for the axiom which is the basis of the syllogism as explained by Mill would be -- "Things which have the same fixed relation to the same thing have the same fixed relation to each other." Mill gives "Things which co-exist with the same thing" etc. The next day he came to tell me in intense delight how important the suggestion was to him in his work on Psychology -- how it had given him just the bridges he wanted etc. -- and that he should put a long note in his book explaining how he came by the idea. Is he not a dear bit of conscientiousness and scrupulosity?"" (Letter from George Eliot to Sara Sophia Hennell dated March 9, 1854. Quoted in Gordon S. Haight, The George Eliot Letters, 7 Vols., Yale University Press, New Haven, 1954. Vol. 2, p. 145, 145n.)

"... what am I to say about Adam Bede? That I have read it with laughter and tears and without criticism. Knowing as you do how constitutionally I am given to fault finding, you will know what this means... After praising it enthusiastically as a work of art, he continues... and then let me not forget the moral effect, I feel greatly the better for having read it, etc." (Letter from Herbert Spencer to George Eliot dated ca. September 29, 1859. Quoted in Gordon S. Haight, The George Eliot Letters, 7 Vols., Yale University Press, New York, 1954. Vol. 3, p. 170n.)

"Mr. Spencer is gone to Derby for a month or two to give some companionship to his father, who has been much out of health lately. He has bought a microscope, and is going to work at it, which I hope will be an agreeable variety in his brain labour." (Letter from George Eliot to Sara Sophia Hennell dated April 13, 1861. Quoted in Gordon S. Haight, editor, The George Eliot Letters, 7 Vols., Yale University Press, New Haven, 1954. Vol. 3, p. 404)
"Of Mr. Herbert Spencer's friendship I have had the honour and advantage for twenty years, but I believe that every main bias of my mind had been taken before I knew him. Like the rest of his readers, I am of course indebted to him for much enlargement and clarifying of thought." (The remarks on Mill and Spencer are intended to counter the ridiculous statements about her relation to them in "Men of the Time, 9th edition, 1875. See 15 July 1874.") (Letter from George Eliot to Elizabeth Stuart Phelps dated August 13, 1875. Quoted in Gordon S. Haight, editor, The George Eliot Letters, 7 Vols., Yale University Press, New Haven, 1955. Vol. 6, pp. 163-164, 164n.)

"Perhaps it will amuse you to know that our friend Mr. Spencer, who used to despise biography as the least profitable occupation of brain, is now busily collecting the materials of his own family and personal history!" (Letter from George Eliot to Sara Sophia Hennell dated November 22, 1876. Quoted in Gordon S. Haight, editor, The George Eliot Letters, 7 Vols., Yale University Press, New Haven, 1955. Vol. 6, p. 310)

"This morning I have had quite an enthusiastic letter from Herbert/Spencer about 'Adam Bede.' Forgive him his trespasses! He says he has not changed towards us, and what a man is not conscious of he must not answer for." (Letter from George Eliot to Eugène Bodi­chon dated October 1, 1859. Quoted in Gordon S. Haight, editor, The George Eliot Letters, 7 Vols., Yale University Press, New Haven, 1954. Vol. 3, pp. 169-170)

"Mr. Lewes is writing to Mr. Spencer to ask him to come and dine with you here on Wednesday. We give the latest day, because being a great diner-out, he may have engagements." (Letter from George Eliot to Sophia Hennell dated November 29, 1860. Quoted in Gordon S. Haight, editor, The George Eliot Letters, 7 Vols., Yale University Press, New Haven, 1954. Vol. 3, p. 361)

"Was it Grant Duff or someone else who told me a story of "George Eliot" and Herbert Spencer; that, walking with her one day on the terrace of Somerset House, he felt he might have prop­osed to her if, "having a face like a horse's head," she had not been so ugly?" (James Milne, The Memoirs of a Bookman, John Murray, London, 1934. P. 20)


"And just try to imagine what would have happened if Herbert Spencer and George Eliot had been man and wife!" (George Sarton, "Herbert Spencer, 1820-1920," Scribner's Magazine, Vol. 67, pp. 695-701, 1920. P. 699)
"I hope you will be pleased with our present number of the Westminster Review. If you don't think the Universal Postulate first-rate, I shall renounce you as a critic."


"... Herbert Spencer, the most intimate and helpful of her [George Eliot's] London friends, had from his first acquaintance with her urged her to venture into this field [writing novels]." (Laura Johnson Wylie, Introduction to Adam Bede, by George Eliot, pp. ix-xxiv. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1917. P. x)

"... about three weeks later [after the publication of George Eliot's first really successful novel, Adam Bede] she entered in her journal the news, brought by Herbert Spencer, that a member of Parliament had in the House of Commons quoted Mrs. Foyser's [a character in Adam Bede] "It wants to be hatched over again and hatched different."" (Laura Johnson Wylie, Introduction to Adam Bede, by George Eliot, pp. ix-xxiv. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1917. P. ix)

In his Introduction, the editor of the Penguin edition of Middlemarch refers to Casaubon as "... the pedantic and sterile Casaubon." (p. 8) Later he says, "Above all, there is Casaubon: chill, impotent, a creature of shadows who walks an interior labyrinth and says of himself, with unconscious irony: 'I feed too much on the inward sources; I live too much with the dead.'" (p. 14) And elsewhere he says, "But while it may be academically amusing to debate whether Casaubon was based on Mark Pattison, Dr Brabant, or some / other actual person, ...." (pp. 16-17). (W. J. Harvey, Introduction to George Eliot, Middlemarch, ed. by W. J. Harvey, pp. 7-22. Penguin Books. Harmondsworth, 1976)

Casaubon says: "The task, not withstanding the assistance of my amanuensis, has been a somewhat laborious one, but your [Dorothea's, his wife's] society has happily prevented me from that too continuous prosecution of thought beyond the hours of study which has been the snare of my solitary life." (George Eliot, Middlemarch, edited by W. J. Harvey. Penguin Books. Harmondsworth, 1976. P. 231)
"How was it that in the weeks since their marriage, Dorothea had not distinctly observed but felt with a stifling depression, that the large vistas and wide fresh air which she had dreamed of finding in her husband's [Casaubon's] mind were replaced by ante-rooms and winding passages which seemed to lead nowhither?" (George Eliot, *Middlemarch*, edited by W. J. Harvey. Penguin Books. Harmondsworth, 1976. Pp. 227-228)

"He [Havelock Ellis about the age of 19] was being deeply impressed by Spencer's *Study of Sociology.*" (p. 99) (Houston Peterson, *Havelock Ellis*, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1928.)

"My religious views have during the last three years been very unsettled and my task has been to bring them into harmony. Reading and thinking constantly to this end, I believe I have now finally left all doubt behind. The writers whose works have influenced me most are perhaps Carlyle, Goethe, Herbert Spencer, James Hinton." (Letter from Havelock Ellis to his cousin John dated July 7, 1878. Quoted in Houston Peterson, *Havelock Ellis*, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1928. P. 102)

"Two weeks later Henry wrote [circa July 21, 1878] in his diary: 'And so I am converted,' with a brief explanation that this new mental state was immediately preceded by the reading of Hinton's *Life in Nature* and Spencer's *Study of Sociology* along with the reflections aroused by the clergyman's coming letter. In the later accounts of the experience Spencer and the clergyman's letter are not mentioned, and to-day Ellis cannot remember being definitely influenced by *The Study of Sociology*; but he does recall being helped at this period by Spencer's *First Principles.*" (Houston Peterson, *Havelock Ellis*, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1928. Pp. 102-103, 103n.)
John Stuart Mill, in his *System of Logic*, Vol. 1, Bk. III, ch. vi, had called attention to the fact that there are some causes in which the joint effect of several causes is the algebraic sum of their separate effects—for example, the composition of forces in dynamics. "But in the other description of cases the agencies which are brought together cease entirely, and a totally different set of phenomena arise." Here "a concurrence of causes takes place which calls into action new laws bearing no analogy to any that we can trace in the separate operation of the causes." These laws he proposed to call "heteropathic laws." Writing along the same lines, Spencer's long-time friend, George H. Lewes, in his *Problems of Life and Mind*, Series II, 1875(?), p. 212 (or 412) drew the distinction between resultant effects and emergent effects. (This is apparently the first use of the term 'emergent' in this sense.) (See C. Lloyd Morgan, "The Case for Emergent Evolution," *Journal of Philosophical Studies*, January, 1929, p. 23) "The resultants are the effects which we are able to deduce from the causes; as when we say that the weight of salt is the sum of the weights of sodium and the chlorine that combine to produce it. The emergents are the unpredictable effects, which, so to speak, supervene together with the resultants; as the taste of the salt, its crystalline form and color, which lacking all resemblance to the properties of either sodium or chlorine seem to be something quite new and additional to the situation. Such emergent qualities appear to depend upon the way of arrangement or composition of the ingredients." (W. E. Hocking, *Types of Philosophy*, Revised edition, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1939. P. 57) But although Spencer was presumably familiar with this work of Lewes, he never made use of the distinction himself, and never adopted the term emergent.
"... a letter which Mortimer wrote from Waterville, Me., May 16, 1878 .... Mortimer (probably the Alfred L. Mortimer, civil engineer, ... introduced himself as a reader of Emerson's own works for over twenty-years. Only one sentence in all this reading had aroused in him any painful dissent "& that one was y'r reply to an interviewer regarding 'Herbert Spencer,' in wh. you said he was 'a hack-writer who writes equally well upon all subjects.'" Mortimer now wished to hear that Emerson had since discovered abundant reason to reverse the criticism and to yield to Spencer the "immense honor" that he deserved." (Ralph L. Rusk, editor, The Letters of Ralph Waldo Emerson, 6 Vols., Columbia University Press, New York, 1939. Vol. 6, pp. 312n.-313n.)

In an interview with a reporter from Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper, Ralph Waldo Emerson was quoted as saying that Herbert Spencer was nothing better than a "stock-writer, who writes equally well upon all subjects." This statement rankled Spencer's loyal disciple, Edward L. Youmans, with the utmost scorn he could muster: "And what shall we say ... when the Seer himself snubs the author of First Principles as a "stock-writer," and says to the author of that unclean imposture, "Leaves of Grass," "I greet you at the beginning of a great career?" (Edward L. Youmans,"Herbert Spencer and the Doctrine of Evolution," Appendix to M. E. Cazelles, Outline of the Evolution-Philosophy, Translated from the French by Rev. 0. B. Frothingham. D. Appleton & Company, New York, 1875. p.158)

"On Nov. 7, 1881, George S. Cottman wrote from Ingallston Post Office, Ind., telling of his great interest in Spencer and of his searching of Emerson's works "for the least hint implying your estimate" of that philosopher. Cottman asked whether Emerson would not now send him such an estimate." (Ralph L. Rusk, The Letters of Ralph Waldo Emerson, 6 Vols., Columbia University Press, New York, 1939. Vol. 6, p. 313n.)

"Dear Sir, On my return from a long absence I find among my letters yours asking my opinion of Herbert Spenser's writings. I regret that I am entirely ignorant of them, & I do not recall any writing of mine such as you quote. I remember that some friend sent me long ago what was prorably Mr Spenser's first book, and that I looked into it but was not drawn to it, very likely my ignorance of the subject. And now that we have many writers on the same subjects I am still drawn to my old studies. I can hardly believe that I can have said any disrespecting word of Mr Spenser as I have no recollection of the book "No..." (Letter from Ralph Waldo Emerson to A. L. Mortimer? Concord, c. June? 1878? Quoted in Ralph Rusk, editor, The Letters of Ralph Waldo Emerson, 6 Vols., Columbia University Press, New York, 1939. Vol. 6, pp. 312-313)
"At Derby about this time (December 7, 1847, when he apparently lectured there, and again December 9, when he visited there), Emerson seems to have met Herbert Spencer. In a letter written from London, Apr. 12, 1851, Spencer recalled the pleasure he had in their short time together at Derby during Emerson's last visit to England. He had long been an admirer of Emerson's writings, he declared, and now sent something of his own containing sentiments similar to those he had found in one of the essays after his own work was written." (Ralph L. Rusk, editor, The Letters of Ralph Waldo Emerson, 6 Vols., Columbia University Press, New York, 1939. Vol. 3, p. 447n.)

"Spencer also saw in Emerson, who had read Lamarck, a herald of the evolutionist point of view. During his visit to America, in 1882, he made a pilgrimage to Emerson's house in Concord. This is said to have been the only occasion on which Spencer paid tribute to another thinker." (Van Wyck Brooks, New England: Indian Summer, E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc., New York, 1965. P. 110n.)

"Had Herbert Spencer succeeded in his efforts to attract the attention of Emerson and to establish satisfactory relations with him, as he wished to do, there might have been a significant story to tell here of the intercommunity of American and English thought in the second half of the nineteenth century. But we have only the evidence of what might have been, and nothing further need be said either of Spencer or of any of his contemporaries." (Ralph L. Rusk, editor, The Letters of Ralph Waldo Emerson, 6 Vols., Columbia University Press, New York, 1939. Introduction to Vol. 1, p. lix)

"To E. A. Silsbee, Concord? May? c. 21? 1860? (Silsbee, Salem, Mass., May 28 (endorsed 1860), thanks Emerson for "the very elegant letter which you did me the honor to send me." Silsbee quotes a letter he had from Spencer the preceding February, in which the English philosopher asked about Emerson's attitude and hoped that, if favorable, it would be made known and so help Spencer. Spencer's letter had apparently accompanied a copy of the circular announcement of his projected work on synthetic philosophy." (All by Rusk) (Ralph L. Rusk, editor, The Letters of Ralph Waldo Emerson, 6 Vols., Columbia University Press, New York, 1939. Vol. 5, p. 219)

"I have turned up a new thing with regard to Spencer. He has heard that Emerson characterized him as a "stock writer," which means a "job writer." His disgust is unspeakable; he has been for the past week gathering up the proofs that he has had one method from the beginning, that he has never written a single article proposed by anybody else; that he had the law of evolution worked out as the basis of a philosophy before Darwin or Wallace ever published a line about it." (Letter from Edward L. Youmans to his sister, Eliza A. Youmans, dated September 13, 1871. Quoted in John Fiske, Edward Livingston Youmans, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. P. 283)
EMPIRICISM

Spencer's intellectual ancestry goes back, not to speculative philosophy, but to empirical science.


ENERGY

"I was much gratified the other day on reading your article in the Philosophical Magazine. I was the more gratified because I found in it verification of a view for which I have myself contended. When preparing the last edition of First Principles, I had a prolonged discussion with my friends Tyndall and Hurst, who wished me to modify certain views I had expressed,—views which, in consequence of our discussion, I elaborated more fully. They failed to convince me that I was wrong, and I failed to show them that I was right. Now I am glad to find that I do not stand alone in the view I took, that the conception of potential energy, as scientific men at present hold it, is not a legitimate conception, and that in fact a force cannot be transformed into a relation of positions in space." (Letter from Herbert Spencer to James Croll dated October 13, 1876. Quoted in Autobiographical Sketch of James Croll by James Campbell Irons, Edward Stanford, London, 1896. P. 311)
"... Spencer came to the study of biology in the spirit and with the equipment of the engineer ..." (D'Arcy Wentworth Thompson, On Aristotle As A Biologist with A Prooemion on Herbert Spencer, Herbert Spencer, for 1913, 31pp., The Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1913. P. 11)

"These [the years he spent as an engineer] were the years that he spoke of afterwards as 'the futile part of his life'; but it is as plain as an open book that they were years in which his mind was moulded and his mechanical outlook on phenomena developed and confirmed." (D'Arcy Wentworth Thompson, On Aristotle as a Biologist with a Prooemion on Herbert Spencer, Herbert Spencer Lecture for 1913, 31pp., The Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1913. P. 4)

"Again, in certain chapters [of Principles of Biology] he shows, after the fashion of the engineer, and from the experience of the bridge-builder, how the principles of stress and strain are concerned in the fabric, and in the physiology, of the organism; how physical and mechanical relations alter in the organism with increasing bulk; and how incident forces of gravity, growth, and pressure control or determine the shape of leaf and bone and single cell. Under the guidance of a wholesome restraint, a whole school of morphologists, Roux's school of Entwickelungsmechanik, are now investigating these self-same problems, and so bringing to the help of morphology some of those physical concepts which began to be the stock-in-trade of the physiologists when Majendie wrote his Leçons sur les phénomènes physiques de la Vie (1830)." (D'Arcy Wentworth Thompson, On Aristotle as a Biologist: With a Prooemion on Herbert Spencer, The Herbert Spencer Lecture for 1913, 31 pp., The Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1913. P. 8)

"... in common with every other creature, Man is modifiable ... [and] his modifications, like those of every other creature, are ultimately determined by surrounding conditions ...." (Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1891. P. 336)

Spencer is aware of environmental factors in social evolution. He ascribes to the mountainous valleys of Greece a leading role in creating the warring petty states or chiefdoms of the Hellenes, and in maintaining their respective independence. (Vol. II, p. 373, 395).
"Where pasture is abundant and covers large area, the keeping of flocks and herds does not necessitate separation of their owners into very small clusters: instance the Comanches, who, with their hunting, join the keeping of cattle, which the members of the tribe combine to guard. But where pastures is not abundant, or is distributed in patches, many cattle cannot be kept together; and their owners consequently have to part." (Herbert Spencer, The Principles of Sociology, Vol. 1, 3rd revised edition, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1890. P. 692)

"These phenomena of social evolution have, of course, to 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." (Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1891. P. 53)

"As already pointed out, we have, in pre-pastoral stages, as among the Bushmen, cases where scarcity of wild food necessitates parting into very small groups, usually single families; and clearly when, instead of game and vermin to be caught, cattle have to be fed, the distribution of pasturage, here in larger cases and there in smaller ones, will determine the numbers of animals, and consequently of human beings, which can keep together." (Herbert Spencer, The Principles of Sociology, Vol. 1, 3rd revised edition, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1890. PP. 692-693)

"While spreading over the Earth mankind have found environments of various characters, and in each case the social life fallen into, partly determined by the social life previously led, has been partly determined by the influences of the new environment...." (Herbert Spencer, The Principles of Sociology, Vol. 3, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1897. P. 331)

"...the society as a whole has the character of its sustaining system determined by the general character of its environment, inorganic and organic...." (Herbert Spencer, The Principles of Sociology, Vol. 1, 1st ed., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1878. P. 615)

Spencer was aware of the effect of environment upon social organization. He pointed out that those regions were the habitable and was much broken up by mountains or bodies of water tended to foster independent political units in a confederacy if threatened from the outside. (Vol. II, Ch. 7).

Spencer employed ecological explanations, although of course he did not call them that. For example, in accounting for compound (as opposed to single) political heads, he pointed out that mountainous terrain, with numerous isolated valleys, favored their formation.
"While the society as a whole has the character of its sustaining system determined by the general character of its environment, inorganic and organic, the respective parts of this system differentiate in adaptation to the circumstances of the localities...." (Herbert Spencer, The Principles of Sociology, Vol. 1, first edition, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1878. P. 615)

"Though, in regions where circumstances permit, the tribes descended from some original tribe migrate in all directions, and become far removed and quite separate; yet, where the territory presents barriers to distant migration, this does not happen: the small kindred communities are held in closer contact, and eventually become more or less united into a nation." (Herbert Spencer, "The Social Organism," In Essays: Scientific, Political, & Speculative, Vol. 1, pp. 265-307, Williams and Norgate, London, 1891. Vol. 1, pp. 281-282)


"Evolution under all its aspects, general and special, is an advance towards equilibrium. We have seen that the theoretical limit towards which the integration and differentiation of every aggregate advances, is a state of balance between all the forces to which its parts are subject, and the forces which its parts oppose to them (First Prin. § 170). And we have seen that organic evolution is a progress towards a moving equilibrium completely adjusted to environing actions." (Herbert Spencer, The Principles of Biology, revised edition, 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1899. Vol. 2, p. 537)

"For example, so far is it from being true, as he Prof. J. E. Cairnes supposes, that the existence of stationery societies is at variance with the doctrine of social evolution, it is, contrariwise, a part of the doctrine that a stationery state, earlier or later reached, is one towards which all evolutorial changes, social or other, inevitably lead." (Herbert Spencer, "A Note on the Preceding Article," The Fortnightly Review, Vol. 23, pp. 214-216, 1875. P. 214)
(James Thompson Bixby, *The Ethics of Evolution*, Small, Maynard and Company, Boston, 1900. (Most of the book seems to be a thoughtful, constructive criticism of Spencer's views on the evolution of ethics.))

(William Ritchie Sorley, *The Ethics of Naturalism*, 1904. Most of the book is on evolution and ethics; Spencer discussed extensively. W. H. Hudson said it contained much valuable criticism of Spencer.)


"Spencer's ethics is, in the large, an attempt to impart to Utilitarian hedonism a scientific and deductive character, and to rescue it from mere empiricism." (Arthur Kenyon Rogers, *English and American Philosophy Since 1800*, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1922. P. 154)

"It is interesting to note, as we have seen, that neither Locke nor Spencer saw any necessary connexion between the diversity of moral judgements but thought on the contrary that a science of ethics was possible." (Morris Ginsberg, *Essays in Sociology and Social Philosophy*, A Pregrine Book, Penguin Books, Baltimore, 1968. P. 256)

"Obviously, indeed, Prof. Huxley cannot avoid admitting that the ethical process, and by implication, the ethical man, are products of the cosmic process. For if the ethical man is not a product of the cosmic process, what is he a product of?" (Herbert Spencer, "Evolutionary Ethics," *The Athenaeum*, No. 3432, pp. 193-194, August 5, 1893. P. 193)

William James, speaking mockingly of the ultimate ethical state envisioned by Spencer, referred to: "... when the ultimate lady-like tea-table elysium of the data of ethics shall prevail, such questions as the breaking of eggs at the large or the small end will span the whole degree scope of possible human warfare ..." (William James, "The Importance of Individuals," *The Open Court*, Vol. 4, pp. 2437-2440, 1890-91. P. 2439)
"But some very respectable philosophers have maintained that there is an abstract right and wrong which may be known and upon which a science of pure ethics can be based.... it is worth noting that Herbert Spencer set out from this point of view and defended it is his Social Statics, but in his later works repudiated it as not sustained by the great body of facts that he had gleaned from the history of all races." (Lester F. Ward, Outlines of Sociology, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1898. P. 76)

"So far as ethical problems were concerned, I at first regarded Mr. Darwin's principles rather as providing a new armoury wherewith to / encounter certain plausible objections of the so-called Intrusionists, than as implying any reconstruction of the utilitarian doctrine itself. Gradually, however, I came to think that a deeper change would be necessary, and I believe that this conviction came to me from a study of some of Mr. Herbert Spencer's works." (Leslie Stephen, The Science of Ethics, second edition, G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1907. Pp. v-vi)

"It will now begin to be seen what "evolution" is for, and I find the main reason why he has jumped over to ethics is that people had got tired of waiting for some / result, and the ethical writers—mainly Sidgwick, of Cambridge—have said, "After all, morality is found to have nothing to do with evolution." " (Letter from Edward L. Youmans to his sister, Eliza A. Youmans, dated December 27, 1878. Quoted in John Fiske, Edward Livingston Youmans, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. Pp. 353-354)

"The 'evolutionary' utilitarianism of Spencer likewise abandons us halfway without any answer, since, following Darwin, it tries to dissolve the concrete historical morality in the biological needs or in the 'social instincts' characteristic of a gregarious animal, and this at a time when the very understanding of morality arises only in an antagonistic milieu, that is, in a society torn by classes ...." (Leon Trotsky, The Basic Writings of Trotsky, edited by Irving Howe, Random House, New York, 1963. P. 377)

"In his famous letter to J. S. Mill, Spencer clearly defined the evolutionary view of ethics, according to which experiences of utility, organised and consolidated through all the generations of the human race, have, by means of hereditary transmission, taken the form of moral intuitions, emotional responses to right and wrong conduct, which have no apparent basis in individual experiences of utility. According to Spencer, ethical development which is from the simple to the complex is conditioned by the social environment." (Anonymous, "The Philosophy of Herbert Spencer," The Edinburgh Review, Vol. 199, pp. 352-373, 1904. P. 371)
"Spencer's "Ethics" is a most vital and original piece of attitude-taking in the world of ideals. His politico-ethical activity in general breathes the purest English spirit of liberty, and his attacks on over-administration and criticisms on the inferiority of great centralized systems are worthy to be the textbooks of individualists the world over. I confess that it is with this part of his work, in spite of its hardness and inflexibility of tone, that I personally sympathize most." (William James, Memories and Studies, Longmans, Green, and Co., New York, 1911. pp. 140-141)

"This great generalization [that "human nature" has been transformed from cruel and brutal to kind and sympathetic as the conditions to which it had to adapt changed] is not only Mr. Spencer's chief contribution to sociology as to psychology, but it is probably destined in time to be regarded as the most important single contribution to the moral sciences since Aristotle. Strictly speaking, it is the only really new contribution to those sciences since the Greeks, the only modern ethical idea not found in Greek philosophical thought." (Franklin H. Giddings, "Modern Sociology," The International Monthly, Vol. 2, pp. 536-554, 1900. P. 540)

"All changes of social arrangements have to be made with a view to the least injustice. Every change involves inflicting evils somewhere, and while out changes must always be in the direction of an ideal equity, they have to be made with a view to the minimum of proximate evil." (Herbert Spencer, letter to the London Daily Chronicle, August 29, 1894. Reprinted in "Mr. Herbert Spencer and the Land Restoration League," Land Restoration Tract, No. 1, Office of the English Land Restoration League, London, December, 1894. P. 9)

In arguing that his approach to the problems of ethics was scientific rather than a priori, Spencer wrote: "... the method I contend for is that of deducing from the laws of life under given conditions, results which follow from them in the same necessary way as does the trajectory of a cannon-shot from the laws of motion and atmospheric resistance." (Herbert Spencer, "Replies to Criticisms on The Data of Ethics," Mind, Vol. 6, pp. 82-98, 1881. P. 86)

Writing of Shakespeare's "Measure for Measure" Lilly says: "And it must be confessed that if judged by the latest, and presumably the most perfect, system of Protestant morals, Isabella's virginal constancy is indefensible. 'Totality of life in self, in offspring, and in fellow-men,' is Mr. Herbert Spencer's criterion of most highly evolved conduct, of conduct superlatively ethical. Such totality Isabella would certainly have achieved by compliance with Angelo's desire; and therefore, I suppose, her non-compliance stands condemned by the Spencerian rule of right and wrong." (W. S. Lilly, Studies in Religion and Literature, Chapman & Hall, London, 1904. P. 22)
"The points, then, of resemblance in the philosophy of Paracelsus [in Browning's poem] and Herbert Spencer which we have traced here are: that conduct, love, happiness, are all subject to the laws of evolution, that is, our ideas of good conduct, true love, and real happiness are ever reaching out towards higher standards; that pleasure and happiness are legitimate as the ultimate aim of conduct, though a high moral sense will often prevent pleasure from being the immediate aim; that as our standards of pleasure become higher, our egoistic gratifications will depend on the most exalted altruistic actions, love and sympathy for our fellow-creatures will reign supreme; that, notwithstanding knowledge of absolute good comes by slow degrees, there exists in us a consciousness of the absolute, and to know consists in "opening out a way whence the imprisoned splendor may escape."" (Helen A. Clarke, "Paracelsus" and "The Data of Ethics", Poet-Lore, Vol. 1, pp. 117-127, 1889. P. 125)

"Two sentences which have become classical may represent the best results accomplished, up to this time, by the science of ethics. One is the phrase of Matthew Arnold, that speaks of the Power, not ourselves, that makes for righteousness: the other is that of Spencer, that speaks of the experiences of utility, organized and consolidated through all past generations of the human race, as having become in us the source of the faculties of moral intuition. These sentences stand over against one another, expressing the fundamental principles of opposing schools. One speaks of a purpose in the universe: the other is designed to exclude all teleological conceptions. The one makes righteousness the end towards which and for which a Power not ourselves is working: the other represents righteousness as subordinate to other results which have come to pass through it." (C. C. Everett, "The Data of Ethics," The Unitarian Review and Religious Magazine, Vol. 13, pp. 43-59, 1880. P. 43)

"I can't for the life of me understand how the professor can reconcile his distressingly clever discovery of "a metaphysical creed" and a "tea table elysium" on the Spencerian system with Spencer's own careful statements to the effect that there can be no such thing as a moral science but as drawn from the tangible progress of events, and measured from the point of view of a postulated ideal. The professor seems to be shrieking for the recognition of something like this as if it were his own discovery of the nebular hypothesis. He doesn't seem to see that Spencer's philosophy includes his own, for what it is worth, and that his self-elected position as metaphysical funny man is almost pathetically unimpressive." (Letter from E. A. Robinson to John Hays Gardiner dated November 2, 1898. Quoted in Selected Letters of Edwin Arlington Robinson, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1940. Pp. 15-16)
"In his Data of Ethics Herbert Spencer gives to the world the results of his investigation into the foundation of morality. These inquiries he conducted independently of the New Testament, with reference to the facts and laws of human nature. By his own peculiar processes of reasoning, he develops a practical rule of morality which is simply a restatement of the Christian law. How far he may have been unable to divest himself of New Testament ideas, and was unconsciously led by them in his investigations, can, of course, never be determined; but this distinguished living sociologist un­designedly bears his testimony to the rationale of moral principles inculcated by Jesus Christ. Nor can he resist the acknowledgment that the conclusion he has reached is "a rationalized version of the ethical principles of the current creed"—in short, a verifica­tion of Christ's teachings." (Daniel Dorchester, D.D., Christianity in the United States, revised edition, Hunt & Eaton, New York, 1895, P. 660)

"... Herbert Spencer into whose empiricism Darwin inculcated the idea of 'evolution' as a special vaccine, taught that in the moral sphere evolution proceeds from 'sensations' to ideas. Sensa­tions conform to the criterion of immediate pleasure, while ideas permit one to be guided by the criterion of future, lasting and higher pleasure. Thus the moral criterion here, too is that of 'pleasure' and happiness: But the content of this criterion ac­quires breadth and depth depending upon the level of 'evolution.' In this way Herbert Spencer too, though the methods of this own 'evolutionary' utilitarianism, showed that the principle, 'the end justifies the means' does not embrace anything immoral. It is naive however, to expect from this abstract 'principle' an answer to the practical question: what may we, and what may we not do? Moreover this principle 'the end justifies the means' naturally raises the question 'and what justifies the end?' In practical life as in the historical movement the end and the means constant­ly change places." (Leon Trotsky, The Basic Writings of Trotsky, edited by Irving Howe, Random House, New York, 1963, Pp. 376-377)

"This last remark may suggest some answer to the more special question, whether my book has not been made superfluous by the dis­cussion of the same topic upon the same / assumptions by the lead­ing exponent of the philosophy of evolution in Mr. Herbert Spencer's Data of Ethics. To this I reply that I differ from Mr. Herbert Spen­cer in various ways; and moreover, that we really stand at differ­ent points of view. Mr. Spencer has worked out an encyclopaedic sys­tem, of which his ethical system is the crown and completion. I, on the contrary, have started from the old ethical theories, and am trying to bring them into harmony with the scientific principles which I take for granted. My aim is more limited, though we ought to coincide in results so far as we cover the same ground. I have, as it were, surveyed the province from within, without attempting to pass the frontiers, whilst he reaches the provinces after sur­veying the whole empire of scientific thought; ...." (Leslie Step­hen, The Science of Ethics, second edition, G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1907. Pp. vii-viii)
"But so far from regarding these intellectual recognitions of utility as preceding and causing the moral sentiment, I regard the moral sentiment as preceding such recognitions of utility, and making them possible. The pleasures and pains directly resulting in experience from sympathetic and unsympathetic actions, had first to be slowly associated with such actions, and the resulting incentives and deterrents frequently obeyed, before there could arise the perceptions that sympathetic and unsympathetic actions are remotely beneficial or detrimental to the actor; and they had to be obeyed still longer and more generally before there could arise the perceptions that they are socially beneficial or detrimental. When, however, the remote effects, personal and social, have gained general recognition, are expressed in current maxims, and lead to in- / junctions having the religious sanction, the sentiments that prompt sympathetic actions and check unsympathetic ones are immensely strengthened by their alliances." (Herbert Spencer, "Morals and Moral Sentiments," The Fortnightly Review, Vol. 15. pp. 419-432, 1871. P. 431)

"He Herbert Spencer, too like John Locke, is concerned to disprove the theory of a universal moral sense. In harmony with his evolutionary theory he concludes that each society develops the kind of morals needed for its survival. We must accordingly expect a general correlation between social type and moral sentiments—a correlation which will be close in respect of conditions essential for survival, but less complete in matters such as temperance and chastity which need not directly interfere with the fundamental needs of social cooperation. The correlations are, however, not defined with any precision and, in any case, they are not employed by him to justify any extreme forms of ethical relativity. On the contrary, he thinks it possible to reach an 'Absolute Ethics', concerned with ascertaining / necessary relations between actions and their consequences, and 'deducing from fundamental principles what conduct be detrimental and what conduct must be beneficial' in an ideal society (Spencer 1892, I, p. 58). From these principles Relative Ethics can derive in a more empirical manner the code applicable to actual societies." (Morris Ginsberg, Essays in Sociology and Social Philosophy, A Peregrine Book, Penguin Books, Baltimore, 1968. Pp. 237-238)

Herbert Spencer "... made probably the most important scientific contributions to that field. Yet made ...." (Henry Holt, Garrulities of an Octogenarian Editor, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1923. P. 333)
ETHNOCENTRISM

In referring to Spencer, Herskovits spoke of "... the deter­
mined ethnocentrism that marked his thinking." (Melville J. Hers­

"Instead of passing over as of no account, or else regarding
as purely mischievous, the superstitions of the primitive man, we
must inquire what part they play in / social evolution; and must
be prepared, if need be, to recognize their usefullness." (Herbert

"Thus, then, contemplating social structures and actions from
the evolution point of view, we may preserve that calmness which
is needful for scientific interpretation of them, without losing
our powers of feeling moral reprobation or approbation." (Herbert
pany, New York, 1899. P. 242)

"Characters are to be / found among rude peoples which compare
well with those of the best among cultivated peoples. With little
knowledge and but rudimentary arts, there in some cases go virtues
which might shame those among ourselves whose education and polish
are of the highest." (Herbert Spencer, The Principles of Sociology,

"Yet only by seeing things as the savage sees them can his
ideas be understood, his / behaviour accounted for, and the re­
sulting social phenomena explained." (Herbert Spencer, The Study

"While describing and illustrating the various forms / of bias
which a student of Sociology must guard against, I became conscious
[while writing The Study of Sociology] that I myself needed the
warnings I was giving. The result was that, while retaining my so­
cial ideals, I gained a greater readiness to recognize the relative
goodness of forms which have passed away, and a greater prepared­
ness for looking at the various factors of social development in an
unprejudiced manner. Without losing my aversion to certain barbaric
institutions, sentiments, and beliefs, considered in the abstract,
I became more impressed with the necessity of contemplating them
calmly, as having been in their times and places the best that were
possible, and as unavoidably to be passed through in the course of
social evolution." (Herbert Spencer, An Autobiography, 2 Vols.,
"Another trait which has been ascribed to primitive man is his inability of concentration when any demand is made upon the more complex faculties of the intellect. I will mention an example which seems to make clear the error committed in this assumption. In his description of the natives of the west coast of Vancouver Island, Sproat says: "The native mind, to an educated man, seems generally to be asleep .... On his attention being fully aroused, he often shows much quickness in reply and ingenuity in argument. But a short conversation wearies him, particularly if questions are asked that require efforts of thought or memory on his part. The mind of the savage then appears to rock to and fro out of mere weakness." Spencer, who quotes this passage, adds a number of others corroborating this point. I happen to know the tribes mentioned by Sproat through personal contact. The questions put by the traveller seem mostly trifling to the Indian and he naturally soon tires of a conversation carried on in a foreign language and one in which he finds nothing to interest him. I can assure you that the interest of those natives can easily be raised to a high pitch and that I have often been the one who was wearied out first." (Franz Boas, "Human Faculty as Determined by Race," Proceedings of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, Vol. 43, pp. 301-327, 1894. Pp. 320-321)

"And thus prepared, we need feel no surprise on being told that the Zuni Indians require "much facial contortion and bodily gesticulation to make their sentences perfectly intelligible;" that the language of the Bushmen needs so many signs to eke out its meaning, that "they are unintelligible in the dark;" and that the Arapahos "can hardly converse with one another in the dark."" (Herbert Spencer, The Principles of Sociology, 1st edition, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1878. P. 149) (Spencer gave no sources for any of his quotations in the first edition of Principles of Sociology, but in the third edition, 1885, he added them. The Zuni reference is Popular Science Monthly, 1876, p. 580. Francis Klett, "The Zuni Indians of New Mexico," Pop. Sci. Monthly, 84, 1894. The Bushmen and Arapaho references are Sir John Lubbock, The Origin of Civilization, 4th ed., 1882, p. 413. But the for the first edition of Principles of Sociology, Spencer must have used an earlier edition, such as the first edition, 1870. The Bushmen quote is from Lubbock himself, and he gives no source. The Arapaho quote is taken by Lubbock from Richard Burton, The City of the Saints, p. 151)

In Principles of Sociology, Vol. 1, first edition, p. 149, Spencer had quoted from Lubbock, and through him from Richard Burton, passages indicating that the Bushmen, Zuni, and Arapaho had such primitive languages they had great need of gestures, and so could hardly communicate at night. J. W. Powell corrected Spencer's error: "The Zuni and the Arapaho Indians have a language with a complex grammar and copious vocabulary well adapted to the expression of the thoughts incident to their customs and status of culture, and they have no more difficulty in conveying their thoughts with their language by night than Englishmen have in conversing without gaslight." (p. 86) Powell used this as one example "to illustrate the worthlessness of a vast body of anthropologic material to which even the best writers resort." (p. 86) (Elsewhere in this article Powell criticized Richard Burton's The City of the Saints in particular.) (J. W. Powell, "On Limitations to the Use of some Anthropologic Data," First Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology 1879-80, pp. 71-86, Washington, D.C., 1881)
"Spencer mentions as a particular case of this impulsiveness the improvidence of primitive man. I believe it would be more proper to say instead of 'providence, optimism. "Why should I not be as successful to-morrow as I was to-day?" is the guiding thought of primitive man." (Franz Boas, "Human Faculty as Determined by Race," Proceedings of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, Vol. 43, pp. 301-327, 1894. P. 320)

"In reaching such results [his general formulation of cultural evolution] Spencer made systematic use of materials from primitive life; and discriminating readers will readily discern that he would have attained to those results with great difficulty, if at all, and with much less surety, had he, after the order of his predecessors, rejected primitive materials or known nothing about them." (William Graham Sumner and Albert Galloway Keller, The Science of Society, Vol. 3, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1929. P. 219)

"... it is his [Comte's] analogies between politics and physics which are so illuminating in his work, as in that of his English compeer, Herbert Spencer; and it is the weakness of both in the direction of anthropology [Myres means their supposed lack of ethnographic knowledge] which mainly accounts for the shortness of their respective vogues." (John L. Myres, "The Influence of Anthropology on The Course of Political Science," University of California Publications in History, Vol. 4, No. 1, 1916, 81pp. P. 67)

"Approaching the subject from the standpoint of anthropology (the data on contemporary societies in his Descriptive Sociology were not collected until later and were then probably interpreted in the light of the previously collected data from primitive societies), he concerned himself primarily with the interpretation of primitive life and thought." (L. L. Bernard, "Herbert Spencer's Work in the Light of His Life," The Monist, Vol. 31, pp. 1-35, 1921. P. 7)

"It is difficult to understand why Mr. Spencer has ransacked travellers' accounts of all the savages in the world, and has barely opened the records of classical antiquity which, although they mostly belong to times of well-advanced civilization [sic], have preserved for us priceless evidences of archaic belief and usage. When we say mostly, we of course refer to the important exception of the Homeric poems. The result is that Mr. Spencer overlooks many interesting and difficult questions, and also misses opportunities for strengthening his illustrations." (Anonymous, "Spencer's Ceremonial Institutions," The Saturday Review of Politics, Literature, Science, and Art, Vol. 49, pp. 21-22, 1880. P. 22)
"In forming an opinion of the mental capacities of people, an examination of their language is no doubt extremely useful. But such an examination requires considerable care and circumspection. Mr. H. Spencer says /The Principle of Sociology, Vol. 1, 1st edition, p. 142/, "When we read of an existing South American tribe, that the proposition, 'I am an Abipone,' is expressible only in the vague way, 'I Abipone,' we cannot but infer that by such undeveloped grammatical structures only the simplest thoughts can be rightly conveyed." Would not some of the most perfect languages in the world fall under the same condemnation?" (F. Max Müller, Lectures on the Origin and Growth of Religion, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1879. P. 83)

"Volumes II. and III. of Principles of Sociology are exclusively devoted to Institutions—Ceremonial, Political, Ecclesiastical, Professional, Industrial—and even in such very modern institutions as Co-operation and Socialism we have the irrepressible Bushmen of South Africa, Red Indians, and Australian savages brought up as examples. Now it is not that we have the evolution of institutions in these 134 chapters—but the larger part of all of them is devoted to primitive types, often to mere 'sports' or abnormal accidents, incalculable caprice, and curious survivals." (Frederic Harrison, "Sociology: Its Definitions and Its Limits," The Sociological Review, Vol. 3, pp. 97-104, 1910. P. 103)

"In informing ourselves ... about the growth and functions of society, we are almost entirely dependent on testimony of an exceedingly defective kind—the chronicles of credulous and hasty historians, and the narratives of ill-trained or unscrupulous travellers, or the incidental allusions of soldiers or geographers." (p. 289) "... an effort to base a science on literature must necessarily be tentative and unsatisfactory. This is no reason for not making it in the present case and Mr. Spencer is not answerable for the imperfections of his materials ...." (p. 289) (Anonymous (E. L. Godkin), "Spencer's Descriptive Sociology," The Nation, Vol. 19, pp. 288-289, 1874)

"Spencer's "Descriptive Sociology" is chiefly derived from the latter ... books of travel of untrained observers which are written to sell, and all its statements have to be taken cum grano salis." (Lester F. Ward, Review of Principles of Sociology by Franklin H. Giddings, Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, Vol. 8, pp. 1-31, 1896. P. 28)

"For myself I get utterly weary of the barbarous mutilations and nasty tricks of savages with which Spencer deluged Sociology out of the notes of his "Descriptive Sociology." Ninety-nine out of every hundred of his references regale us with these Aqualid brutalities. We know now enough about the persistence of irrational customs in all races and in all ages. But I decline to regard the tattoo marks on a Fijian girl's back as a contribution to Sociology." (Frederic Harrison, "Sociology: Its Definition and Its Limits," The Sociological Review, Vol. 3, pp. 97-104, 1910. Pp. 103-104)
"Mr. Spencer's successors will probably not feel, as he now does, that the study of the habits of filthy savages is far better than that of the lives of illustrious Europeans ...." (Anonymous [William James], "Herbert Spencer's Data of Ethics," The Nation, Vol. 28, pp. 178-179, 1879. P. 178)


"I could wish that the whole five volumes of Native Races of the Pacific States were already available," writes Herbert Spencer to me in February, 1875, "and had been so for some time past; for the tabular statements and extracts made for the Descriptive Sociology, by Professor Duncan would have been more complete than at present."" (Hubert Howe Bancroft, Literary Industries; A Memoir, Harper & Brothers, New York, 1891. P. 189)

"Mr. Herbert Spencer writes me: "In less than a year I hope to send you the first volume of the Principles of Sociology, in which you will see that I have made frequent and important uses of your book Native Races of the Pacific States:" and indeed nothing could be more flattering than the references therein made to the Native Races. "During my summer in Europe," says Mr. Gilman in a letter from Baltimore, "I have frequently heard your great work spoken of, but nowhere with more commendation than I heard from Herbert Spencer. I am sure you must be more than paid for your labor by the wide-spread satisfaction it has given." (Hubert Howe Bancroft, Literary Industries; A Memoir, Harper & Brothers, New York, 1891. P.185)

Spencer obtained information not only from published sources, but also from several correspondents (India, Japan), and from the Japanese minister to England.

"Spencer's access to empirical data was limited, but there is no doubt that he was an original thinker." (Alexander Alland, Jr., Evolution and Human Behavior, The Natural History Press, Garden City, 1967. P. 173)

Then there is the matter of Spencer's "evidence" with which he supports many of his conclusions—arrived at a priori. The Bushmen and the Arapahos "can hardly converse with one another in the dark" (Ch. X, p. 149). And so on..... L. A. White
... a prime fallacy in Mr. Spencer's system of sociology is the assumption that we can find in the primitive man all the evidence which is needed to explain the social man in general." (Albion W. Small, General Sociology, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1905. P. 99)

"... his studies of the Abors, the Eodas, the Creeks, the Dhimals, the Egahs, and other queer people, to the end of the alphabet, of whom his later books are as full as those of the pedants of the last century were of classical quotations ...." (Henry George, A Perplexed Philosopher, Robert Schalkenbach Foundation, New York, 1965. P. 169)

Spencer's evolution does not take us to the advent of civilization and then stop. He deals with historically known higher societies: Egypt, Assyria, Greece, Rome, England, France.

"The impact of Spencer's stupendous collection of ethnological data, with its obvious implications as to the non-theological origins of human institutions, was stunning to the mind trained in traditional ways of thinking. His ideas were regarded as even more dangerous than those of Comte." (L. L. Bernard and Jessie Bernard, Origins of American Sociology, Thomas Y. Crowell Company, New York, 1943. P. 844)

Harry Elmer Barnes, quoting at length a passage from Spencer's Autobiography in which the latter explains the mechanics of how he organized his voluminous and disparate ethnographic notes, attempts to ridicule or invalidate Spencer's work thereby. But this attempt is itself invalid. It is for Barnes—or any other critic of Spencer—to cite particular propositions in Principles of Sociology and to show that they are incorrect.

"Professional anthropologists soon came to be disdainful of the travelers' yarns and other questionable sources on which Spencer, in his day and generation, had been compelled so heavily to rely, and eventually their attitude was conveyed to the sociologists. After World War I, to set the very latest date, data were seldom if ever openly drawn from Spencer's treatises or from the works to which they referred." (Howard Becker, "Anthropology and Sociology," in For a Science of Social Man, edited by John Gillin, pp. 102-159, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1954. Pp. 130-131)
"His [Spencer's] method was one—that of the classical anthropologists—which is abandoned by all scholarly and critical ethnologists at the present time. He would gather together illustrative material from his Descriptive Sociology bearing upon the evolution of any particular institution, absolutely regardless of the relation of the particular practice to the whole cultural complex of the particular localities from which the information was drawn, or of the different stages of culture which contributed evidence in support of his thesis. The Shoshonean Indians and the Italian cities at the time of the Renaissance might thus be offered as supporting evidence for any particular process or "stage" in social evolution." (Harry Elmer Barnes, "Some Typical Contributions of English Sociology to Political Theory," The American Journal of Sociology, Vol. 27, pp. 289-324, 1921. P. 306)

"Spencer's interests were essentially sociological. While he recognised that social systems could only be perceived and formulated by abstraction from the actual manners and customs of particular groups of men, his treatment of cultural phenomena as an "accumulation of superorganic products" was symptomatic of his secondary and derived interest in the content of cultural behaviour and the conditions that shaped it. It did not focus attention on the needs and difficulties of objective and meticulous examination of cultural phenomena and too easily assumed that facts adequate for sociological inference were easily gained and that one observer was as good as another. In other words, Spencer was an indifferent ethnographer." (Daryll Forde, "The Integration of Anthropological Studies," Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute, Vol. 78, pp. 1-10, 1948. P. 2)

"Of the wealth of illustration, the enormous array of facts which Mr. Spencer has brought together in these volumes, it is desirable to say that they have been made the subject of some unjust criticism. It is true that Mr. Spencer has depended upon the reports of travelers, explorers and missionaries for the greater part of his material; it is true that the observations so obtained have not always been made with critical discernment; but, on the other hand, it is to be remembered that comparatively little work has ever been done in sociological observation by trained observers. The test, therefore, that should be applied to Mr. Spencer's data is the question: "Has he on the whole made a discriminating and critical use of such material as was available?" When judged by this standard, Mr. Spencer's work in sociology will be found to be above the average level of treatises on anthropology and ethnology." (Franklin H. Giddings, "Review of Spencer's Principles of Sociology, Vol. 3," Science, Vol. 5, pp. 732-733, 1897)
"EVOLUTION" – THE TERM


"Ever since 1839, J. P. Nichol, the astronomer, had been writing and re-writing a whole series of book popularizing astronomy. Over and over again, basing his conclusions on the nebular observations of the younger Herschel, he had painted a picture of a universe in the process of creation and in 1855 had used the word "evolution" to describe it." (Morse Peckham, "Darwinism and Darwinisticism," Victorian Studies, Vol. 5, pp. 19-40, 1959. P. 25)

"When the philosopher Herbert Spencer popularized the term evolution to denote the natural development of life on earth, he certainly intended to convey the impression of a necessary progress toward higher states." (Peter J. Bowler, Evolution; The History of an Idea. 3rd edition. University of California Press. Berkeley and Los Angeles, 2003. P. 8)

"In reply to question from Professor A. S. Packard, of Brown University, Providence, Spencer wrote (15 August, 1902): 'I believe you are right in crediting me with the introduction of the word 'evolution.' I did not, however, introduce it in the place of 'epigenesis,' or any word of specially biological application, but as a word fit for expressing the process of evolution throughout its entire range, inorganic and organic. I believe the introduction of it was between 1857, when 'Progress: Its Law and Cause' (was issued), and the time when the scheme for the Synthetic Philosophy was drawn up; and the adoption of it arose from the perception that 'progress' has an anthropocentric meaning, and that there needed a word free from that." (Duncan, p. 551n.)

"Lyell also gave Darwin one thing more: the word evolution, which he was the first to use in the sense of transformation of species in considering Lamarck's theory. [Footnote quotes passage from Lyell I have quoted.] This was in the volume of his Principles of Geology which Darwin received on 26 October 1832. Herbert Spencer used it in his essay on 'The Development Hypothesis' in 1852, and Darwin himself in the 6th edition of the Origin of Species, published in 1872." [No evidence is presented of the contention that Darwin got the word "evolution" from Lyell.] (Sir Gavin de Beer, "Charles Darwin," Proceedings of the British Academy, Vol. 44, pp. 163-183, 1958)
The word "evolution" was used about a dozen times in "Progress: Its Law and Cause," but it was still subordinate to "progress" as the master term by which Spencer described the major transformation of social forms.

"... what we call the moral law—the law of equal freedom, is the law under which individuation becomes perfect; and that ability to recognise and act up to this law, is the final endowment of humanity—an endowment of humanity—an endowment now in process of evolution." (p. 440) "Civilization is evolving a state of things and a kind of character, in which two apparently conflicting requirements are reconciled." (p. 441) (Herbert Spencer, Social Statics, John Chapman, London, 1851. These are the only usages of the word evolution or evolved that I have found in the first edition of Social Statics--RLC)

"It is not that the word "evolution" was not used before in natural history, although, curiously enough, Darwin did not use it once in his "Origin of Species"; for since the second half of the eighteenth century we find it used by Bonnet, and afterward by Laurillard, the assistant and right hand of George Cuvier, who recalled the observations of Bonnet on evolution. If Lamarck had used it in his "Philosophie Zoologique," his theory might have had another destiny during his lifetime. Darwin had the acuteness to see what a capital handle it would make for his theory, and as soon as he saw it in Spencer's work, he transferred the word into all his other works, speaking constantly of the "principles of evolution." His sympathizers took to evolution, and now evolution is everywhere. It has dethroned revolution completely. The word "evolution" a fait fortune according to a French proverb." (Jules Marcou, Life, Letters, and Works of Louis Agassiz, 2 Vols., Macmillan and Co., New York, 1896. Vol. 2, p. 116)

The idea "of evolution as a pervading cosmical process we derive from Herbert Spencer alone. Even the word is Mr. Spencer's; before his time, it was never used, I believe, in that particular sense; and after him, it was seldom employed by Darwin, who used it (when he used it at all) in reference to Mr. Spencer's general concepts. So, too, the phrases, "survival of the fittest," "adaptation to the environment," and others, due entirely to Mr. Spencer, are regarded as a rule by the averagely well-read man as purely "Darwinian."" (Grant Allen, "Spencer and Darwin," Appleton's Popular Science Monthly, Vol. 50, pp. 815-828, 1896-97. P. 818. [reprinted from Fortnightly Review]
"Now that biologists have shown that biological advance is neither inevitable nor unilinear, and that thinkers have been able to provide general definitions of evolution more satisfactory than those of earlier evolutionary philosophers like Herbert Spencer / or Bergson ...." (Julian Huxley, *Evolution The Modern Synthesis*, John Wiley & Sons, Inc., New York, 1964. Unpaginated Introduction to this edition, pp. 31-32 counting first page of type as 1)
"The proper application of the principle of natural selection to societies is to see a competition of societal forms for survival, but what Spencer sees is a competition for survival of the members of any society. Spencer sees society as properly a proving ground in which the "breed" is to be improved by the elimination of those members of society who fail in the competitive activities traditionalized in the society. "Social Darwinism," then, has nothing directly to do with societal evolution. It has to do with the continuing biological evolution of the human species, with "improving the breed," in which the proper function of society is to increase the selective pressure." (Georg Weisd, letter of May 4, 1966).

"Fostering the good-for-nothing at the expense of the good, is an extreme cruelty. It is a deliberate stirring-up of misery for future generations. There is no greater curse to posterity than that of bequeathing to them an increasing population of imbeciles and idlers and criminals." This aspect of Spencer's thought was to provide a basis for the most vigorous branch of applied sociology in Britain in the first twenty years of the next century---Eugenics." (Philip Abrams, The Origins of British Sociology: 1834-1914, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1968. P. 74)

"... Eugenics, was foreshadowed by Spencer ...." (Victor Brandler, Interpretations and Forecasts, Mitchell Kennerley, New York, 1914. P. 3)
"Already in the essays on the 'Genesis of Science' and the 'Art of Education,' as well as in the Principles of Psychology, increase of definiteness had been recognized as a characteristic of advancing development; and already, in each of these, there had also been recognized as characterizing one or other kind of development, a growing integration. Yet in this essay on 'Progress: Its Law and Cause,' there is no recognition of these traits as holding of things in general. The sole trait of progress alleged and illustrated throughout all its stages, is the transition from the homogeneous to the heterogeneous; and the sole cause assigned is the multiplication of effects." (Auto. I, 501).

"Herbert Spencer (1820-1903) was, properly speaking, the first modern evolutionist. His masterful mind made the first great synthesis of the accumulated data of modern science and formulated the evolutionary hypothesis in its most comprehensive or universal form." (Newell LeRoy Sims, The Problem of Social Change, Thomas Y. Crowell Company, New York, 1939. P. 82)

"Students and investigators in all departments, alike in the physical and in the historical sciences, were fairly driven by the nature of the phenomena before them into some hypothesis, more or less, vague, of gradual and orderly change or development. The world was therefore ready and waiting for Herbert Spencer's mighty work when it came, and it was for that reason that it was so quickly triumphant over the old order of thought." (John Fiske, Edward Livingston Youmans, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. P. 103)

"The application of the evolutionary concept to human history and institutions, the great work of Hegel, influenced Spencer considerably. And its effects on Protestant theology can be seen in lectures of Professor Shedd of the Presbyterian Union Theological Seminary." (Morris Raphael Cohen, American Thought: A Critical Sketch, Collier Books, New York 1962. P. 89. [first published by the Free Press, 1954])

"Sir, I happened recently to be re-reading your poem "The Two Voices" [written ca. 1842], and coming to the verse

Or if thro' lower lives I came—
Tho' all experience past became
Consolidate in mind and frame—

it occurred to me that you might like to glance through a book which applies to the elucidation of mental science, the hypothesis to which you refer. I therefore beg your acceptance of [Principles of Psychology], which I send by this post. With much sympathy yours, Herbert Spencer." (Letter from Herbert Spencer to Alfred Tennyson dated 1855 [Undoubtedly written in the latter half of that year since Principles of Psychology was first published in July, 1855]. Quoted in Alfred Lord Tennyson, A Memoir, by His Son [Hallam Tennyson], 2 Vols., The Macmillan Company, New York, 1905. Vol. 1, p. 411)
A letter written by Spencer in 1845 refers to reading a review of Humboldt's Kosmos in The Westminster Review, and inferring from quotations contained in the review that Humboldt had a leading toward the 'development theory.' This shows that Spencer was still interested in organic evolution.

"The notion of development was in the air. But it remained for Darwin to demonstrate the theory as a working principle in biology, and for Spencer to formulate it, give it broad application, and make it current in popular as well as in scientific thought. These two men, supplementing each other in genius and method, have thus co-operated in establishing evolution as a working hypothesis in the domain of science, and have put every man, in whatever field of thought, under the necessity of reinterpreting his world from this point of view. Evolution once established as a general point of view, the genetic method is inevitable. This method in the hand of the specialist has developed into the most effective instrument of contemporary science." (W. Rose, "Herbert Spencer as a Philosopher," Journal of Proceedings and Addresses of the Forty-Third Annual Meeting of the National Education Association, pp. 231-235, 1904. P. 234)

"In 1855 Mr. Herbert Spencer ("Principles of Psychology," 2d edit. vol. i p. 465) expressed "the belief that life under all its forms has arisen by an unbroken evolution, and through the instrumentality of what are called natural causes." This was my belief also at that time." (John Tyndall, Address delivered before the British Association for the Advancement of Science meeting in Belfast, August 19, 1874, in Fragments of Science, pp. 443-494, 6th edition, A. L. Burt Company, New York, n.d. P. 472n.)

"Spencer saw unity where others had seen chaos: he invented a word for that unity, and called it Evolution: the word answered to a want, an idea of the age; so it stuck immediately. Followers of the master popularized it by degrees in everyday speech; and thousands use the familiar expression to-day without the faintest notion that they owe both phrase and concept in the main to the author of the System of Synthetic Philosophy." (Grant Allen, "The Gospel According to Herbert Spencer," Part I, The Pall Mall Gazette, April 26, 1890, pp. 1-2. P. 2)

"... emphatically and before all other men, Mr. Spencer is the inventor and patentee of Evolution. And as our age is essentially the age of evolution, Mr. Spencer may fairly claim to rank as its truest prophet. The very word is his: it is he, and he alone, who first employed and popularized it in its existing philosophical and cosmical sense." (Grant Allen, "The Gospel According to Herbert Spencer," Part I, The Pall Mall Gazette, April 26, 1890, pp. 1-2. P. 1)
"It was not strange that among the younger men whose opinions were molded between 1830 and 1840 there should have been one of organizing genius, with a mind inexhaustibly fertile in suggestions, who should undertake to elaborate a general doctrine of evolution, to embrace in one grand coherent system of generalizations all the minor generalizations which workers in different departments of science were establishing. It is this prodigious work of construction that we owe to Herbert Spencer. He is the originator and author of what we know to-day as the doctrine of evolution, the doctrine which undertakes to formulate and put into scientific shape the conception of evolution toward which scientific investigation had so long been tending." (John Fiske, "The Doctrine of Evolution: Its Scope and Influence," The Popular Science Monthly, Vol. 39, pp. 577-599, 1891. P. 588)

"By Life I everywhere mean the true Idea of Life, or that most general form under which Life manifests itself to us, which includes all its other forms. This I have stated to be the tendency to individualization, and the degrees or intensities of Life to consist in the progressive realization of this tendency." (Samuel Taylor Coleridge, The Idea of Life. Hints Toward the Formation of A More Comprehensive Theory of Life, edited by Seth B. Watson, John Churchill, London, 1848. P. 49)

"How I came by the idea that a low type of animal consists of numerous like parts performing like functions, while a high type of animal consists of relatively few unlike parts performing unlike functions, I do not remember. It may have been from Professor Rymer Jones's Animal Kingdom; for some of the facts cited are, I think, from that work." (H. Spencer, "The Filiation of Ideas," p. 315) (Jane Fajans looked through this book for me in October, 1968, but found no such discussion.)

"As far back as 1850, when In Social Statics I did not yet recognize evolution as a process co-extensive with the cosmos, but only as a process exhibited in man and in society." (Herbert Spencer, "Evolutionary Ethics," Popular Science Monthly, Vol. 52, pp. 497-502, 1898. P. 498)

Meanwhile, Spencer developed his idea, (of the general law of evolution) and in April 1857, two years and a half before Darwin's book and fifteen months before the famous parallel communications of Darwin and Alfred Russel Wallace to the Linnéan Society, the Westminster Review published the long essay on "Progress: Its Law and Cause."

"In the lowest forms of the vegetable and animal world we perceive totality dawning into individualization, while in man, as the highest of the class, the individuality is not only perfected in its corporeal sense, but begins a new series beyond the appropriate units of physiology." (Samuel Taylor Coleridge, The Idea of Life. Hints Toward the Formation of A More Comprehensive Theory of Life, edited by Seth B. Watson, John Churchill, London, 1848. P. 48)
"In his general philosophy the two parallel processes, originally suggested by economic science, are distinguished as differentiation and integration, terms borrowed from the language of the higher mathematics." (Alfred William Benn, The History of English Rationalism in the Nineteenth Century, 2 Vols., Longmans, Green, and Co., London, 1906. Vol. 2, p. 211)

"Evolution was conceived by classical evolutionists as an unfolding of a potential, and before the process would be sketched it was necessary to determine what was being unfolded." (Kenneth E. Bock, "Evolution, Function, and Change," American Sociological Review, Vol. 28, pp. 229-237, 1963. P. 231)

"Then came the congruous formula of Von Baer--of development from the homogeneous to the heterogeneous. At the same time had arisen the correlative conception of divergence and redivergence, and consequent increasing multiformity, as occurring in organisms, in governmental organizations, and in the genesis of the sciences. Advance from the indefinite to the definite, as displayed in the individual mind and in the mind of humanity, had also been recognized. Thus various ideas, forming components of a theory of evolution, were lying ready for organization." ("The Filiation of Ideas," in Duncan, p. 546)

In the article "The Art of Education," published in The North British Review for May, 1854, it is possible to note that Spencer's evolutionary ideas were growing. He wrote that mind "like all things that develop, it progresses from the homogeneous to the heterogeneous," and also that "the development of the mind, as all other development, is an advance from the indefinite to the definite." (Auto. I, 438)

"Now nature proceeds in its operation from the simple to the complex; and among things which result from natural agency that which is more complex is the more perfect and constitutes the integration and purpose of the others. One can at once see this in respect of any whole and its parts." (Thomas Aquinas, Introduction to "Commentary on the Politics of Aristotle," quoted in Aquinas, Selected Political Writings, edited by A. P. D'Entreves, translated by J. G. Dawson, Basil Blackwood, Oxford, 1959. P. 195)

Prof. Adam Sedgwick, a geologist, in a lecture to the Geological Society of London in 1831 is supposed to have said: "We have a series of proofs the most emphatic and convincing that the approach to the present system of things has been gradual, and that there has been a progressive development of organic structure subservient to the purposes of life." (According to Edward L. Youmans) See Catalogue of Scientific Papers (1800-1863) Compiled by the Royal Society of London, Vol. 5, 1871, p. 617 to try to track down the paper in which it was published.
John Fiske called the 1855 edition of Spencer's Principles of Psychology "the profoundest work I ever read.... The author has discovered a great law of evolution in nature, which underlies all phenomena, & which is as important & more comprehensive than / Newton's law of gravitation." "I have had an 'intellectual drunk' over it." (Letters from John Fiske to his mother dated July 21, 1861, and August 12, 1861. Quoted in Milton Berman, John Fiske; The Evolution of a Popularizer, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1961. Pp. 36-37)

For Spencer's own summary of the series of steps that carried his conception of evolution from its beginning to its final formulation, see Auto. II, 165-169)

"... Youmans saw that the theory expounded in it (the first edition of Principles of Psychology) was a long stride in the direction of a general theory of evolution." (John Fiske, Edward Livingston Youmans, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. P. 105)

"He (Spencer) was not the first to approach Nature from the standpoint of evolution. His originality consisted in reducing the vague poetic and speculative ideas of his predecessors and contemporaries to definite scientific form and weaving his biological generalisations into his cosmical generalisations. Upon isolated biological truths Spencer's mind acted like a magnet: it brought them into a coherent whole." (Anonymous, "The Philosophy of Herbert Spencer," The Edinburgh Review, Vol. 199, pp. 352-373, 1904. P. 363)

"... so far is the doctrine of evolution--as expressing the general fact of natural development--from being the latest product of human thought, that we venture the opinion, that not only was this conception involved in the earliest explanations of natural phenomena, but that no great thinker of the world, who has constructed a general system of philosophy, has ever founded a cosmology upon any other theory." (William C. Morey, "Herbert Spencer in the Light of History," Baptist Quarterly Review, Vol. 5, pp. 279-309, 1887. P. 299)

"How I came by the idea that a low type of animals consists of numerous like parts performing like functions, while a high type of animal consist of relatively few unlike parts performing unlike functions, I do not remember. It may have been from Professor Hymer Jones's / Animal Kingdom; for some of the facts cited are, I think, from that work. (Spencer is here referring to his Social Statics, 1850/ But wherever this general truth came from, I immediately recognized the parallelism between it and the truth presented by low and high types of societies. This was the earliest foreshadowing of the general doctrine of Evolution." ("The Filiation of Ideas," in Duncan, pp. 540-541)
"But many years before Von Baer a greater man than he had enunciated the same truth that organisms grow more complex as they grow older, and had set it forth in even plainer and better words. It was Goethe, in his Zur Morphologie (1807 (written in 1795). Republished in Goethe's Werke, xxxvi, p. 7), who laid it down as a law that 'the more imperfect a being is, the more do its individual parts resemble each other, and the more do these parts resemble the whole. The more perfect the being is, the more dissimilar are its parts. In the former case the parts are more or less a repetition of the whole; in the latter case they are totally unlike the whole. The more the parts resemble each other, the less subordination is there of one to the other: and subordination of parts is the mark of high grade of organization.' Lewes, Life of Goethe (1855), 3rd ed. 1875, p. 358. Now these words are found in the Life of Goethe, by Lewes, Herbert Spencer's closest friend. We can scarce avoid the inference that it may have been the poet's insight and the poet's words, quite as much as Von Baer's, that crystallized in his famous formula of evolution. And the inference is confirmed by the fact that though it was to Von Baer that Spencer was afterwards in the habit of ascribing the law, yet, on the first occasion when he mentions it, he speaks of it as having been established 'by the investigations of Wolff, Goethe, and Von Baer'. Von Baer himself claimed no priority. 'Dieses Gesetz ist wohl nie verkannt worden,' Zur Entwicklungs- gesch. (1), p. 153. (D'Arcy Wentworth Thompson, On Aristotle as a Biologist: With a Proemion on Herbert Spencer, The Herbert Spencer Lecture for 1913, 31pp., The Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1913. Pp. 6, 6n., 7, 7n.)

"I should add that the acquaintance which I accidentally made with Coleridge's essay on the Idea of Life, in which he set forth, as though it were his own, the notion of Schelling, that Life is the tendency to individuation, had a considerable effect. In this same chapter it is referred to as illustrated alike in the individuation of a living organism, and also in the individuation of a society as it progresses." ("The Filiation of Ideas," in Duncan, p. 541)

"The law of Evolution has been thus far contemplated as holding true of each order of existences, considered as a separate order. But the induction as so presented, falls short of that completeness which it gains when we contemplate these several orders of existences as forming together one natural whole. While we think of Evolution as divided into astronomic, geologic, biologic, psychologic, sociologic, &c., it may seem to a certain extent a coincidence that the same law of metamorphosis holds throughout all its divisions. But when we recognize these divisions as mere conventional groupings, made to facilitate the arrangement and acquisition of knowledge—when we regard the different existences with which they severally deal as component parts of one Cosmos; we see at once that there are not several kinds of Evolution having certain traits in common, but one Evolution going on everywhere after the same manner." (Herbert Spencer, First Principles, 4th edition, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1880. Pp. 558-559)
"Respecting your account of the genesis of my own views on evolution, in an article by John Fiske, "The Doctrine of Evolution: Its Scope and Influence," The Popular Science Monthly, Vol. 39, pp. 577-599, 1891, I may remark that on one point it does not agree with the facts. Fiske wrote: "The question occurred to him ((Spencer)), Where do we find the process of development most completely exemplified from beginning to end, so that we can follow and exhaustively describe its consecutive phases? Obviously in the development of the ovum." P. 590 Recognition of the course of transformation going on in an ovum, where so conveniently the general characters of evolution is exhibited in little, was not that which initiated my own views, though it was that which initiated the views of von Baer, whose formula was so influential on my thoughts. Until recently I was myself not fully aware of what constituted the first step I made. It was only on rereading a part of Social Statics, (which I have recently gone through for the purpose of giving a permanent form to selections from it,) that I recognized (sic) fully (though I had before done so dimly) that towards the close of the chapter entitled "General Considerations" there exists the germinal thought which afterwards took so large a development. This germinal thought you will find in a comparison drawn between individual organisms & societies: pointing out that in each case the primitive simple type of structure is one consisting of many like parts performing like functions, which are merely placed in juxtaposition; whereas in each case the developed state is one of which the structure consists of many unlike parts performing unlike functions. Though there is here no verbal mention of the progress from homogeneity to heterogeneity, yet the contrast drawn is a contrast expressing the change that may be so named. This perception that progress in animals consists in growing complexity & interdependence of parts & that progress in societies consists in the like change was a perception in which there was partially recognized (sic) both the nature of evolution & the occurrence of this evolution in more regions than one." (Letter from Herbert Spencer to John Fiske dated September 5, 1891. Henry E. Huntington Library Cat. No. HM 13751. Unpublished)

"It progress, i.e., evolution is an idea anterior to him (Spencer), but which was formerly otherwise understood. Leibnitz, who in so many respects has anticipated the most recent theories, substituted the idea of a continous progress for the geometrical mechanism of Descartes. The Hegelian dialectic, also founded on the idea of becoming, pretends to reproduce by its synthesis the evolution of the world, from void existence up to thought and absolute consciousness. But whilst the theory of Leibnitz is only a view of the future by a genius, an hypothesis not then verified by facts, while the theory of Hegel is an entirely metaphysical conception, completely subjective, encumbered with its triple movement of thesis, antithesis, and synthesis, boldly bending facts to its a priori conceptions, the hypothesis of development is quite otherwise presented by Mr. Herbert Spencer. It is produced objectively, the facts suggest it to the mind, the mind does not impose it upon the facts." (Th. Ribot, English Psychology, Translated from the French, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1897. [Original French edition ca.1871 P. 127)
"In the beginning of biology, human knowledge was a chaos of isolated facts concerning living things whose relations were not perceived; in a later stage the living things were grouped in a hierarchy or orderly system of species, genera, families, and orders, which were recognized as running from the lowly and simple to the higher and more complex, and this arrangement was interpreted as the expression of a preternatural and admirable plan, and a long line of high priests of the gospel of special creation, ending with Agassiz and Dawson, extolled the wonderful works of the Creator. Then came Spencer, Darwin, and Wallace with the doctrine of evolution, and it was perceived that living things represent not simply a hierarchy running from the low to the high, but a genetic series, in which the higher sprang from the lower through the operation of natural forces and conditions implanted in the cosmos at the beginning, and thus residing in the earth; and thereby a new and nobler plan of creation was recognized, and the modern high priests extol a more exalted theme than the old." (W J McGee, "The Earth The Home Of Man," Anthropological Society of Washington, Special Papers, No. 2, 1894, 28pp. P. 11)

"The great truth that all phenomena were mutually dependent, and that every fact was but the last link of a chain reaching back into the unfathomable past, had dawned fully upon the age. The questions whether life was also a part of nature, whether man was the product of ages of slow development, whether language, custom, civilization, society, were not also subject to law and fruits of cosmic evolution, were before the bar of human judgement for decision. It was under these circumstances that Herbert Spencer came upon the stage. He looked over the field. His eye caught the salient points. He saw that the first requisite was knowledge. He obtained it. He then proceeded to compare it. Under every point of view one fundamental law of nature stood boldly out. That law was change. Restricting his view, a second law presents itself, subordinate only to the law of change. This law is progress. The elements of all phenomena are perpetually changing their position. This change is in a fixed direction, and not arbitrary. That direction is from the confused and homogeneous toward the definite and heterogeneous. This is the rest of progress. It is the process of evolution." (Lester F. Ward, Dynamic Sociology, 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. Vol. 1, pp. 154-155)

"For, nature being one and indivisible, it follows from the fact that evolution is going on in all its parts, that there must be an all-pervading law of change, holding with equal truth for the material universe as for mankind and its social products. The credit of having conceived the idea of such an all-embracing formula of evolution belongs to Herbert Spencer, who first elaborated it fully in his epoch-making "First Principles" (1862), which forms the basis of his great work, the "Synthetic Philosophy."" (S. Herbert, The First Principles of Evolution, 2nd edition, A. & C. Black, Ltd., London, 1922. P. 3)
"He [Spencer] finds that throughout the universe there is an unceasing redistribution of matter and motion, and that this redistribution constitutes evolution when there is a predominant integration of matter and dissipation of motion, and constitutes dissolution where there is a predominant absorption of motion and disintegration of matter. He supposes that evolution is primarily integration, from the incoherent to the coherent, exemplified in the solar nebula evolving into a solar system; secondly differentiation, from the more homogeneous to the more heterogeneous exemplified by the solar system evolving into different bodies; thirdly determination, from the indefinite to the definite, exemplified by the solar system with different bodies evolving into an order." (Thomas Case, "Metaphysics," The Encyclopaedia Britannica, 11th edition, Vol. 18, pp. 224-253, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1911. P. 227)

"I venture to object to the statement [of Spencer's] that the homogeneous is transformed into the heterogeneous, because it implies that homogeneity can for a time (however brief) exist. This is contrary to experience. The process which actually takes place is a transformation from the less heterogeneous to the more heterogeneous, the strengthening and stronger marking of varieties of structure which began with the very beginning of the forming aggregation. Absolute uniformity never has existed or can exist in any part of the universe, large or great [sic], any more than any absolute physical entity can exist which answers to the geometrical definition of a straight line." (Richard A. Proctor, "Herbert Spencer's Philosophy," The Gentleman's Magazine, Vol. 254, pp. 73-88, 1883. P. 81)

"... as regards evolution at large, Mr. Spencer is not in the remotest degree beholden for the origin of his ideas to Darwin. So far as those ideas are not quite original with him—and no human idea is ever wholly original—they are derived from the direct line of Kant, Laplace, and the English geologists. For many years previous to Mr. Spencer's philosophic activity the progress of human thought had been gradually leading up to the point where a cosmic evolutionism such as Mr. Spencer's became almost of necessity the next step forward. But to say this is not to detract in any way from Mr. Spencer's greatness; rather the other way; for it needed a man of cosmic intellect and of cosmic learning to make the advance which had thus become inevitable. The moment had arrived, and waited for the thinker; Mr. Spencer was the thinker who came close upon the moment." (Grant Allen, "Spencer and Darwin," Appleton's Popular Science Monthly, Vol. 50, pp. 815-827, 1896-97. P. 824. [reprinted from Fortnightly Review])

"Among the many distinguished men who have contributed to the world's plebiscite in favour of the Darwinian hypothesis in favour of the Darwinian hypothesis on the origin of species, there is no one so distinguished as Mr. Herbert Spencer. He alone has dealt with it systematically. He has pursued the idea of development with wonderful ingenuity through not a few of its thousand ramifications. He has carried it into philosophy and metaphysics." (The Duke of Argyll [George Douglas Campbell], Organic Evolution Cross-Examined, John Murray, London, 1898. P. 1)
"Now Spencer's great achievement was to prove that von Baer's law of development, with sundry modifications, applies to the succession of phenomena in the whole universe so far as known to us. Spencer took the development of the solar system according to the theories of Kant and Laplace, he took the geologic development of the earth according to the school of Lyell, he took the development of plant and animal life upon the earth's surface according to Linnaeus and Cuvier, supplemented and rectified by Hooker and Huxley, and he showed that all these multifarious and apparently unrelated phenomena have through countless ages been proceeding according to the very law which expresses the development of an individual embryo. In addition to this, Spencer furnished an especially elaborate illustration of his theory in a treatise upon psychology in which he traced the evolution of mind from the first appearance of rudimentary nerve systems in creatures as low as starfishes up to the most abstruse and complex operations of human intelligence, and he showed that throughout this vast region the phenomena conformed to his law. This was by far the profoundest special research that has ever been made on the subject of evolution, and it was published four years before Spencer had ever heard of Darwin's theory of natural selection." (John Fiske, "Evolution and the Present Age," pp. 251-284, in Essays Historical and Literary, 2 Vols., The Macmillan Company, New York, 1902. Vol. 2, p. 274)

"The discovery of a universal formula for evolution, and the application of this formula to many diverse groups of phenomena, have been the great work of Mr. Spencer, and in this he has had no predecessor. His wealth of originality is immense, and it is unquestionable. But as the most original thinker must take his start from the general stock of ideas accumulated at his epoch, and more often than not begins by following a clew given him by somebody else, so it was with Mr. Spencer when about forty years ago he was working out his doctrine of evolution. The clew was not given him by Mr. Darwin.... The clew which Mr. Spencer followed was given him by the great German embryologist Von Baer, and an adumbration of it may perhaps be traced back through Kaspar Friedrich Wolf to Linnaeus. Hints of it may be found, too, in Goethe and in Schelling. The advance from simplicity to complexity in the development of an egg is too obvious to be overlooked by any one, and was remarked upon, I believe, by Harvey; but the analysis of what that advance consists in was a wonderfully suggestive piece of work. Von Baer's great book was published in 1829, just at the time when so many stimulating ideas were being enunciated, and its significant title was Entwickelungsgeschichte, or History of Evolution." (John Fiske, "The Doctrine of Evolution: Its Scope and Influence," The Popular Science Monthly, Vol. 39, pp. 577-599, 1891. P. 589)

"His book was immensely popular and probably did much to prepare the general public for the coming of the idea of organic evolution. So did the writings of Herbert Spencer in the 1850's, which brought out the incongruity, when applied in detail, of Agassiz' idea that the system of homologies on which the hierarchic natural classification was based reflected the thought of the creator." (Sewall Wright, Evolution and the Genetics of Population, 3 Vols., Vol. 1: Genetic and Biometric Foundations, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1968. P. 6)
"The situation is this: Kant and Laplace had suggested that suns and stars might have grown and assumed their existing distribution and movements by the action of purely natural laws without the need for direct creative or systematizing effort from without. The geologists had suggested that the crust of the earth might have assumed its existing stratification and sculpture through the agency of causes at present in action. Erasmus Darwin and Lamarck had suggested that plants and animals might have been developed and specialized from a common original by the direct action of the environment, aided in part by their own volition, where such existed. But all these thinkers, great and able in their day, had addressed themselves—as Charles Darwin later addressed himself—to one set of phenomena alone; had regarded the process which they pointed out, in isolation only. It remained for a man of commanding intellect and vast grasp of generalizing faculty to build up and unify these scattered evolutionary guesses into a single consistent concept of evolution. Herbert Spencer was that man." (Grant Allen, "Spencer and Darwin," Appleton's Popular Science Monthly, Vol. 50, pp. 815-828, 1896-97. [reprinted from Fortnightly Review/)

While working for the Birmingham and Gloucester Railway Spencer had many occasions to see in the Worcester office of that line a number of fossils that had been removed from railroad cuts. His frequent walks along these cuts developed in him an interest in geology, and paleontology, and he looked for fossil remains, among which he found those of a pleiosaur. This interest led Spencer to purchase a copy of Lyell's Principles of Geology, which had recently been published. "I name this purchase," Spencer wrote, "chiefly as serving to introduce a fact of considerable significance. I had during previous years been cognizant of the hypothesis that the human race has been developed from some lower race; though what degree of acceptance it had from me memory does not say. But my reading of Lyell, one of whose chapters was devoted to a refutation of Lamarck's views concerning the origin of species, had the effect of giving me a decided leaning to them. My inclination to accept it as true, in spite of Lyell's adverse criticisms, was, doubtless, chiefly due to its harmony with that general idea of the order of Nature toward which I had, throughout life, been growing. Supernaturalism, in whatever form, had never commended itself. From boyhood there was in me a need to see, in a more or less distinct way, how phenomena, no matter of what kind, are to be naturally explained. Hence, when my attention was drawn to the question whether organic forms have been specially created, or whether they have arisen by progressive modifications, physically caused and inherited, I adopted the last supposition; inadequate as was the evidence, and greater as were the difficulties in the way. Its congruity with the course of procedure throughout things at large, gave it an irresistible attraction; and my belief in it never afterwards wavered, much as I was, in after years, ridiculed for entertaining it." (Auto. I, 176-7)
In 1851 Spencer was asked to review W. B. Carpenter's Principles of Physiology, General and Comparative FOR The Westminster Review. This was to be a turning point in Spencer's intellectual life. "In the course of such perusal as was needed to give an account of its contents, I came across von Baer's formula expressing the course of development through which every plant and animal passes—the change from homogeneity to heterogeneity.... this phrase of von Baer expressing the law of individual development, awakened my attention to the fact that the law which holds of the ascending stages of each individual organism is also the law which holds of the ascending grades of organisms of all kinds. And it had the further advantage that it presented in brief form, a more graphic image of the transformation, and thus facilitated further thought. Important consequences eventually ensued." (Autobiography, Vol. 1, pp. 384-385)

But while Spencer is continually citing authorities for his statements of fact, he hardly ever cites other theorists. He seems to owe extremely little to other theorists. He was the first person to apply the concept of evolution to society in a thoroughgoing way, and with this masterkey he independently and single-handedly erected a great theoretical edifice.
EVOLUTION OF EVOLUTION


"As far back as 1850, when I did not yet recognize evolution as a process co-extensive with the cosmos, but only as a process exhibited in man and in society,..." (Herbert Spencer, "Evolutionary Ethics," The Athenaeum, No. 3432, pp. 193-194, August 5, 1893. P. 193)

"... the formation of an aggregate necessarily precedes any changes of structure which occur in the aggregate; and therefore integration is the primary process and differentiation the secondary process." (Herbert Spencer, An Autobiography, 2 Vols., Watts & Co., London, 1926. Vol. 2, p. 154)

"Evolution is a change from an indefinite, incoherent homogeneity, to a definite, coherent heterogeneity; through continuous differentiations and integrations." (Herbert Spencer, First Principles, Williams & Norgate, London, 1862. P. 216)

"Tennyson, therefore, cannot be designated a prophet of the new enlightenment, in spite of the fact that in 1855 Herbert Spencer sent him a letter, together with a copy of his Psychology, because he found in Tennyson's lines, The Two Voices, suggestions of his Evolution Theory." (Guy B. Petter, George Meredith and His German Critics, H. F. & G. Witherby Ltd., London, 1939. P. 287)


"Mr. Spencer seems to have rescued this idea [evolution] from the loose, indeterminate forms in which it appears in connection with different classes of phenomena, and to have reduced it to laws as well defined as those of mechanics." (Rev. Francis H. Johnson, "Mechanical Evolution," The Andover Review, Vol. 1, pp. 631-649, 1884. P. 634)

"... the different existences with which ... [the various sciences] deal are component parts of one Cosmos ... there are not several kinds of Evolution having certain traits in common, but one Evolution going on everywhere after the same manner." (Herbert Spencer, First Principles, 1st ed., Williams & Norgate, London, 1862, Section 188. P. )
"... it was nearly another decade [from the 1860's] before the title "theory of evolution" began to gain popularity. It would appear probable that this popularity was largely the result of the theory being incorporated into the general evolutionary philosophy of Herbert Spencer." (p. 106) "It can hardly be a coincidence that [the word] "evolution" came into common use at the same time that Herbert Spencer's philosophy began to enjoy some degree of popularity." (p. 111) (Peter J. Bowler, "The Changing Meaning of "Evolution."" Journal of the History of Ideas, Vol. 36, pp. 95-114, 1975)


"Evolution, as a philosophical doctrine applicable to all phenomena, whether physical or mental, whether manifested by material atoms or by men in society, has been dealt with systematically in the "Synthetic Philosophy" of Mr. Herbert Spencer. Comment on that great undertaking would not be in place here. I mention it because, so far as I know, it is the first attempt to deal, on scientific principles, with modern scientific facts and speculations." (Thomas Henry Huxley, "The Progress of Science, 1837-1887," [1887] in Methods and Results, Essays, by Thomas H. Huxley, pp. 42-129, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1897. P. 103)

"Doubtless it was during the preceding autumn (that of 1854) that the change from homogeneity to heterogeneity, which we have already seen was in course of being recognized as characterizing the change from lower to higher in several diverse groups of phenomena, was recognized as characterizing this change in all groups of phenomena. And doubtless this development of the conception took place while writing the 'General Synthesis' in Principles of Psychology; two chapters of which trace, among mental phenomena, the progress from the homogeneous to the heterogeneous, and two other chapters of which exhibit the progress in specialty and in complexity; both involving the same trait." (Auto. I, 462).

"... the rôle of Lamarck was to introduce evolution as a scientific theory; that of Darwin to present the theory in such wise as to make it acceptable to and accepted by the scientific mind; that of Huxley to fight the battles of evolution and to win its acceptance by the intelligent popular mind; that of Spencer to generalize it into a universal law of nature, thereby making it a philosophy as well as a scientific theory." (The Autobiography of Joseph Le Conte, edited by William Dallam Armes, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1903. P. 335)
Of evolution: "It has been the most effective / organon of thought that the world has known ...." (J. Arthur Thomson--Herbert Spencer. J. M. Dent & Co. London, 1906. pp. 143-144)

John Fiske called evolution "... the supreme organizing idea of modern thought ...." (John Fiske, Edward Livingston Youmans, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. P. 148)

Spencer "... may claim the distinguished honor of having placed practically all phases of scientific study upon the road to further progress by making their guiding principle that of evolution." (Harry Elmer Barnes, "Some Typical Contributions of English Sociology to Political Theory," The American Journal of Sociology, Vol. 27, pp. 289-324, 1921. P. 295)


"In the same way, "evolution" is, with Mr. Spencer, not a theorem of inductive science, but a necessary truth deduced from axioms ...." (Chauncey Wright, "German Darwinism," The Nation, Vol. 21, pp. 168-170, September 9, 1875. P. 169)

"Evolution is not a force, but a process; not a cause, but a law." (John Morley, On Compromise, p. 210)

"And so it has been with the greatest achievement of modern thinking--the doctrine of evolution." (John Fiske, Edward Livingston Youmans, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. P. 103)

"For of all the evolutionists, it was Spencer who approached most closely to the understanding of sociocultural phenomena in terms of evolving systems, each of whose parts contributed to each other and to the continuity and change of the whole." (Marvin Harris, The Rise of Anthropological Theory, i-I. Crowell Co., N.Y. 1968. P.208)

"In the middle of the last century evolution was in the air, and Spencer was discovering it in the societal--or, as he called it, the superorganic--realm while Darwin and Huxley were demonstrating its presence in the organic." (William Graham Sumner and Albert Galloway Keller, The Science of Society, 4 Vols., Yale University Press, New Haven, 1927-28. Vol. 1, p. 657)
"Spencer's inclusion of human society in an over-all theory of evolution, however, was a major step in the foundation of scientific anthropology." (Alexander Alland, Jr., Evolution and Human Behavior, The Natural History Press, Garden City, 1967. P. 173)

Herbert Spencer, "The Rev. Thomas Mozley and Mr. Herbert Spencer," The Athenaeum, No. 2856, pp. 112-113, July 22, 1882. This brief communication contains Spencer's own summary, in 16 points, of the entire theory of evolution.

"It is probably due to Herbert Spencer more than to any other one person that we have come to recognize the applicability of evolution to the various departments of the social life of man." (Richard T. Ely, Studies in the Evolution of Industrial Society, Grosset & Dunlap, New York, 1903. P. 7)

"The part and position which belongs to Mr Herbert Spencer in the history of evolution as a scientific doctrine has not yet received due attention or adequate recognition." (John Theodore Merz, A History of European Thought in the Nineteenth Century, 6 Vols., William Blackwood and Sons, Edinburgh, 1912. Vol. 2, p. 346n.)

"... the law of evolution in human society is now accepted as the basis of modern anthropology ...." (Lester F. Ward, Dynamic Sociology, 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. Vol. 2, p. 217)

"Herbert Spencer was a leader in this [the evolutionary] movement, although his somewhat hasty generalizations have not, for the most part, stood the test of time. This fact has led to a revulsion among sociologists that unduly depreciates the social significance of the evolutionary principle." (Robert M. Maciver and Charles H. Page, Society, Rinehart and Company, Inc., New York, 1949. P. 525)

"To have discovered a unifying principle of such far-reaching application, covering such various phenomena, to have given us the grand conception of a world-embracing evolution, is the great achievement of Herbert Spencer." (S. Herbert, The First Principles of Evolution, 2nd edition, A. & C. Black, Ltd., London, 1922. P. 3)

"Whereas evolutionary thinking in the social science has suffered more than a generation of eclipse since Spencer's day, there is currently a notable revival going on, which again testifies to Spencer's importance." (Talcott Parsons, Introduction of The Study of Sociology by Herbert Spencer, pp. v-x, The University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor, 1961. P. viii)
"It is probably due to Herbert Spencer more than to any other one person that we have come to recognize the applicability of evolution to the various departments of the social life of man." (Richard T. Ely, Studies in the Evolution of Industrial Society, Grosset & Dunlap, New York, 1903. P. 7)


"... the doctrine [evolution] did actually spread there [in the U.S.] in the last century almost more rapidly than anywhere else. But this was largely the result of the special activity of one man, Edward Livingston Youmans, who devoted an active life to the propagation of science, and of the evolutionary science of Herbert Spencer in particular." (J. H. Robertson, A History of Freethought in the Nineteenth Century, Watts & Co., London, 1929. P. 330)

"The attempt [by Spencer] to string all the beads of human knowledge on one loose-fibred thread of thought called Evolution has been, I think, a failure. But the beads remain, ready for a truer arrangement, and a better setting, in the years to come." (The Duke of Argyll [George Douglas Campbell], Organic Evolution Cross-Examined, John Murray, London, 1898. P. 194)

"Not only has the doctrine of evolution obtained a place in the sunshine of British respectability, but it is tending more and more, under one form or another, to permeate the philosophy and even the religion of the country." (Count Goblet d'Alviella, The Contemporary Evolution of Religious Thought in England, America and India, translated by J. Moden, G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1886. P. 47)

"He [Spencer] believes, I think, that the new not only comes out of the old, but that it is explained by the full statement of the old. Now this is a philosophy; and it is a leveling-down philosophy .... It tends to state the tulip in terms of its roots." (James Mark Baldwin, "Mr. Spencer's Psychology," The American Naturalist, Vol. 31, pp. 553-557, 1897. P. 556)

"The application of this principle [evolution, by Spencer] thus served the double purpose of exhibiting the fruitfulness of the genetic method, and of presenting nature as a totality /with a majestic sweep of outline, and a clearly recognizable meaning and direction." (Ralph Barton Perry, Philosophy of the Recent Past, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1926. Pp. 35-36)


"The only complete and systematic statement of the doctrine of evolution with which I am acquainted is that contained in Mr. Herbert Spencer's 'System of Philosophy'; a work which should be carefully studied by all who desire to know what scientific thought is tending." (Thomas Henry Huxley, "On the Animals which Are Most Nearly Intermediate between Birds and Reptiles," Royal Institution of Great Britain Proceedings, 1868, pp. 278-287. P. 278).


"But for the inductions by which biological evolution was established as a fact, it seems doubtful whether a speculative theory like that of Spencer's would have commanded, in scientific and general circles, the attention and acceptance which, as a matter of fact, it gained." (A. S. Pringle-Pattison, "The Life and Philosophy of Herbert Spencer," The Quarterly Review, Vol. 200, pp. 240-267, 1904. Pp. 265-266).


"From the evolutionary philosophers I have learned little; although I admit that, however hurriedly their theories have been knocked together, and however antiquated and ignorant Spencer's First Principles and general doctrines, yet they are under the guidance of a great and true idea, and are developing it by methods that are in their main features sound and scientific." (Charles Peirce, Philosophical Writings of Peirce, edited by Justin Buchler, Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd., London, 1940. P. 2).
"Dissolution replaces evolution when the quantity of motion received is greater than the quantity dissipated, but precisely which the one process will replace the other is decided by incalculable particular conditions." (H. S. Shelton, "Spencer's Formula of Evolution," The Philosophical Review, Vol. 19, pp. 241-258, 1910. P. 257)

"The brilliancy of this concept [evolution] and the comprehensive knowledge which Spencer brought to its defense, made a profound impression upon the intellectual world. It modified not only the thinking of scientists, but of theologians and literary men as well." (Thomas Nixon Carver, The Essential Factors of Social Evolution, Harvard Sociological Studies, Vol. 1, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1935. P. 105)

Robert A. Millikan considered evolution to be one of the "... three ideas which ... stand out above all others in the influence they have exerted and are destined to exert upon the development of the human race." (Despite this statement, Millikan seemed to think that it was Darwin who first applied the concept of evolution.) (Robert A. Millikan, Science and the New Civilization, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1930. P. 166)

"If one is speaking of the theory of social evolution itself, it can be said that Spencer alone conceived the entire framework; but if one is thinking of the development of the theory in respect to social organization particularly, Spencer properly takes the place—merely part of the background—that has been assigned to him." (Sol Tax, "From Lafitau to Radcliffe-Brown," in Social Anthropology of North American Tribes, edited by Fred Eggan, pp. 445-481, enlarged edition, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1955. Pp. 451-452)

"The question which faced Spencer was this: given a universe composed of a fixed matter and motion conceived in harmony with the Newtonian law of gravitation, as manifesting co-existent forces of attraction and repulsion, to trace the process by which the cosmos evolved from its nebulous to its present form. At the end of a long inquiry, worked out by the inductive method and verified deductively, Spencer formulated the law of the cosmic process." (Anonymous, "The Philosophy of Herbert Spencer," The Edinburgh Review. Vol. 199. pp. 352-373, 1904. P. 360)

Chauncey Wright objected that Spencer's philosophy was "a cosmological theory." (p. 725) "It contemplates the universe in its totality as having an intelligible order, a relation of beginning and end—a development. All that the transmutation hypothesis presupposes is continuity and uniformity in the temporal order of nature." (p. 725) (Typical of Wright's narrow empiricism.) (Anonymous (Chauncey Wright), "Spencer's Biology," The Nation, Vol. 2, pp. 724-725, 1866. Review of the first volume of Spencer's Principles of Biology.)
"Fashion has completely deserted him, and the course of evolution in which he trusted has not taken his hints. Even where some philosophy of evolution is still in vogue, it is not his philosophy, but perhaps that of Hegel or Bergson, who conceive evolution as imposed on nature by some magic or dialectical force, contrary to an alleged helplessness in matter. Such devices were far removed from the innocence of Herbert Spencer..." (George Santayana, "The Unknowable," The Herbert Spencer Lecture for 1923, The Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1923. P. 3)

"In the special field of sociology his contributions to the theory of evolution far outshone those of any other writer of his time. In respect to the volume of his contributions in this field, he has scarcely been surpassed; but naturally such men as Hobhouse, Frazer, and Westermarck, with a generation of scientific investigation to their advantage, have done more careful work, and have in many respects arrived at better tested results." (L. L. Bernard, "Herbert Spencer: The Man and His Age," The South Atlantic Quarterly, Vol. 21, pp. 241-251, 1922. P. 249)

"I propose to you a consideration of what, in America, has been called the Cosmic Philosophy, or what is more generally known as the Philosophy of Evolution. I speak of this philosophy as the intellectual sensation of the decade [this was written in 1878], for not ten years have passed since it made its way to the front." (Augustus Hopkins Strong, D.D., Philosophy and Religion, A. C. Armstrong and Son, New York, 1888. P. 39. This shows Fiske's term "cosmic philosophy" rather than Spencer's "Synthetic philosophy" was then current in the United States.)

"Evolution means nothing but growth in the widest sense of that word.... And what is growth? Not mere increase, Spencer says it is the passage from the homogeneous to the heterogeneous—or, if we prefer English to Spencerese—diversification. That is certainly an important factor in it. Spencer further says that it is a passage from the unorganized to the organized; but that part of the definition is so obscure that I will leave it aside for the present." (Charles Peirce, Philosophical Writings of Peirce, edited by Justin Buchler, Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd., London, 1940. P. 357)

"... the advance towards conceptions of great complication and high generality, has taken place by slow steps—by natural growth.... Simple numeration existed before arithmetic; arithmetic before algebra; algebra before the infinitesimal calculus; and the more special forms of the infinitesimal calculus before its more general forms. The law of the scales was known / before the general law of the lever was known; the law of the lever was known before the laws of composition and resolution of forces were known; and these were known before the laws of motion under their universal forms were known." (Herbert Spencer, The Principles of Psychology, 3rd edition, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1896. Vol. 1, pp. 461-462)
"... its [the doctrine of evolution's] dominant result has been the destruction of political traditionalism. It has to clearly suggested that each institution, each theory, each event, is only one in an infinite series as to make impossible the erection of finality in any department of thought." (H. J. L. Harold J. Laski, "Herbert Spencer," review of Herbert Spencer by Hugh Elliott [sic], The New Republic, Vol. 11, No. 138, pp. 224-225, June 23, 1917. P. 225)


"On the broad basis of the facts and inductions that have been reached by three centuries of investigation in the several domains of natural phenomena, rests the hypothesis of universal evolution. The coordination of these diverse and alien orders of facts, and the synthesis of inductions, by which the grand generalization was arrived at, we owe to the genius of Herbert Spencer." (Edward L. Youmans, "Editor's Table," The Popular Science Monthly, Vol. 2, pp. 110-116, November, 1972. P. 114)

See Principles of Sociology, Vol. 1, Chapter 8, "Primitive Ideas," Section 50, for Spencer's best statement of the course of evolution in society, retrogression, equilibration with the environment, and similar considerations. Although brief, this section might have been included as a separate chapter in The Evolution of Society.

"... it is to him [Spencer] that is due the credit of having demonstrated more fully than any other writer the universality of the laws of evolution and the importance of making the general doctrine of evolution the basis of all inquiry into the connected phenomena of the universe." (Lester F. Ward, Dynamic Sociology, 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. Vol. 1, p. 147)

The evolutionism of Tylor and Morgan was much less explicit and lacked the philosophical underpinnings of Spencer's.

"The total philosophic concept of evolution as a cosmical process—one and continuous, from nebula to man, from star to soul, from atom to society—we owe to Herbert Spencer himself, and to him alone, using as material the final results of innumerable preceding workers and thinkers." (Grant Allen, "Spencer and Darwin," Appleton's Popular Science Monthly, Vol. 50, pp. 815-827, 1896-97. P. 827. [reprinted from Fortnightly Review])
"... that crowning [scientific] synthesis which has been worked out in our time, and which is summed up in the single word, Evolution. Of all the watchwords that from time to time have dominated modern thought this is probably the most comprehensive in its inclusiveness. Others have related to single phases of intellectual activity; this has controlled them all. Mr. Herbert Spencer has taken all knowledge for his province in a wider sense than any of which Bacon could have dreamed." (William Morton Payne, "American Literary Criticism and the Doctrine of Evolution," The International Monthly, Vol. 2, pp. 26-46, 127-153, 1900. P. 27)

"So completely has the idea [of evolution] passed into the fibre of our thinking that it is difficult for the men of the present generation to estimate the full extent of our debt to Spencer's work." (A. S. Pringle-Pattison, "The Life and Philosophy of Herbert Spencer," The Quarterly Review, Vol. 200, pp. 240-257, 1904. P. 266)


"Spencer was the first man to demonstrate Evolution in mind, morals and society. As already said, nearly every editorial now contains things that he taught--without the writer's having the slightest idea where he got them." (Henry Holt, Garrulities of an Octogenarian Editor, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1923. P. 52)

"For it is to him [Herbert Spencer] that is due the credit of having demonstrated more fully than any other writer the universality of the laws of evolution and the importance of making the general doctrine of evolution the basis of all inquiry into the connected phenomena of the universe." (Lester Frank Ward, Dynamic Sociology, 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1883. Vol. 1, p. 147)

"The difference between Mr. Spencer's work and all sociological writing of an earlier date, lies in the circumstance that everything which Mr. Spencer has done, whether in the interpretation of society, of mind, or of the physical cosmos, is a part of the evolutionist thought which in our age has transformed science. Explanations of society which lacked the evolutionist principle can no more be called modern than can explanations of organic phenomena that antedate the observation of Charles Darwin." (Franklin H. Giddings, "Modern Sociology," The International Monthly, Vol. 2, pp. 536-554, 1900. P. 536)
"The evolutionism of Spencer was cosmic. Evolution, the supreme law of all becoming, included the becoming of human society. The human mind with its ability to deliberate and to choose was therefore not a factor in evolution; in fact, its interference with evolution was rather harmful. In the middle 1880's a new brand of evolutionism arose which, contrary to the theory of Spencer, ascribed to human mentality an important role in evolution. The founder of psychological evolutionism was the American sociologist Lester F. Ward." (Nicholas Timasheff, Sociological Theory: Its Nature and Growth, 3rd edition, Random House, New York, 1967. P. 74)

"One of the strangest facts in the history of the scientific thought of the nineteenth century is that, though the profound scientific revolution caused by Darwinism and Spencerian evolution has reinvigorated with new youth all the physical, biological and even psychological sciences, when it reached the domain of the social sciences, it only superficially rippled the tranquil and orthodox surface of the lake of that social science par excellence, political economy." (Enrico Ferri, Socialism and Modern Science (Darwin--Spencer--Marx), Translated by Robt. Rives La Monte, International Library Publishing Co., New York, 1900. [Original French edition, 1897-8-956)

"Not only, however, is the mere word Spencer's, that were a small matter: the concept itself which the word designates is Spencer's too above everybody else's. He gave it generality: he gave it definiteness. Other thinkers before him had caught passing glimpses of the evolutionary principle in one or more of its special embodiments: they had been evolutionists in biology, like Lamarck and Erasmus Darwin; or evolutionists in astronomy and the cosmic order, like Laplace and Herschel or evolutionists in geology, like Lyell and Agassiz. But no thinker of them all had seen before Spencer the cardinal truth that these separate evolutions were but phases and moments in a single great universal process, exemplifications of an ultimate cosmic law." (Grant Allen, "The Gospel According to Herbert Spencer," Part I, The Pall Mall Gazette, April 26, 1890, pp. 1-2. Pp. 1-2)

"And, we used to be told, the 'law of all progress is the same, the evolution of the simple into the complex by successive differentiations.' This is the gospel according to Herbert Spencer. As a universal law of nature, it is ludicrously untrue. Some species have survived by becoming more complex, others like the whole tribe of parasites have had the best of it." (pp. 165-166) "It was impossible that such shallow optimism as that of Herbert Spencer should not arouse protests from other scientific thinkers." (p. 167) (William Ralph Inge, "The Idea of Progress," in Outspoken Essays (Second Series), pp. 158-183, Longman's, Green and Co., New York, 1927)
"In this noble work /Philosophie Positive/, social as well as physical changes are shown to conform to invariable laws. Comte thus founded social science, and opened a path for future discoverers. But he did not perceive, any more than previous inquirers, the fundamental law of human evolution. It was reserved for Herbert Spencer to discover this all-comprehensive law, which is found to explain alike all the phenomena of man's history, and all those of external nature. This sublime discovery—that the Universe is in a continuous process of evolution from the homogeneous to the heterogeneous—with which only Newton's discovery of the law of gravitation is at all worthy to be compared, underlies not only physics, but also history. It reveals the law to which social changes conform." (Unsigned, Review of Henry Thomas Buckle's History of Civilization in England, The National Quarterly Review, Vol. 4, pp. 30-63, 1861, Pp. 31-32)

"The distinctive feature of Spencer's system is that it is "Evolution Philosophy." That would be a somewhat cumbersome name, but I dare say that if in some way or other the word "evolution" could from the start have been wrought into Mr. Spencer's title-pages, it might have prevented a vast amount of popular misapprehension. It would early have helped to associate the doctrine of evolution with the name of its true founder more closely than with Mr. Darwin, whose discoveries were concerned simply with one department of the subject. "Evolutionism" and "Spencerism" are synonymous terms; "evolutionism" and "Darwinism" are not, as is proved by the fact that a man may be an enthusiastic Darwinian and still scout at the doctrine of evolution as a metaphysical chimera; such was the case with the late Chauncey Wright." (John Fiske, Edward Livingston Youmans, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. P. 291n.)

"Mere transformism, of course, was not the essence of the evolutionism of the Spencerians nor of the doctrinaire Marxists. There were three additional ingredients in the Spencerian version of evolution, and it was to these that the Boasians objected. One was biological reductionism, the other was the tendency to regard parallel evolution as dominant over either convergent or divergent evolution, and the third was a snobbish definition of progress. There was another ingredient in Spencerian evolutionism with which the Boasians were by and large in complete agreement. This was the conviction, shared by Spencer and Darwin, that biological as well as sociocultural evolution was explicable in terms of purely "natural" processes." (Marvin Harris, The Rise of Anthropological Theory, Thomas Y. Crowell Company, New York, 1968. Pp. 292-293)

"If Herbert Spencer had not lived in the nineteenth century, although the age would have been full of illustrations of evolution, contributed by Darwin and others, yet in all probability such a thing as the doctrine of evolution would not have been heard of." (John Fiske, "Evolution and the Present Age," pp. 251-284, in Essays Historical and Literary, 2 Vols., The Macmillan Company, New York, 1902. Vol. 2, p. 273)
"Spencer’s stylized ideas of evolution did not work when applied to the immense complexity of human life. The brief intense intellectual transformations, the cycles of advance and decay, the diversity of culture which characterize human history, had little in common with Spencer's simple doctrine of progress." (C. D. Darlington, The Facts of Life, The Macmillan Company, New York, [1955]. P. 243)

"Mr. Spencer’s own so-called 'Law of Evolution' is in reality only a great generalization, and not in a stricter sense of the word a law at all. It tells us that everywhere the loss and redistribution of the internal motion of a finite aggregate are accompanied by the concentration of 'integration' of mass, a 'differentiation' of arrangements, forms and activities, and a 'segregation' or drawing together of like units. It does not tell us anything about the rate or amount of 'compound evolution' to be expected from any given expenditure of energy under given conditions." (In Spencer's own terms, it would be a law at the earlier and simpler qualitative stage, rather than at the more advanced quantitative one.) (Franklin H. Giddings, "The Laws of Evolution," Science, Vol. 22, pp. 206-208, 1905. P. 206)

"Spencer’s importance springs from the simple, central feature of his sociology. He managed to combine evolution and Adam Smith. Comte and Léopold had also made theories of evolution fundamental to their understanding of society. But Spencer did so in a way that made the nature of social evolution an imperative theoretical and empirical issue for all his contemporaries. He did so in a way that made his sociology the apothecary of political economy. The device that worked the trick was natural selection. Any account of Spencer's importance for British sociology has to begin from there. By incorporating natural selection, or as he renamed it, the survival of the fittest, into his sociology he was able to give an account of social organization which gripped and interpreted critical processes of social change more cogently than could be done by any of the other attempts at a general sociology made in his age." (Philip Abrams, The Origins of British Sociology: 1834-1914, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1968. P. 67)

Proctor said of the "dissipation of motion" in Spencer's formula of evolution: "It may result in systematic movement within the scheme or system thus formed [rather than continuing as more or less random motion], as in the movements of the planets within the solar system, or of satellites within a system of circulating round a planet. But in the Spencerian philosophy [..] motion is used in a wider sense. Thus the formation or evolution of a race of animals [poor example; evolution of a society would have been better] involves a dissipation of motion,—the tendency to irregular changes being resolved into systematic variation,—freedom to vary in any direction, merging gradually into the tendency to change only in specific directions and according to uniform law." (Richard A. Proctor, "Herbert Spencer's Philosophy," The Gentleman's Magazine, Vol. 254, pp. 73-88, 1883. P. 83-84)
"Mr. Herbert Spencer wishes to explain evolution upon mechanical principles. This is illogical, for four reasons. First, because the principle of evolution requires no extraneous cause, since the tendency to growth can be supposed itself to have grown from an infinitesimal germ accidentally started. Second, because law ought more than anything else to be supposed a result of evolution. Third, because exact law obviously never can produce heterogeneity out of homogeneity; and arbitrary heterogeneity is the feature of the universe the most manifest and characteristic. Fourth, because the law of the conservation of energy is equivalent to the proposition that all operations governed by mechanical laws are reversible; so that an immediate corollary from it is that growth is not explicable by these laws, even if they be not violated in the process of growth. In short, Spencer is not a philosophical evolutionist, but only a half-evolutionist—or, if you will, only a semi-Spencerian. Now philosophy requires thorough-going evolutionism or none." (Charles Peirce, Philosophical Writings of Peirce, edited by Justus Buchler, Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd., London, 1940. Pp. 318-319)

"I will say only that your view as to the determination of force is one which puzzles me as coming from a man of science. I hold that the determination of any force depends on the proceeding distribution of forces in their amounts and directions; and I accept in full your alleged implication that this distribution depends upon a preceding distribution, and so through infinite past time; and if you allege that this is not an ultimate or satisfactory interpretation, I simply reply that there exists in it just the same ultimate inscrutability that exists with respect to the nature of force and the nature of matter. Your criticism seems to me, as the criticism of most others, to tacitly assume that the hypothesis of Evolution as set forth by me professes to be an interpretation of things in their ultimate causes, whereas, professedly alleging the ultimate cause to be unknowable, alike in nature and mode of operation, the sole aim is to generalise the order of the manifestations." (Letter from Herbert Spencer to James Croll dated April 23, 1883. Quoted in Autobiographical Sketch of James Croll by James Campbell Irons, Edward Stanford, London, 1896. P. 395)

"Mr. Spencer's theory of evolution is to the ideas which preceded it even more than the theory of gravitation was to the guesses of Hooke and the facts of Kepler. Finding only a vague notion of progress from lower to higher, he has affixed the specific meaning to the word higher ..., defining the processes by which this progress is effected. He has, moreover, formed the conception of evolution as the subject of general propositions applicable to all natural processes, a conception which serves as the basis of a complete system of philosophy. In particular, he has applied this theory to the evolution of mind, developing the complete accord between the laws of mental growth and of the growth of other organic functions." (William Kingdon Clifford, Lectures and Essays, edited by Leslie Stephen and Frederick Pollock, 2 Vols. Macmillan and Co., London, 1879. Vol. 1, p. 107)
"I do not assume that evolution is inevitable, irreversible, or must follow any single particular course.... What I mean by evolution, then, is nothing metaphysical but the simple empirical generalization that more complex forms develop from less complex forms and that [their properties and possibilities differ]." (Robert Bellah, "Religious Evolution," American Sociological Review, Vol. 29, pp. 1964. P. 358)

Some writers have maintained that Spencer thought of evolution as something immanent or intrinsic. But Spencer specifically rejected this. (Quote Vol. I, p. 106)

"But whatever else may be, we can categorically state that organic evolution is not progressive, either in a conventional sense of getting better or some such thing, or in a special Spencerian sense (if this be genuinely different). The falsity of the conventional sense has been seen in the last chapter, and talk of 'homogeneity' and 'heterogeneity' helps matters not a bit. In the well-known evolution of the horse, we get a reduction in the number of toes from four to one." (Michael Ruse, Taking Darwin Seriously, Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 1986. P. 40)

"It was, therefore, Herbert Spencer—not Charles Darwin—who made evolution an integral element in the intellectual equipment of every educated man of the twentieth century. Spencer's particular applications of his formula may have been premature, crude, inadequate, and often erroneous, but he must be given credit for popularizing the most momentous conception in the whole history of human thought." (Harry Elmer Barnes, Society in Transition, Prentice-Hall, Inc., New York, 1939. P. 48)

"Such of us [young British naturalists of the 1860's and 1870's] as ventured to read the First Principles then learnt that the theory of organic evolution propounded in the Origin of Species was the application to one domain of Nature of a broader principle which Spencer had shown held good throughout every domain of Nature; that organic evolution by Natural Selection was a particular phase of the evolutionary process." (Raphael Meldola, Evolution: Darwinian and Spencerian, The Herbert Spencer Lecture for 1910, The Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1910. P. 13.)

"At the present day, Herbert Spencer's evolutionism is somewhat severely judged. His generalizations appear hasty, presumptuous, and not well founded. Thirty years ago, however, they were considered both substantial and potent." (Lucien Levy-Bruhl, How Natives Think, translated from the French by Lilian A. Clare, George Allen & Unwin Ltd., London, 1926. P. 27)


"The name of Herbert Spencer has been long associated, in the public mind, with the idea of Evolution. And, while that idea was passing through what may be called its stage of execration, there was no hesitancy in according to him all the infamy of its parent / nity; but, when the infamy is to be changed to honor, by a kind of perverse consistency of injustice there turns out to be a good deal less alacrity in making the revised award." (Edward L. Youmans, "Herbert Spencer and the Doctrine of Evolution," Appendix to M. E. Cazelles, Outline of the Evolution-Philosophy, Translated from the French by Rev. O. E. Frothingham, D. Pileton & Company, New York, 1875. Pp. 115-116)

"Even Darwinians were well grounded in Spencer. [O. G.] Marsh (1877), 48, accepted natural selection "in the broad sense in which that term is now used by American evolutionists," and helped get Spencer's banned Study of Sociology into the classrooms at Yale. At the Peabody Museum in 1882 Marsh entertained Spencer and at the farewell banquet for the philosopher at Delmonico's in New York flatteingly echoed Spencer's words by talking of evolution as the "law of all progress": Marsh (1882), 3." (Adrian Desmond, Archetypes and Ancestors, Blond & Briggs, London, 1982. P. 228m.)

"The central conception of his [Spencer's] system— that evolution consists of the change from an indefinite homogeneous unity to a definite heterogeneous complexity, is a proposition which neither throws light upon the cause of such progress, nor supplies us with any canon of its quality." (Israel Zangwill, "Herbert Spencer," The Reader Magazine, Vol. 4, pp. 27-29, 1904. P. 28)

"... Spencer sees natural change as gradual, uniform and incremental (as in Lyell's Principles of Geology) ...." (J. D. Y. Peel, Herbert Spencer on Social Evolution, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1972. P. xxix)
"The conception of evolution is everywhere being substituted for that of special creation; and this involves the most extensive and thorough change that has ever taken place in men's thoughts about the world they live in." (John Fiske, Excursions of an Evolutionist. Houghton, Mifflin and Company. Boston, 1894. P. 284.)

"When the beautiful simplicity of Greek architecture was replaced by the manifold floridness of rococo, shall we say this is the inevitable movement of Evolution? As often as not, in a period of better taste, there is a return to the old models." (Israel Zangwill, "Herbert Spencer," The Reader Magazine, Vol. 4, pp. 27-29, 1904. P. 28)

"But it was Spencer's large generalisations and speculative genius that so formulated the doctrine of evolution as to make it credible to the scientific mind." (A. M. Fairbairn, "Herbert Spencer," The Contemporary Review, Vol. 85, pp. 1-11, 1904. P. 11)

"There is hardly a general observation in all evolutionary theory which cannot be credited to Spencer." (Irving Goldman, "Evolution and Anthropology," Victorian Studies, Vol. 3, pp. 55-75, 1959. P. 58)

Minot J. Savage "... goes so far as to characterize it [Spencer's theory of evolution] as the greatest work the mind of man has ever performed." (Count Goblet d'Alviella, The Contemporary Evolution of Religious Thought in England, America and India, translated by J. Moden, G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1886. P. 216)

"The main body of the Spencerian philosophy ... is devoted to an exposition of evolution as a universal fact controlled by a universal law, and to an explanation of this law by showing its dependence upon the persistence of force. It is evident that this general conception of philosophy is not at all new, either in its general statement that evolution is a universal fact, or in its general explanation that the cause of evolution is purely a dynamical one. In both these respects it is as old as the natural philosophy of the Greeks." (William C. Morey, "Herbert Spencer in the Light of History," Baptist Quarterly Review, Vol. 5, pp. 279-309, 1883. P. 302)

"Whatever the estimate put on Spencer's genius or lasting contribution to European thought, he was the appointed vehicle by which the general idea of evolution, together with the genetic and comparative method in science, was implanted in the minds of Englishmen and Americans." (Ralph Barton Perry, The Thought and Character of William James, 2 Vols., Little, Brown, and Company, Boston, 1935. Vol. 1, p. 474)
"So well have you put the matter of the rise of evolution in an address to the Liberal Club in New York(?) that every one who reads must see that such a change was impending, and that the last generation of scientific men, narrowly disciplined by their special studies, were incapable of seeing it." (Letter from Herbert Spencer to Edward L. Youmans dated June 20, 1874. Quoted in John Fiske, Edward Livingston Youmans, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. P. 326)

"Herbert Spencer is considered [by P. B. Medawar] worthy of rescue from current obscurity, and yet he exemplified the silly confusion that results from calling all directional processes "evolution" and from assigning a single direction to organic evolution." (George G. Simpson, Review of The Art of the Soluble, by P. B. Medawar, Science, Vol. 158, p. 246, 1967. P. 246)

"Introduced by Darwin solely in its application to biological evolution, as discovery after discovery in modern science has pushed back farther and farther the age of the stars, the age of the solar system, the age of the earth, the age of the rocks, of fossil life, of prehistoric man, of recorded history, of social institutions, the evolutionary theory has come to dominate in a very broad way almost every aspect of human thought." (Robert A. Millikan, Science and the New Civilization, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1930. P.183)

"While evolution and dissolution, understood in this sense, are opposite processes, and as a whole every aggregate is undergoing one or the other, yet speaking more precisely, both are everywhere concurrent, and the observed effect is the resultant of the two." [See First Principles (which ed.?), p. 257] (H. S. Shelton, "Spencer's Formula of Evolution," The Philosophical Review, Vol. 19, pp. 241-258, 1910. P. 250)

"Practically speaking, what we mainly have to keep in mind is that Spencerian evolution is a double-sided process—multiformity in unity, or specialisation along with mutual dependence." (William Henry Hudson, An Introduction to the Philosophy of Herbert Spencer, revised edition, Watts & Co., London, 1906. P. 52n.)

"The latter's Spencer's master conception, which he arrived at independently of Darwin and which life-long he applied systematically to the several fields of thought, was the master creative conception of the nineteenth century—the conception of pervasive unity and organic growth. In his well-known phrase it was the law of continuous development from the homogeneous to the heterogeneous, from the simple to the complex; and this principle he found exemplified in the total history of nature and man." (Vernon L. Parrington, Main Currents in American Thought, Vol. 3: The Beginnings of Critical Realism in America: 1860-1920, Harcourt, Brace, & Co., Inc., New York, 1930. P. 198)
"Development was in the air. For centuries both philosophers and physicists had been groping after it, and he [Spencer] supplied the physicist with what seemed a philosophical form of the idea." (A. M. Fairbairn, "Herbert Spencer," The Contemporary Review, Vol. 85, pp. 1-11, 1904. P. 10)

"His [Spencer's] System of General Evolution does not really work; the evolution of society and of the solar system are different phenomena, and the one teaches us next to nothing about the other." (Peter B. Medawar, The Art of the Soluble, Methuen & Co Ltd, London, 1967. P. 58)

"Here [In First Principles] we find the great law of evolution; though in fact, it is not properly a law, but rather a description of the process of the world ...." (L. F. Austin, "Herbert Spencer," The Illustrated London News, Vol. 123, p. 898, December 12, 1903. P. 898)

"His role was that of a champion of the whole philosophy of evolution as opposed to special creation, and it was largely due to his forceful writings that Darwinism won the battle against dogmatism." (Horatio Hackett Newman, "Historical Account of the Development of the Evolution Theory." In Readings in Evolution, Genetics, and Eugenics, edited by H. H. Newman, pp. 10-45. University of Chicago Press. Chicago, 1921. P. 28.)

"So far as this system [the philosophy of evolution] accepts the simple fact or process of development as applied to natural phenomena, it is true, and should be accepted. So far as it professes to determine the mode or law of development, it is still an hypothesis, and should be held sub judice. But so far as it presumes to afford an adequate, or assign a sufficient cause for the development and organization of the universe, it is false, and should be rejected. The rejection of the persistence of force, as the sole and adequate cause of universal evolution, does not, of course, involve the rejection of the conservation of energy as a law of general physics. It simply involves the acceptance of the doctrine already emphasized by Aristotle, Leibnitz, and Kant, that no purely mechanical principle can explain the facts of adjustment and co-ordination which exist in nature, and which are inexplicable except as being the result of thought as well as force." (William C. Morey, "Herbert Spencer in the Light of History," Baptist Quarterly Review, Vol. 5, pp. 279-309, 1883. Pp. 307-308)

"Some of us [Fiske and a few men he knew] entertained pretty decided opinions about Mr. Spencer's work. When we sometimes ventured to observe that it was as great as Newton's, and that his theory of evolution was going to remodel human thinking upon all subjects whatever, people used to stare at us and take us for idiots." (John Fiske, Edward Livingston Youmans, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. P. 167)
"It is not that the word "evolution" was not used before in natural history, although, curiously enough, Darwin did not use it once in his "Origin of Species"; for since the second half of the eighteenth century we find it used by Bonnet, and afterward by Laurillard, the assistant and right hand of George Cuvier, who recalled the observations of Bonnet on evolution. If Lamarck had used it in his "Philosophie Zoologique," his theory might have had another destiny during his lifetime. Darwin had the acuteness to see what a capital handle it would make for his theory, and as soon as he saw it in Spencer's work, he transferred the word into all his other works, speaking constantly of the "principles of evolution." His sympathizers took to evolution, and now evolution is everywhere. It has dethroned revolution completely. The word "evolution" a fait fortune according to a French proverb." (Jules Marcou, Life, Letters, and Works of Louis Agassiz, 2 Vols., Macmillan and Co., New York, 1896. Vol. 2, p. 116)

"The theories of Darwin and Spencer are doubtless not demonstrated; they are to some extent hypothetical, just as all the theories of physical science are to some extent hypothetical, and open to doubt. Judging from the immense numbers of diverse facts which they harmonise and explain, I venture to look upon the theories of evolution and natural selection in their main features as two of the most probable hypotheses ever proposed. I question whether any scientific works which have appeared since the Principia of Newton are comparable in importance with those of Darwin and Spencer, revolutionising as they do all our views of the origin of bodily, mental, moral, and social phenomena." (W. Stanley Jevons, The Principles of Science, 2nd ed. Macmillan and Co., Limited, London, 1900. P. 762)

"In a chapter entitled "The Evolution of the German Novel," Boyesen wrote: "Evolution, according to one of the several definitions presented by Herbert Spencer, is a development from the homogeneous to the heterogeneous, and if the novel is to keep pace with life, it must necessarily be subject to the same development; it must, in its highest form, convey an impression of the whole complex machinery of the modern state and society, and, by implication at least, make clear the influences and surroundings which fashioned the hero's character and thus determined his career." (Hjalmar Hjorth Boyesen, Essays on German Literature, third edition, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1893. P. 232) (Boyesen was Professor of Germanic Languages and Literatures at Columbia University)

"In conformity with the law of evolution of all organized bodies, that general functions are gradually separated into the special functions constituting them, there have grown up in the social organism for the better performance of the governmental office, an apparatus of law-courts, judges, and barristers; a national church, with its bishops and priests; and a system of caste, titles, and ceremonies, administered by society at large." (Herbert Spencer, "On Manners and Fashion," in Essays on Education, Etc., by Herbert Spencer, pp. 196-238. J. M. Dent & Sons Ltd., London, 1910. P. 215. [Originally published in the Westminster Review, April, 1854]
"Of historical and literary knowledge, such as one usually gets from books, Spencer had a great deal, and of an accurate and well-digested sort. He had some incomprehensible way of absorbing it through the pores of his skin—at least, he never seemed to read books." (John Fiske, "Reminiscences of Huxley," Smithsonian Institution Annual Report, 1900 (1901), pp. 713-728. P. 717)

"Why does Spencer call out so much reverence in spite of his weakness in rationalistic eyes? Why should so many educated men who feel that weakness, you and I perhaps, wish to see him in the Abbey notwithstanding? Simply because we feel his heart to be in the right place philosophically. His principles may be all skin and bone, but at any rate his books try to mould themselves upon the particular shape of this particular world's carcase. The noise of facts resounds through all his chapters, the citations of fact never cease, he emphasizes facts, turns his face toward their quarter; and that is enough. It means the right kind of thing for the empiricist mind." (William James, "The Present Dilemma in Philosophy," in Pragmatism and Four Essays from The Meaning of Truth, pp. 15-37, Meridian Books, The World Publishing Company, Cleveland, 1967. P. 37)


One is impressed by the tremendous knowledge that Spencer had of biology—not mere numbers of facts, but process, functions, and mechanisms.

"But it may be said, and with justice, that he [Spencer] should not be held responsible for failure to accomplish that which was not only outside his life-purpose, but in opposition to it. His interest lay in the direction of generalization rather than in that of special discovery and experimental verification. Following this interest, he deliberately chose the field of scientific speculation, and set for himself the tremendous task of synthesizing the whole of experience and stating it in terms of universal law." (W. Rose, "Herbert Spencer as a Philosopher," Journal of Proceedings and Addresses of the Forty-Third Annual Meeting of the National Education Association, pp. 231-235, 1904. P. 232. Rose was Professor of the History and Philosophy of Education at the University of Tennessee.)
"... Darwin had said of Spencer: "If he had trained himself to observe more ... he would have been a wonderful man." But Spencer was not made to observe." (C. D. Darlington, The Facts of Life, George Allen & Unwin Ltd, London, 1953. P. 242)

"... all his Spencer's life he continued to be handicapped by a lack of knowledge of the merest rudiments of culture. There was never sufficient grist in his mill." (F. J. C. Hearnshaw, "Herbert Spencer and the Individualists," in The Social & Political Ideas of Some Representative Thinkers of the Victorian Age, ed. by F. J. C. Hearnshaw, pp. 53-83, George G. Harrap & Co. Ltd., London, 1933. P. 57)

"Professor Ray Lankester spoke of him Spencer as "an acute observer and experimentalist versed in physics and chemistry, but above all, thoroughly instructed in scientific methods."" (Henry George, A Perplexed Philosopher. Robert Schalkenbach Foundation, New York, 1965. P. xii)

"Passing on to positive considerations, it may be said that what we of today value most in him Spencer is the rich and ordered abundance of concrete data, of facts concerning the beginnings of social life." (Leopold von Wiese, Systematic Sociology on the Basis of the Beziehungslehre and Gebildelehre, adapted and amplified by Howard Becker, John Wiley & Sons, Inc., New York, 1932. P. 689)
"We did not begin to understand ourselves as social beings until Herbert Spencer discovered the principle of social evolution and until Charles Darwin wrote his Descent of Man." (Thomas Nixon Carver and Henry Bass Hall, Human Relations, An Introduction to Sociology, D. C. Heath and Company, Boston, 1923. P. 21)

"The whole panorama of universal evolution is resplendent for variety and inclusiveness, and has aroused an admiration for philosophy in minds that never admired philosophy before." (William James, Memories and Studies, Longmans, Green, and Co., New York, 1911. Pp. 131-132)

"Evolution is commonly conceived to imply in everything an intrinsic tendency to become something higher. This is an erroneous conception of it. In all cases it is determined by the co-operation of inner and outer factors." (Principles, Vol. III, p. 95. 3rd ed. N.Y., 1910)


"Spencer thought he ... was living at the tail end of the evolutionary chain." [That is, that evolution had culminated and ceased.] (Terry M. Perlin, Review of Herbert Spencer: The Evolution of a Sociologist by J. D. Y. Peel, Society [formerly Transaction], Vol. 10, No. 1, pp. 119-122, Nov.-Dec., 1972. P. 120)
"... while Spencer was popularizing the notion of evolution he was also circulating a theory of society which was in effect as fatalistic as the hyper-Calvinistic dogma of foreordination." (Albion W. Small, The Meaning of Social Science, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1910. P. 82)

"So far from implying that the efforts of each man to achieve that which he thinks best, are unimportant, the doctrine implies that such efforts, severally resulting from the natures of the individuals, are indispensable forces." (Herbert Spencer, "A Note on the Preceding Article," The Fortnightly Review, Vol. 23, pp. 214-216, 1875)

"You will see by the 'Fortnightly,' Vol. 23, pp. 214-216, 1875 which you have not read, that Mr Spencer is very anxious to vindicate himself from neglect of the logical necessity that the evolution of the abstraction "society" is dependent on the modified action of the units; indeed he is very sensitive on the point of being supposed to teach an enervating fatalism." (Letter from George Eliot to Mrs. Henry Frederick Ponsonby dated February 11, 1875. Quoted in Gordon S. Haight, editor, The George Eliot Letters, 7 Vols., Yale University Press, New Haven, 1955. Vol. 6, P. 124)

"Can we have any doubt as to the tendency of such teaching? Spencer's cultural determinism? As to its paralyzing effect on labourers in the field of human improvement? Wherefore, indeed, should we trouble ourselves if the result is already certain; if the gain is inevitable ...." (J. E. Cairnes, "Mr. Spencer on Social Evolution," The Fortnightly Review, Vol. 23, pp. 63-82, 200-213, 1875. P. 80)


"The son [Ernest Fenollosa], at Harvard, was influenced by Herbert Spencer, whose teachings John Fiske was popularizing, and, when the University of Tokio was opened, he was appointed professor of philosophy." (Van Wyck Brooks, New England: Indian Summer, E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc., New York, 1965. P. 372)

"However scientific Spencer might be, he was primarily concerned with making the inner tally with the outer. To Fenollosa the inner was more significant than the outer. His soul's search for the free space of self-knowledge was a matter of the mind. He moved naturally toward Hegel in his graduate years. Hegel made the mind ultimate and adequate; his logical architecture was spacious and firm, inviting metaphysical adventure and offering rational faith. Hegel interpreted all human history and every facet of human experience in terms of the development of Absolute Spirit, a development focused on the growth of individual awareness of freedom, .... The progressive movement of Hegelian ideas from birth to opposition to new birth drew Fenollosa into a dialectical web whose apotheosis of thought offered a persuasive alternative to Spencer's mechanical materialism." (Lawrence W. Chisolm, Fenollosa: The Far East and American Culture, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1963. Pp. 24-25)

"Nonetheless Fenollosa's allegiance as an undergraduate went to Herbert Spencer, and he joined in forming a Spencer Club at Harvard. More than any other philosopher, Spencer struck the dominant American chords of faith in progress, perfectibility, and science. Even William James in his early years fell under the spell. Spencer had all the answers, and they were couched in terminology sufficiently obscure to confuse the opposition. Civilization as a part of nature was of necessity progressing, and Spencer assured his readers that "the ultimate development of the ideal man is logically certain." [Social Statics, New York, 1864, p. 72]. Once man overcomes his "non-adaptation of constitution to conditions," as he inevitably will, society will reach a state of "equilibration," a state of the greatest perfection and the most complete happiness." In the '70s Spencer seemed a giant, one of the great comprehensive minds of the century." (Lawrence W. Chisolm, Fenollosa: The Far East and American Culture, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1963. P. 24)
"I have one thing more to chat about; --I am trying to get all my friends to read Herbert Spencer--beginning with "First Principles." Slow reading, but invaluable; systematizes all one's knowledge and plans and ideas." (Letter from Lafcadio Hearn to Elizabeth Bisland, April 14, 1887. Quoted in Elizabeth Bisland, The Life and Letters of Lafcadio Hearn, 2 Vols., Houghton, Mifflin and Company, Boston, 1906. Vol. 1, p. 392)

"Yet First Principles is the coördination of the whole, and, whatever the other volumes of his philosophy may have accomplished incidentally, they were written to illustrate the applicability of his main ideas, and particularly of his famous formula of evolution, to all branches of knowledge, and particularly to those connected with life and mind." (H. S. Shelton, "Spencer's Formula of Evolution," The Philosophical Review, Vol. 19, pp. 241-258, 1910. P. 243)

"... Mr. Spencer's "First Principles" is the book which more than any other has spread his popular reputation ...." (William James, Memories and Studies, Longmans, Green, and Co., New York, 1911. P. 127)

"Later I have used it [First Principles] often as a textbook with students, and the total outcome of my dealings with it is an exceedingly unfavorable verdict. Apart from the great truth which it enforces, that everything has evolved somehow, and apart from the inevitable stimulating effect of any such universal picture, I regard its teachings as almost a museum of blundering reasoning." (William James, Memories and Studies, Longmans, Green, and Co., New York, 1911. P. 128)

"It was not, however, until I returned home for the vacation, that I came across the book which by putting this theory of Evolution once for all on a deep philosophical basis, filled up the gaps in my theory of the World, revolutionized my method of thought, and for a time solved for me the great problems of Life, of Nature, and of Human Destiny. This was Herbert Spencer's 'First Principles,' the first volume of his great system of Evolutionary Philosophy, a book that fell on the orderly line of my mental evolution like a shell, blasting and wrecking it, and which even when it ultimately failed to satisfy me, yet left me with a foundation so solid for the superstructure of Idealism which I was afterwards to erect upon it, that it has remained unshaken to this day. For here, on a mind blank as a sheet of white paper, as it were, and with no antecedent theories to be wiped away, was sketched as at a single sitting in all its complexity and with but a minimum of trouble, too, on my part, a complete picture of the Universe, of the Stars, of the Solar System, of Nature, of the formation of the earth and the changes it had undergone ...." (John Beattie Crozier, My Inner Life, Being a Chapter in Personal Evolution and Autobiography, Longman's, Green, and Co., London, 1898. Pp. 242-243)
"I allow that a large part of 'First Principles' is vitiated by a false conception of Energy, and that the book would have been far better written had the ideas it embodies been framed in the philosopher's mind after, instead of before, the great discoveries of Helmholtz, Thomson, Joule, Mayer, Tait, Balfour Stewart, and Clerk Maxwell." (Grant Allen, "Personal Reminiscences of Herbert Spencer," The Forum, Vol. 35, pp. 610-628, 1904. P. 619)

"... were all Spencer's other works to be utterly destroyed First Principles would ensure for its author a high place in the history of philosophy, for it is the product of a gigantic intellect." (T. W. Hill, Introduction to Herbert Spencer's First Principles, 6th edition, pp. ix-xiv, The Thinker's Library, No. 52, Watts & Co., London, 1937. P. xiv)


"... I originally entertained it, and still consider it, ...

[First Principles] essentially a Cosmogony that admits of being worked out in physical terms, without necessarily entering upon any metaphysical questions, and without committing myself to any particular form of philosophy commonly so called .... my sole original purpose was the interpretation of all concrete phenomena in terms of the redistribution of Matter and Motion, and ... I regard all other purposes as incidental and secondary ...." (Herbert Spencer to John Fiske, February 2, 1870. Quoted in John Spencer Clark, The Life and Letters of John Fiske, 2 Vols., Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1917. Vol. 1, p. 369)

"Such is a brief and imperfect sketch of the "First Principles" of Herbert Spencer's philosophy. No one has yet been found to deny that they give their author a better title to the name of philosopher than belongs to any other to whom it has thus far been applied." (Lest Frank Ward, Dynamic Sociology, 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1883. Vol. 1, p. 168)

In First Principles, "The doctrines of "least resistance" and the "rhythm of motion" are fully elaborated, and the treatment of the latter subject offers one of the most brilliant examples of strict philosophic thinking which the world has yet produced." (Lester Frank Ward, Dynamic Sociology, 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1883. Vol. 1, p. 160)
"FIRST PRINCIPLES"

"... as I originally conceived it, "First Principles" was constituted of what now forms its second part; that along with the succeeding volumes, it was intended to be a detailed working-out through all its ramifications of that conception crudely set forth in the essay on "Progress, its Law and its Cause," and that I subsequently saw the need for making such preliminary explanation as is now given in Part I (The Unknowable) simply for the purpose of guarding myself against the charges of atheism and materialism, which I foresaw would most likely be made in its absence." (Herbert Spencer to John Fiske, February 2, 1870. Quoted in John Spencer Clark, The Life and Letters of John Fiske, 2 Vols., Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1917. Vol. 1, p. 368)

"In connection with the further development of Spencer's thinking some notice should also be given of the apparent softening of statement [in the 6th edition of First Principles] which at times accompanies the improvement in diction. References to 'inexorable logic' almost disappear, as do many strong adjectives and adverbs, such as 'absolutely,' 'positively,' 'rigorously,' 'inevitably' and the like, of which he formerly made abundant use. 'And this assumption is made by the immense majority of philosophers, past and present,' becomes more simply--'most philosophers' [4th ed., p. 32; 6th ed., p. 27]." (Frank C. Becker, "The Final Edition of Spencer's 'First Principles: Part I'," The Journal of Philosophy, Vol. 3, pp. 287-291, 1906. P. 289)

"It is probably—strange irony of fate—that the book called "First Principles," although from a strict point of view it is far more vulnerable than anything its author ever wrote, is the work by which the "Synthetic Philosophy" will remain best known to the reading world." (William James, "Herbert Spencer," The Critic, Vol. 44, pp. 21-24, 1904. P. 23)

"As the "First Principles" has run to 11,000 copies in England, no doubt, it must be widely known." (L. F. Austin, "Herbert Spencer," The Illustrated London News, Vol. 123, p. 898, December 12, 1903. P. 898)

"Mr. Spencer's First Principles has had certainly a very great influence on my feelings and thoughts." (Beatrice Webb, My Apprenticeship. Longmans, Green and Co. London, 1926. P. 37.)
"About 1865 I got hold of a copy of Spencer's First Principles, and had my eyes opened to a new heaven and a new earth."


"... Wallace says of Spencer's First Principles that it was "a coherent exposition of philosophy, coordinating and explaining all human knowledge of the universe into one great system of evolution everywhere conforming to the same general principles, [and thus] must be held to be one of the greatest intellectual achievements of the Nineteenth Century," ...." (Michael Shermer, In Darwin's Shadow; The Life and Science of Alfred Russel Wallace. Oxford University Press. Oxford, 2002. Pp. 285-286)

(In the first edition of First Principles there is a chapter entitled "Laws in General" which was left out of subsequent editions. It is a good chapter, and worth xeroxing from a copy of this edition at Columbia University Library. However, check to see if some or all of what is contained in this chapter does not also appear in the essay, "The Genesis of Science" (1854).)

"The book that the Stranger gives to Waldo in The Story of an African Farm was intended to be Spencer's First Principles. When I was up in Basutoland at the mission station of Hermon in June, 1871, with an old aunt and cousin, one stormy, rainy night, there was a knock at the door; they were afraid to go and open it, so I went. There was a stranger there like Waldo's Stranger exactly. There was no house within fifty miles, so he slept there; the next morning he talked with me for a little while and after that I saw him twice for half an hour; and then I never saw him again. The stranger was a man named Willie Bertram, who died in 1878. He lent me Spencer's First Principles. I always think that when Christianity burst on the dark Roman world it was what that book was to me. I was in such complete, blank atheism." (In about 1884, Havelock Ellis took down the following statement from Olive; it seems to qualify parts of the letter: "When Olive met Bertram, who was completely atheistic, she was still theistic though freethinking, and he rather shocked her.") I did not even believe in my own nature, in any right or wrong, or certainty. I can still feel myself lying before the fire to read it. I had only three days." (She was 16 years, 3 months at the time. S. C. Cronwright-Schreiner, The Life of Olive Schreiner, Little, Brown, and Company, Boston, 1923. Letter from Olive Schreiner to Havelock Ellis dated March 25, 1884. Pp. 81-82, 82n.)
"I return your proofs by this post. To my mind nothing can be better than their contents, whether in matter or in manner, and as my wife arrived, independently, at the same opinion, I think my judgment is not one-sided. There is something calm and dignified about the tone of the whole—which eminently befits a philosophi- cal work which means / to live—and nothing can be more clear and forcible than the argument. (The work in question is First Princi- ples) I rejoice that you have made a beginning, and such a begin- ning—for the more I think about it the more important it seems to me that somebody should think out into a connected system the loose notions that are floating about more or less distinctly in all the best minds." (Letter from Thomas Henry Huxley to Herbert Spencer dated September 3, 1860. Quoted in Leonard Huxley, Life and Letters of Thomas Henry Huxley, 2 Vols., Macmillan and Co., Limited, London, 1900. Vol. 1, pp. 212-213)

"In December 1860, Gray lightly mentioned to Hooker his judg- ment on Spencer. "You think so much—you & Darwin—of Herbert Spen- cer that I subscribed for the new issue of his writings—and have just glanced at his 'principles.' Can't say I like his principles, and am amused to see him run 'the philosophy of the conditional' into positivism...." (A. Hunter Dupree, Asa Gray, The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1959. P. 302)

"My first introduction to the fact of Huxley's existence was in February, 1861, when I was a sophomore at Harvard. The second serial number of Herbert Spencer's "First Principles," which had just arrived from London, and on which I was feasting my soul ...." (John Fiske, "Reminiscences of Huxley," in Essays Historical and Literary, 2 Vols., The Macmillan Company, New York, 1902. Vol. 2, p. 199)

"In consequence mainly of your last letter, I have been reading Spencer's "First Principles" over again. On the whole I like it less than the first time. He is so good that he ought to be better. His à priori system is more consistent than Hamilton's, but quite as fundamentally absurd; in fact, there is the same erroneous assump- tion as the bottom of both. And most of his general principles strike me as being little more than verbal or at most empirical generalisations, with no warrant for their being considered laws. As you truly say, his doctrine that the Persistence of Force is a datum of Con- sciousness is exactly Hamilton's strange theory of Causation. But how weak his proof of it." (Letter from John Stuart Mill to Alex- ander Bain dated March 18, 1864. Quoted in The Letters of John Stu- art Mill, edited by Hugh S. R. Elliot, 2 Vols., Longmans, Green and Co, London, 1910. Vol. 2, p. 4)

"... the introductory notice, which I aimed to make a sort of religious breakwater to protect First Principles from the rush of the pious flood." (Letter from Edward L. Youmans to Herbert Spencer dated April 12, 1864. Quoted in John Fiske, Edward Living- ston Youmans, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. P. 177)
"In a work now issuing from the press, and still unfinished, it is suggested, with considerable plausibility, that Persistence of Force would be a more accurate expression than Conservation of Force. See Mr. Herbert Spencer's First Principles, London, 1861, p. 251. The title of this book gives an inadequate notion of the importance of the subjects with which it deals, and of the reach and subtlety of thought which characterizes it. Though some generalizations appear to me rather premature, no well-instructed and disciplined intellect can consider them without admiration of the remarkable powers displayed by their author." (Henry Thomas Buckle, History of Civilization in England, Second edition, 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1865. Vol. 2, p. 385n.)


"Such is a brief and imperfect sketch of the "First Principles" of Herbert Spencer's philosophy. No one has yet been found to deny that they give their author a better title to the name of philosopher than belongs to any other to whom it has thus far been applied." (Lester F. Ward, Dynamic Sociology, 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. Vol. 1, p. 168)

"I agree [with Giddings] that there is more real sociology there /in the second half of Spencer's First Principles/ than there is in his "Principles of Sociology" ...." (Lester F. Ward, Review of Principles of Sociology by Franklin H. Giddings, Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, Vol. 8, pp. 1-31, 1896. P. 17)

"Solid ground is reached only in Part II. of the "First Principles," and in only one other of his works is his master mind revealed with equal clearness. His grasp here of cosmical principles is astonishing, and the vast swing of his logic carries the reader irresistibly on, sweeping majestically across the whole cosmos in many different directions, until everything is compassed in a universal scheme." (Lester F. Ward, "The Career of Herbert Spencer," The Popular Science Monthly, Vol. 74, pp. 5-18, 1909. P. 8)

"And when we consider what that book /First Principles/ does for enquiring minds in the way of reducing a miscellany of ideas to luminous order, it is not easy to find any praise for it that is too high. How many a young intelligence has entered as it were a new sphere of order and coherence at the contact of Spencer's generalising thought, as the sand scattered at random on the surface of the demonstrator's disc trembles and divides into rhythmic lines at the touch of the vibration-giving bow, under a law mysterious as life itself." (John M. Robertson, Modern Humanists, Swan Sonnenschein & Co., London, 1891. P.)
"On my first visit to Massachusetts, in May, 1860, I fell upon a copy of that same prospectus of Spencer's series, in the Old Corner Bookstore, in Boston, and read it with exulting delight, for clearly there was to be such an organization of scientific doctrine as the world was waiting for." (John Fiske, Edward Livingston Youmans, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. P. 167)

"Some of us [Fiske and a few men he knew] entertained pretty decided opinions about Mr. Spencer's work. When we sometimes ventured to observe that it was as great as Newton's, and that his theory of evolution was going to remodel human thinking upon all subjects whatever, people used to stare at us and take us for idiots." (John Fiske, Edward Livingston Youmans, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. P. 167)


"I suppose the New Yorkers are too much absorbed in the pursuit of the Almighty Dollar to give much thought to the philosophy of their society." (Said in connection with the lesser success of Fiske's lecture tour in New York than elsewhere.) (Letter from Herbert Spencer to John Fiske dated April 7, 1885. Henry E. Huntington Library, Cat. No. HM 13747. Unpublished)

"Spencer was gentle and admirable as always; and the reverence which all these men [Lewes, Huxley, Tyndall, etc.] feel for him was thoroughly apparent in the way in which they listened to every word that came out of his mouth." (p. 270) "There is no doubt that Spencer is the profoundest thinker of all these men but Darwin impresses me with his strength more than any man I have ever seen." (p. 271) (Letter from John Fiske to Abby Morgan Brooks, November 13, 1873. Quoted in Ethel F. Fisk [sic], The Letters of John Fiske, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1940)
"Mill had made popular the theory of science as empirical. Spencer put content into this empirical view. Moreover, Spencer gave men a vista into infinite time and space. He really replaced the old religion since he told us where we come from, how we have developed, and what is the ultimate goal of civilization. In addition, he found in this country enthusiastic disciples. And John Fiske made the gospel of evolution respectable with his two heavy tomes on Cosmic Philosophy (1874) and his repeated exposition of that gospel." (Morris Raphael Cohen, American Thought: A Critical Sketch, Collier Books, New York, 1962. P. 89. [first published by The Free Press, 1954])

An anonymous writer in The Nation had said, off-handedly, that while Herbert Spencer was accepted by the general public, he was scoffed at by the experts in the various fields in which he wrote. John Fiske replied to this that "... it is not the "experts" who do the scoffing at Mr. Spencer, but almost without exception the literary dilettanti who have never received the special scientific training without which Mr. Spencer's works cannot possibly be understood or appreciated." (John Fiske, "Herbert Spencer and the Experts," The Nation, Vol. 8, p. 434, June 3, 1869. P. 434)
When the news of Spencer's death reached Italy, the Italian Chamber suspended the Order of the Day to pay its tribute to the great philosopher. Signori Berenini, Finchla and Biancheri recited the virtues and talents of the great dead amid generous and prolonged cheering. (Anonymous, "Herbert Spencer Notes," The Liberal Review, Vol. 1, pp. 18-21, 1904. P. 18)

"Indeed, Spencer was more readily and more generously recognized abroad than in his own country." ("W.", "Herbert Spencer," The Athenaeum, No. 3972, pp. 794-795, December 12, 1903. P. 795)

"I was in Italy when Spencer died, and was much struck by the Italians' appreciation of his work. From the Chamber of Deputies at Rome a message of condolence, full of Italian warmth, and beautiful Italian language too, was sent to our country on the loss of her great citizen. On reading it, I tried in vain to conceive the English House of Commons expressing in like manner its sorrow on the death of a distinguished foreign thinker. So far was such a message from our frigid English customs that, as the official Italian paper La Tribuna pointed out in an article headed "The Coldness of the English Public," our legislators appear to have taken no notice of Spencer's death. The journal added that Spencer had been "the great philosopher of the nineteenth century for all countries except his own." (James Sully, My Life and Friends, T. F. Unwin Ltd., London, 1918. Ep. 293-294)

"Spencer was not without honour in his own country, yet our national indifference to philosophy and to all systematic thinking, and the subserviency of a great part of our professed philosophers to the great German metaphysicians, have undoubtedly prevented his receiving from his countrymen during his lifetime the full measure of recognition that is due to his splendid services to science and philosophy." (Anonymous, "Herbert Spencer" Obituary, Nature, Vol. 69, pp. 155-156, 1903. P. 155)

Leonard Courtney wrote in his Journal of an audience granted by King Edward to about 25 distinguished foreigners: "As we trooped out Professor Stein, head of the Berne Bureau, was telling me what an ardent disciple he was of Herbert Spencer, and how his daughter had translated the Autobiography." (G. P. Gooch, The Life of Lord [Leonard] Courtney, Macmillan, London, 1920. P. 550)
COMPANY referred to Spencer's definition of evolution as "... the complicated formulae, deliberately rendered obscure to the uninitiated ..." (Gabriel Compayré, Herbert Spencer and Scientific Education, translated from the French by Maria E. Findlay, Thomas Y. Crowell & Co., New York, 1907. P. 8)

"... while Evolution to most other thinkers has been a word of vague and indeterminate meaning, Mr. Spencer has insisted upon defining it for his readers with almost mathematical accuracy and precision." (Grant Allen, "The Gospel According to Herbert Spencer," Part I, The Pall Mall Gazette, April 26, 1890, pp. 1-2, P. 2)

"To seek to reduce all classes of phenomena to a single formula is the mark of the incompetent amateur. To profess to have done so is the mark of the essential quack." (Unsigned, "The Exploded Quack," Blackwood's Magazine, Vol. 201, pp. 717-727, 1917. P. 727)

Spencer's "world-famous formula of Evolution, which thus, after all, turns out to be by no means so terrible as at first sight it possibly looks." (David Church Somervell, English Thought in the Nineteenth Century, 5th ed., Methuen, London, 1947. P. 6)

"Evolution is a change from an indefinite, incoherent homogeneity, to a definite, coherent heterogeneity; through continuous differentiations and integrations." (Herbert Spencer, First Principles, 1st ed., Williams and Norgate, London, 1863. P. 216)

After quoting Spencer's longer definition of evolution: "No Senegalese witch-doctor or Yankee demonstrator of "Christian Science" ever uttered more resounding gibberish; though, like other spells and incantations, it has doubtless poured the balm of consolation into many a wounded spirit ...." (Unsigned, "The Exploded Quack," Blackwood's Magazine, Vol. 201, pp. 717-727, 1917. P. 723)

"This tendency of organic unitries to accumulate when once they are formed is absolutely all the truth I can distill from Spencer's unwieldly account of evolution. It makes a much / less gaudy and chromatic picture, but what there is of it is exact." (William James, Memories and Studies, Longmans, Green, and Co., New York, 1911. Pp. 136-137)
After quoting Spencer's definition of evolution (and the early one, at that) Goldwin Smith remarks: "The universe may well have heaved a sigh of relief when, through the cerebration of an eminent thinker, it had been delivered of this account of itself." (Goldwin Smith, "Has Science Yet Found a New Basis for Morality?", The Contemporary Review, Vol. 41, pp. 335-358, 1882. P. 349)

After quoting Spencer's definition of evolution from the first edition of First Principles, that it "consists in a change from an indefinite /in/coherent homogeneity to a definite coherent heterogeneity, through continuous differentiations and integrations," Smith says: "The universe may well have heaved a sigh of relief when, through the cerebration of an eminent thinker, it had /sic/ been delivered of this account of itself." (Goldwin Smith, "Has Science Yet Found a New Basis for Morality?", The Contemporary Review, Vol. 41, pp. 335-358, 1882. P. 349) Smith later wrote: "A literary flippancy of mine once caused as estrangement between us, but I am happy to say we became the best of friends again." (Goldwin Smith, Reminiscences, edited by Arnold Haultain, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1910. P. 140) But in Spencer's reply to the critical article cited above, there is no mention at all of Smith's derisive statement about Spencer's formula of evolution; the rejoinder is on other issues. (Spencer, "Professor Goldwin Smith as a Critic," The Contemporary Review, Vol. 41, pp. 519-521, 1882)

"... but if his [Spencer's] words [in his formula of evolution] are justly redefined in the light of advancing knowledge, his apothegm remains one of the most successful philosophic summaries of all time." (Horner W. Smith, Man and His Gods, Little, Brown and Company, Boston, 1955. Pp. 355-356)
"I shall always esteem it a high privilege and honour to have been allowed to read a paper before the Anthropological Institute. I am deeply sensible of the honour done me by the intention or wish of yourself [Galton] and the other distinguished men whom you mention to hear my paper. That Herbert Spencer should be one of them is more gratifying to me than I care to say, for my intellectual debt to his writings is deep and will be life long. That I should be able even in prospect to interest one from whom I have derived such keen intellectual pleasure and enlightenment is to me almost affecting." (Letter from James G. Frazer to Francis Galton, dated March 8, 1885. Quoted in Robert Ackerman, J. G. Frazer, His Life and Work, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1987. P. 22)

"Now magicians or medicine-men appear to constitute the oldest artificial or professional class in the evolution of society. For sorcerers are found in every / savage tribe known to us; and among the lowest savages, such as the Australian aborigines, they are the only artificial class that exists. As time goes on, and the process of differentiation continues, the order of medicine-men is itself subdivided into such classes as the healers of disease, the makers of rain, and so forth; while the most powerful member of the order wins for himself a position as chief and gradually develops into a sacred king ...." (James G. Frazer, Lectures on the Early History of Kingship, Macmillan and Co., Limited, London, 1905. Pp. 150-151.)

"Thus Frazer, like all social scientists, owes a debt to Spencer for certain general notions, such as the idea of understanding societies and social arrangements as the products of complex evolutionary processes, the importance of differentiation as an index to evolutionary development, the necessity of studying psychology as it related to social institutions, and the need to think of social and psychological phenomena as systematically organized and as fulfilling functions." (Robert Ackerman, J. G. Frazer, His Life and Work, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1987. P. 44)


"Although Herbert Spencer was in the audience when Frazer made his intellectual debut, reading a paper at a meeting of the Anthropological Institute in 1885, we know of no personal relation between the two." (Robert Ackerman, J. G. Frazer, His Life and Work, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1987. P. 40)
"Mr. Spencer apparently holds the latter only of the two positions just indicated: he accepts the doctrine of the determination of the will by motives; but, if I correctly understand him, refuses to admit that an individual has the power, by an effort of will, to make his character other than it must inevitably be." (as apparently asserted by J. S. Mill, System of Logic, Bk. 6, Ch. 27 (J. E. Cairnes, "Mr. Spencer on Social Evolution." The Fortnightly Review, Vol. 17, n.s., pp. 63-82, 1875. P. 82)

"Why are historical events uncertain, uncertain both in themselves and in their evidence? Because they depend on things which are in their own nature uncertain. The event itself depends on the human will, a very uncertain thing ...." (p. 148) "... if we have no free will, we live in a world of sheer delusion, not only as to historical knowledge, but as to all daily events, public or private." (p. 148) "For the order of nature in no way depends on that very uncertain thing, the human will. But that with which we have to deal, that course of human affairs which, when present, we call politics, and which, when past, we call history, does depend on the human will, and is therefore uncertain." (p. 151) "Compared with the fixity of physical rules, human affairs may seem to be the sport of chance; the science which deals with them may seem to lack the attributes of science." (p. 154) (Edward A. Freeman, The Method of Historical Study, Macmillan and Co., London, 1886)
"... we must make sure to utilize for our purposes a view of the mechanism of laughter which fits our own realm of thought excellently. I refer to the attempted explanation of Herbert Spencer in his essay entitled Physiology of Laughter. According to Spencer laughter is a phenomenon of discharge of psychic irritation, and an evidence of the fact that the psychic utilization of this irritation has suddenly met with a hindrance. The psychological situation, which discharges itself in laughter, he describes in the following words: "Laughter naturally results only when consciousness is unawares transferred from great things to small--only when there is what we call a descending incongruity." .... However, we experience the desire to modify Spencer's thought; to give a more definite meaning to some of the ideas and to change others. We would say that laughter arises when the sum of psychic energy, formerly used for the occupation of certain psychic channels, has become unutilizable so that it can experience free discharge." (Sigmund Freud, Wit and Its Relation to the Unconscious, in The Basic Writings of Sigmund Freud, translated and edited by A. A. Brill, pp. 631-803, The Modern Library, Random House, New York, 1938. P. 733)

"Spirits and demons, as I have shown in the last essay, are only projections of man's own emotional impulses. He turns his emotional cathexis into persons, he peoples the world with them and meets his internal mental processes again outside himself ...." (p. 92) "If we may venture to exploit our hypothesis still further, we may inquire which essential part of our psychological structure is reflected and reproduced in the projective creation of souls and spirits. It could scarcely be disputed that the primitive conception of a soul, however much it may differ from the later, purely immaterial soul, is nevertheless intrinsically the same; that is to say, it assumes that both persons and things are of a double nature and that their known attributes and modifications are distributed between their two component portions. This original duality, to borrow an expression from Herbert Spencer (1893) /The Principles of Sociology, Vol. 1/, is identical with the dualism proclaimed by our current distinction between soul and body and by such ineradicable linguistic expressions of it as the use of phrases like 'beside himself' or 'coming to himself' in relation to fits of rage or fainting (ibid., 144) /The Principles of Sociology, Vol. 1, 3rd edition, p. 144/." (Sigmund Freud, Totem and Taboo, translated by James Strachey, W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., New York, 1952. Pp. 92,93)
"... in each age, among each people, and to a great extent, in each individual, there shall arise just that conception of deity best adapted to the needs of the case. If, being violent and blood-thirsty, the nature be one calling for stringent control, it involves the idea of a ruler equally violent and blood-thirsty, and fitted to afford this control. When, by ages of discipline, of adaptation to the social state, the degree of restraint required has become less, the diabolical characteristics before ascribed to the deity are less predominant in the conception of him. And gradually, as all need for restraint disappears, this conception approximates toward that of a purely beneficent necessity. Thus man's constitution in this, as in other respects, self-adjusting, self-balancing. The mind itself evolves a compensating check to its own movements, varying always in proportion to the requirement. Its centrifugal and its centripetal forces are necessarily in correspondence, because the one generates the other." (Herbert Spencer, "The Use of Anthropomorphism," The Leader, Vol. 4, No. 189, pp. 1076-1077, November 5, 1853. P. 1076)

"... structural changes are the slowly accumulated results of functional changes...." (Herbert Spencer, First Principles, Fourth edition, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1896. P. 462)

Durkheim (and Radcliffe-Brown after him) turned away from the evolutionists' concern with the origin of social institutions, and dealt more with their functions.


"... all evolutions of humanity subserve, in the times and places in which they occur, some useful function; ..." "... All religions, down to the lowest Fetishism, have, in their places, fulfilled useful functions." "... men's theologies, as well as their political and social arrangements, are determined into such forms as the conditions require." (Herbert Spencer, "The Use of Anthropomorphism," The Leader, Vol. 4, No. 189, pp. 1076-1077, November 5, 1853. P. 1076)

"Spencer and / other organicists dealt not only with many subsystems like "the sustaining, the distributing, and the regulating," but also with several subsystems like "the domestic, the ecclesiastic, the ceremonial, the professional, the industrial," and other institutions. If anything, H. Spencer and other organicists analyzed and classified these subsystems and subsystems more thoroughly and clearly than most of today's "functionalists structuralists."" (Pitirim A. Sorokin, Sociological Theories of Today, Harper & Row, Publishers, New York, 1966. Pp. 156n.-157n.)
"But what distinguished Spencer from most of his contemporaries was that instead of merely paying lip-service to the motion of social cohesion and then adopting a method which utterly ignored it, he devoted almost as much attention to structural/functional relations as to social evolution. This, of course, makes him puzzling if one approaches him in terms of a simple dichotomy—structural/functional versus evolutionary—but to Spencer himself it seemed entirely natural." (J. W. Burrow, Evolution and Society, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1966, P. 193)

"... Spencer is a figure of unusual interest, exhibiting within a single body of writings the tension N.B.: Burrow apparently thinks they are not compatible/ to be found in much nineteenth-century sociology, between the hope of constructing a social series developing according to ascertainable laws and the approach to societies as systems of complex functional relations." (J. W. Burrow, Evolution and Society, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1966, P. 191) (He has swallowed the social anthropologists' contention that the two approaches are irreconcilable/)

"... but the very anthropologists who were most ready to reject theories of social evolution wholeheartedly adopted and developed, for specifically sociological purposes, the idea of function and functional interdependence; these they used as essential tools for the analysis of social structure. In this they had been anticipated by Herbert Spencer to a degree which is seldom, even today, fully realized. Functionalism therefore has its roots deep in the evolutionary tradition, though perhaps more in the philosophy and sociology of Spencer than in the biology of Darwin." (Donald G. MacRae, "Darwinism and the Social Sciences," in S. A. Barnett, editor, A Century of Darwin, pp. 296-312, Heinemann, London, 1958. P. 300)

"... Spencer invented and established the working concepts and vocabulary of the modern sociologist or social anthropologist, whether engaged on field or on theoretical work. It was Spencer who first used the terms "social structure" and "social function" in their modern senses, that is, to refer to the essential framework of institutions without which no continuing association of human beings in society is possible. The term institution had been employed in a fashion still contemporary as early as the eighteenth century, but Spencer re-established its usage as a key to the problems of comparative social study; he also put the classification of institutions on a firm basis." (Donald G. MacRae, "Darwinism and the Social Sciences," in S. A. Barnett, editor, A Century of Darwin, pp. 296-312, Heinemann, London, 1958. P. 307)

"Not only was Spencer the most ambitious of evolutionary theorists; he also went as far toward structural-functionalism as anyone could without knowing where he was going. Social systems are dynamic and self-regulating. Integrated by the structuring of their functions, they are moved by the functional interaction of their structures." (Philip Abrams, The Origins of British Sociology: 1834-1914, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1968. P. 69)
"De Tocqueville practised 'structural-functional' analysis without every saying anything about the methodology. In contrast, Herbert Spencer formulated all the relevant concepts but never analysed any concrete society from this point of view. The pages of his Descriptive Sociology are invariably divided into sections under the headings of Structure and Function, but they bear no trace of any attempt to disentangle precisely the web of inter-relations. The formulations of the concepts, however, are far superior to those of the present day exponents of 'functional-structural analysis', who extol Max Weber, Pareto, Toennies but contemptuously dismiss Spencer who put forth ideas which they regard as their own discoveries." (Stanislav Andreski, The Uses of Comparative Sociology, University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1969. P. 69)

"Altogether Malinowski was a greater interpreter of primitive societies but a / mediocre methodologist and theorist. The only 'functionalist' whose formulations add something to what Spencer said was Radcliffe-Brown, but he told me many times that he regarded himself as a Spencerian." (Stanislav Andreski, The Uses of Comparative Sociology, University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1969. Pp. 69-70)

"In addition to greater clarity Herbert Spencer's structural-functional analysis had another important point of superiority over the more recent variants: namely, it gave reasons why we should believe that various features of social structure normally contribute to the maintenance of the whole. The explanation was that the struggle for existence between societies, with the attendant elimination of the unfit, ensured that only those societies survived which consisted of functional parts. Spencer's evolutionism is the only convincing justification of functionalism that has been advanced." (Stanislav Andreski, The Uses of Comparative Sociology, University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1969. P. 73)

"In the thought of Herbert Spencer—the spiritual father of both the evolutionists and the functionalists—the ideas of function and evolution were mutually supporting." (Stanislav Andreski, The Uses of Comparative Sociology, University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1969. P. 68)

"The kinship of functionalism to Spencer is apparent. It is Spencerian, however, without the Spencerian interest in sequence." (p. 67) "Structuralism, as this approach is sometimes called, has its roots in Spencer as well as in Morgan." (p. 68) (Irving Goldman, "Evolution and Anthropology," Victorian Studies, Vol. 3, pp. 55-75, 1959)

Spencer was a thoroughgoing functionalist, and a structuralist too. His chapter on Function is Principles of Biology, Vol. I, is very illuminating.
"The explicit idea that the study of social structure should be an objective for sociological enquiry seems to be due to Spencer (1858) [his Prospectus], who refers to "the Inductions of Sociology--general facts, structural and functional as gathered from a survey of societies and their changes." The fact that Spencer brought the terms "structure" and "function" into direct association shows that he had an anatomical image in mind." (Edmund R. Leach, "Social Structure," International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences, Vol. 14, pp. 482-489, The Macmillan Company & The Free Press, [New York], 1968. P. 482)

While Spencer specific theories (e.g., the "ghost" theory, etc.) were ignored or rejected by Durkheim and Radcliffe-Brown, what was adopted by them was his general functional analysis, his scientific attitude toward social phenomena, and his organic model of society.

"Spencer, however, like most of those influenced by biological conceptions, was most concerned to work out a theory of social evolution, and his analyses of social structure and social function in the Principles of Sociology, though of some interest, are brief and unconvincing. It was Durkheim, as Radcliffe-Brown insists, who first gave a rigorous formulation of the concept of social function in The Division of Labour in Society and in The Rules of Sociological Method." (T. B. Bottomore, Sociology, A Guide to Problems and Literature, 2nd ed., Pantheon Books, Random House, New York, 1971. P. 58)

"Moreover, Marx and Engels shared with Comte, Spencer, and Morgan a functionalism which was fully compatible, indeed was deliberately subordinate to an interest in change, in contrast to the twentieth-century functionalists who were capable only of synchronic analysis." (Marvin Harris, The Rise of Anthropological Theory. Thomas Y. Crowell Company, New York, 1968. P. 235)


"The combination of the idea of a self-regulating system and of functional differentiation taken together brings Spencer very close to the position of modern "functional" theory in sociology and related disciplines. Indeed, on the level of "approach" all the essential ingredients are present. What is lacking are certain propositions of substantive theory which will be mentioned presently." (Talcott Parsons, Introduction to The Study of Sociology by Herbert Spencer, pp. v-x, The University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor, 1961. P. vii)
"Already we can see that between Spencer's evolutionism and his functionalism there is symbiosis not contradiction.... Using the principle of natural selection Spencer achieved what is often supposed to be impossible, a structural-functional sociology of change." (Philip Abrams, *The Origins of British Sociology: 1834-1914*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1968. P. 68)

"But Spencer made his mark on sociology even where he was rejected and forgotten. The social anthropologists, recoiling from conjectural history, yet drew the basic vocabulary of functionalism from him; his influence on Durkheim and Radcliffe-Brown is clear enough." (J. D. Y. Peel, *Herbert Spencer on Social Evolution*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1972. P. xxxix)

"... that aspect of Spencer's work which was immediately and permanently absorbed into the sociological tradition, so much so that we forget that we owe it to Spencer: the notions of structure, function, system, and equilibrium ...." (J. D. Y. Peel, *Herbert Spencer on Social Evolution*, Chicago, 1972. P. x)

Odum speaks of " ... Spencer's progressively invalidated theory of sociology as a science of societies as organized systems having specialized parts or institutions." (Howard W. Odum, *American Sociology*, Longmans, Green and Co., New York, 1951. P. 316)

"To be sure Spencer and early ethnologists had treated the customs and usages of various societies; but they had merely described them, with little or no analysis of their functions in society." (Nicholas Timasheff, *Sociological Theory: Its Nature and Growth*, 3rd edition, Random House, New York, 1967. P. 71)

"Herbert Spencer, the first British sociologist (1820-1903) was the first to use 'function' as a technical term for the analysis of society." (Lucy Mair, *An Introduction to Social Anthropology*, 2nd ed., Oxford University Press, New York and London, 1972. P. 32)

"Spencer's use of the biological analogy of organism, dangerous though it has proved to be, did much to further the use of the concepts of structure and function in social anthropology, for he constantly stressed that at every stage in social evolution there is a necessary functional interdependence between the institutions of a society, which must always tend towards a state of equilibrium if it is to persist. He was also a great advocate of sociological laws, both structural and genetic." (E. E. Evans-Pritchard, *Social Anthropology*, Cohen & West Ltd, London, 1951. P. 51)
"There can be no true conception of a structure without a true conception of its function. To understand how an organization originated and developed, it is requisite to understand the need subserved at the outset and afterwards." (Principles, Vol. III, p. 3. N.Y., 1909)

Spencer speaks of "the general law of organization that difference of function entails differentiation and division of the parts performing them ..." (Vol. II, p. 441)

Spencer shows how like functions produced like structures. For example, in Sparta and among the Inca, Vol. II, pp. 580-584).

He was the father of both functionalism and evolutionism in anthropology. (See "The Social Organism.")

(For the influence of Spencer on Durkheim, Radcliffe-Brown, Evans-Pritchard, and Forde, see my "Introduction, pp. 1-11.")
"For Galton, Spencer was a whetstone whereon he could give his conceptions greater sharpness and clarity ...." (Karl Pearson, The Life, Letters and Labours of Francis Galton, 4 Vols., Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1930. Vol. 3A, pp. 317-318)

"Having obtained drawings or photographs of several persons alike in most respects, but differing in minor details, what sure method is there of extracting the typical characteristics from them? I may mention a plan which has occurred both to Mr. Herbert Spencer and myself, the principle of which is to superimpose optically the various drawings and to accept the aggregate result. Mr. Spencer suggested to me in conversation that the drawings reduced to the same scale might be traced on separate pieces of transparent paper and secured one upon another, and then held between the eye and the light. I have attempted this with some success. My own idea was to throw faint images of the several portraits, in succession, upon the same sensitized photographic plate." (Francis Galton, Address to the Department of Anthropology, The British Association for the Advancement of Science, Reports, 1877, pp. 94-100. P. 97)

"I am very glad that you are going to do justice to Herbert Spencer as an investigator, but I cannot help you with facts about it. I know of course about his experiments on the effect of wind on the upthrow of sap, but do not know where the account of the experiments is published. I feel myself unable to help you, as I wish I could. As regards his influence on contemporary science I feel it is small; on my own work it has been nil, but Romanes ascribed the idea of his beautiful experiments on the formation of nerves on medusae wholly to Spencer's published views. What a sad scene it was at Golder's Green.* ["Galton's account of Herbert Spencer's cremation, which would have had historical interest, seems to have perished."] (Francis Galton, quoted in Karl Pearson, The Life, Letters and Labours of Francis Galton, 4 Vols., Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1930. Vol. 3B, p. 614 + 614n.)
Hamlin Garland proposed to write a book, which he never completed, on The Evolution of American Thought. In it he intended to deal with American literature along evolutionary lines derived largely from Spencer. In a draft of Chapter 1 he asked his readers whether "the general laws of development will not aid us in an understanding of this life and literature. What was the race of this people? Was the individuality high or low? Was the society homogeneous or heterogeneous? He considered this question important because: "For the principle of a comparatively simple cause producing a complex series of effects which in their turn become causes and so spread a never-ceasing heterogeneity, runs through every department of human life, just as surely, though perhaps not so perceptively, as in the material universe." (Quoted by Donald Pizer, "Herbert Spencer and the Genesis of Hamlin Garland's Critical System," Tulane Studies in English, Vol. 7, pp. 153-168, 1957. P. 163)

"Indeed, Garland's utilization of Spencerian evolution was a basic factor in his development of a critical system which served as the foundation for his defense, advocacy, and practice of local color. In all, his literary adaptation of Spencerianism represents both an important late nineteenth-century intellectual relationship and one of the few attempts to construct a systematic local color aesthetic." (Donald Pizer, "Herbert Spencer and the Genesis of Hamlin Garland's Critical System," Tulane Studies in English, Vol. 7, pp. 153-168, 1957. P. 153)

"In all, Garland's intense preoccupation with Spencerian evolution is an important example of Spencer's extensive influence in America. This influence has been documented for social thought by Richard Hofstadter and others, but has received little attention from literary scholars." (Donald Pizer, "Herbert Spencer and the Genesis of Hamlin Garland's Critical System," Tulane Studies in English, Vol. 7, pp. 153-168, 1957. P. 168n.)

"By "Sociology" Garland seems to mean here The Study of Sociology, on which he had taken notes in his May 15, 1885, notebook. In a letter to Eldon C. Hill, April 10, 1938, Garland recalled that in his early Boston days he read Spencer's First Principles, Education, Man versus the State, and various essays (Hill, "A Biographical Study," p. 47). From his use of Spencer's ideas on land ownership and women's rights, it appears Garland knew Social Statics well, and his mention, in his notebooks and elsewhere, of such Spencerian tags as altruism-egoism and emotional-cogital suggests that he was also acquainted with Spencer's ideas on ethics and psychology." (Donald Pizer, "Herbert Spencer and the Genesis of Hamlin Garland's Critical System," Tulane Studies in English, Vol. 7, pp. 153-168, 1957. P. 161n.)
"Herbert Spencer remained my philosopher and master. With eager haste I sought to compass the "Synthetic Philosophy." The universe took on order and harmony as, from my five cent breakfast, I went directly to the consideration of Spencer's theory of the evolution of music or painting or sculpture. It was thrilling, it was joyful to perceive that everything moved from the simple to the complex—how the bow-string became the harp, and the egg the chicken." (Hamlin Garland, A Son of the Middle Border, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1925. P. 323)

"His /Spencer's/ true position in the world of thought is not yet generally perceived, but this much is certain, those whose devotion to truth never swerves to follow religious bias already recognize him as the greatest generalizing mind born on this planet, and the world is sure to come at length to the realization of the fact that he of all other men is the enunciator and the great teacher of the evolution philosophy, and his forty years' work will come to be the most monumental and amazing product of the century." (Hamlin Garland, Review of Alfred Russel Wallace's Natural Selection, The Arena, Vol. 4, pp. xxv-xxviii, October, 1891. P. xxvi)

"Herbert Spencer stands for the illimitable extension in space and time, of the modern mind. That mighty law /of evolution/ brought order out of chaos. The work of Huxley, Tyndall, Haeckel /sic/, Darwin, Wallace confirmed it, specialized it, but they did not go beyond it. Directly or indirectly that conception has done more for the thought of modern times than any other whatsoever." (Hamlin Garland, Review of Alfred Russel Wallace's Natural Selection, The Arena, Vol. 4, pp. xxv-xxviii, October, 1891. P. xxvi)

"But the wonder of Spencerianism was its adaptability. Because the synthetic philosophy "was large enough to be all things to all men" /R. Hofstadter, Social Darwinism in American Thought, p. 18/, writers as temperamentally and intellectually distinct as Sidney Lanier and Jack London could each draw upon it for his own purpose. Garland was thus no different from other American disciples of Spencer when he was selective in his use of Spencerianism and its implications. At this early stage of his career and thought he used Spencer in two simple ways: to explain the growing complexity of the novel and to equate this growth with progress." (Donald Pizer, Hamlin Garland's Early Work and Career, University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1960. P. 11)

"Garland was thus no different from other American disciples of Spencer when he was selective in his use of Spencerism and its implications. At this early stage of his career and thought he used Spencer in two simple ways: to explain the growing complexity of the novel and to equate this growth with progress." (Donald Pizer, Hamlin Garland's Early Work and Career, University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1960. P. 11)
"His full application to literature of Spencer's doctrine of the progression from incoherent homogeneity to coherent heterogeneity now led him to stress local color as the literature best capable of expressing the diversity of America's "sentiments." It is difficult to overestimate the influence of this critical belief on Garland's future work and thought. His practice and defense of local color were not, as was so often true of other writers, simply the result of a personal inclination or of adaptability to the times. They were also based on what he considered to be irrefutable natural law, the law of evolution as stated by Herbert Spencer." (Donald Pizer, Hamlin Garland's Early Work and Career, University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1960. Pp. 20-21)

"Considering the matter of priority settled Garland had just cited the fact that Spencer's "Progress: Its Law and Cause" and the first edition of Principles of Psychology had appeared before Darwin's The Origin of Species, it still remains to note that Darwin and Wallace are but specialists in the great philosophy which Mr. Spencer outlined in that epoch-making essay on "Progress, its Law and Cause." Great as were Darwin's discoveries, or Tyndall's, or Huxley's, they were all included within the mighty circle of Herbert Spencer's thought, and any new discoveries to be made will still be within the limits of his pre-empted territory. While Darwin and Wallace studied animal life, and the configuration of the globe, and the derivation of man, to Herbert Spencer had come the grandest intellectual conception ever wrought out in a human brain, --the conception of the law of progress. The law of a relatively simple cause producing a series of complex results to become in their turn causes. The law that progress consists in the passage of matter from a relatively simple state to a relatively complex state." (Hamlin Garland, Review of Alfred Russel Wallace's Natural Selection, The Arena. Vol. 4, pp. xxv-xxviii, October, 1891. P. xxv)

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"... Garland advised his readers always to keep in mind "Mr. Spencer's idea" that "every external change was accompanied by a correlative adjustment in the intellectual sphere" ..." (Donald Pizer, "Herbert Spencer and the Genesis of Hamlin Garland's Critical System," Tulane Studies in English, Vol. 7, pp. 153-168, 1957. P. 164)
"Once between 1874 and 1878 on returning from an inter-term vacation from the School of Mines in London nominally devoted to the study of chicken embryos, he reported to T. H. Huxley enthusiastically that in addition to he had found time to read Herbert Spencer's Principles of Biology. "You'd have done far better to spend all your time on embryology!" came the snorting rejoinder. Whereupon Geddes immediately reread Spencer to find out why Huxley disapproved of him ...." (Philip Boardman, Patrick Geddes, Maker of the Future, The University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, 1944. P. 34)

"During the London years T. H. Huxley had hold him not to waste time reading Spencer; so he read Spencer and seized upon the latter's emphasis on anabolism and katabolism, the processes of building up and tearing down, as fundamental to all forms of life. From this starting point Geddes read and observed, reasoned and guessed, till he convinced himself of a number of things in contradiction to currently held ideas of organic evolution in general, and the evolution of sex in particular." (Philip Boardman, Patrick Geddes, Maker of the Future, The University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, 1944. P. 126)
GENERALIZATIONS (INCLUDING POWERS OF)

Things and events the most particular are seen and placed by Spencer as instances of a general class of phenomena, as illustrations of some broad process.

To Spencer a fact was never merely a fact, but an instance. Spencer was not interested in facts in and on themselves. He was always seeking to make the broadest generalizations that the facts would allow.

"This generalization [by von Baer, that organisms in their development pass from a homogeneous to a heterogeneous state] seemed to crystallize and unite into a harmonious whole, many observations already made by Spencer himself in different fields of scientific research." (John Beattie Crozier, Civilization and Progress, Outlines of a New System, 3rd edition, Longmans, Green & Co., London, 1893. P. 41)

"Dr. McCosh, who fundamentally differed from him, said "his bold generalizations are always instructive, and some of them may in the end be established as the profoundest laws of the knowable universe."" (Henry George, A Perplexed Philosopher, Robert Schalkenbach Foundation, New York, 1965. P. xii)

"Though there must be data before there can be generalization, yet ungeneralized data accumulated in excess, are impediments to generalization. When a man's knowledge is not in order, the more of it he has the greater will be his confusion of thought. When facts are not organized into faculty, the greater the mass of them the more will the mind stagger along under its burden, hampered instead of helped by its acquisitions." (Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1891. P. 267)

"In the scientific world, the accumulation of facts has outstripped the work of valid generalization. For, while men of moderate ability can observe, experiment, and multiply details in special departments, it requires men of breadth to arrange them into groups, to deduce principles and arrive at comprehensive laws. The great mass of scientific specialists, confined to their departments, and little trained to the work of generalization, are apt to regard lightly the logical processes of science, and to decry mere theorizing and speculation. They forget that facts of themselves are not science, and only become so by being placed in true relations, and that the function of the thinker is therefore supreme; while the work of organizing facts and establishing general truths is, after all, just as much a specialty as that of observation or experiment in any branches of inquiry." (Edward L. Youmans, "Herbert Spencer and the Doctrine of Evolution," The Popular Science Monthly, Vol. 6, pp. 20-48, 1874-75. Pp. 44-45.)
"Now Spencer showed that the universal process of evolution as described in his formula not only conforms to the development of an individual life as generalized by von Baer, but is itself an inevitable consequence of the perpetual metamorphosis of energy that was detected by the great thinkers above named, from Rumford to Helmholtz. Had he only accomplished the former part of the task, his place in the nineteenth century would have been that of a greater Kepler; as it is, his place is undoubtedly that of a greater Newton. The achievement is so stupendous that that of Darwin is fairly dwarfed in comparison. Now in Spencer's law of evolution the unification of nature is carried to something like completeness.... The correct way of stating the case would be to say that Spencer's generalizations give us the complete and scientific statement of a truth which in more or less vague and imperfect shape permeates the intellectual atmosphere of our time." (John Fiske, "Evolution and the Present Age," pp. 251-284, in Essays Historical and Literary, 2 Vols., The Macmillan Company, New York, 1902. Vol. 2, pp. 275-276)

Spencer has "... a cosmic range of intellect that enabled him to unify all knowledge in one inexpugnable generalisation...." (Caleb Williams Saleeby, "The Sun Forgotten," The Academy and Literature, Vol. 66, p. 447, 1904. P. 447)

Of Spencer's powers of generalization: "It seemed as if in his hands facts, apparently the most alien and disconnected, discovered their affinities with one another, and entered into wholly unexpected relationships ...." (David Church Somervell, English Thought in the Nineteenth Century, 5th ed., Methuen, London, 1947. P. 2)

"His [Spencer's] true position in the world of thought is not yet generally perceived, but this much is certain, those whose devotion to truth never swerves to follow religious bias already recognize him as the greatest generalizing mind born on this planet, and the world is sure to come at length to the realization of the fact that he of all other men is the enunciator and the great teacher of the evolution philosophy, and his forty years' work will come to be the most monumental and amazing product of the century." (Hamlin Garland, Review of Alfred Russel Wallace's Natural Selection, The Arena, Vol. 4, pp. xxv-xxviii, October, 1891. P. xxvi)

"But Spencer was so sure of his analogies and generalizations that their verification was to him merely a time-consuming routine. He prepared a system of investigation designed to support his generalizations and sent assistants to the anthropological and classical literatures to select the appropriate data." (Abram Kardiner and Edward Preble, They Studied Man, The World Publishing Company, Cleveland, 1961. P. 44)

Spencer was remarkable for grasping the general properties of things and for gaining insights by comparing and contrasting broad ranges of phenomena.
"Although he stands for much that is yet in dispute there can be no question that at the present time—1892—Herbert Spencer, of all his contemporaries, holds the foremost place in the intellectual world, and through a wider circle than any man now living, and perhaps than any man of our century, is regarded as a profound, original and authoritative thinker—by many indeed as the greatest thinker the world has ever yet seen." (Henry George, A Perplexed Philosopher, Robert Schalkenbach Foundation, New York, 1965. P. xi)

"Referring to this Spencer letter to the St. James' Gazette, February 14, 1883, on the land question, George at the time wrote to Edward R. Taylor: "Spencer is going the way of Comte—going insane from vanity."" (Henry George, Jr., The Life of Henry George, Robert Schalkenbach Foundation, New York, 1960. P. 420n.)

"To his mind Spencer's offence was not merely that of a philosopher who attempted to explain away and shiftingly deny what before he had asserted to be a fundamental, obvious and everlasting truth, but that with his later philosophy, he had allowed materialism to take the place of God." (Henry George, Jr., The Life of Henry George, Robert Schalkenbach Foundation, New York, 1960. P. 568)

"... the work of Mr. Henry George—a work Progress and Poverty which I closed after a few minutes on finding how visionary were its ideas." (Letter from Herbert Spencer to the St. James' Gazette, February 14, 1883. Quoted in Henry George, A Perplexed Philosopher, Robert Schalkenbach Foundation, New York, 1965. P. 58)

"It Ch. IX, "The Right to the Use of the Earth," of Social Statics, 1850 edition was printed and is still being printed by many American newspapers,* (*Even as I write I am constantly receiving, especially from the West, copies of papers which contain Chapter IX. of "Social Statics," and which in ignorance of all he has since said, continue to speak of Mr. Spencer as an advocate of equal rights to land.) and was issued in tract form for free distribution in the United States, Canada and Australia; editions of hundreds of thousands being issued at a time,† (†About the time I ran for Mayor of New York (1886) on a platform which attracted great attention to the idea of equal rights to land, one enthusiastic advocate of the idea, Mr. W. J. Atkinson, himself printed some 500,000 copies.) many of which must have reached Great Britain, even if it was not reprinted there." (Henry George, A Perplexed Philosopher, Robert Schalkenbach Foundation, New York, 1965. P. 73n.)
"It was while they were guests of the Hyndmans, that Mr. George met Herbert Spencer. Through the Hyndmans, Mr. and Mrs. George were invited to a reception at Mrs. (since Lady) Jeune's. It was a "London crush," the drawing-rooms thronged and many notables present, among them, Tennyson, tall, careless and dreamy—in appearance every inch a poet; and Browning, on this occasion at least, smart and dapper, and so far from appearing a great poet, looked, as Mrs. George said, "like a prosperous merchant draper." Mr. George admired both of these men, but was introduced to neither. He met Spencer, however, as soon as the latter appeared. This gave him real pleasure. He had been hearing stories of vanity in the English philosopher that he could scarcely credit, as he put him on a high plane, not because of the evolutionary philosophy, for it was that to which George referred when, in writing to Charles Nordhoff before leaving San Francisco, in 1879, he said he would like sometime to write a book dissecting "this materialistic philosophy, which, with its false assumption of science, passes current with so many." But he had all along held Spencer as immovably against the institution of private property in land, and had in "Progress and Poverty" quoted from the English philosopher's scathing ninth chapter of "Social Statics." He, therefore, expected to find a man who, like himself, saw in the agrarian struggle in Ireland the raising of the question of land ownership and fundamental economic principles. Their conversation quickly turned to Ireland, for scarcely had they exchanged civilities when Spencer bluntly asked what George thought of Irish matters. The American condemned the Government and praised the League. Spencer burst into vehement dissent. "They," said he, meaning the imprisoned Land Leaguers, "have got only what they deserve. They are inciting people to refuse to pay to their landlords what is rightfully theirs—rent." This speech and the manner of its delivery so differed from what was expected of the man who in "Social Statics" wrote, "equity does not permit property in land," that Mr. George was first astonished and then disgusted at this flat denial of principle. "It is evident that we cannot agree on this matter," was all that he could say, and he abruptly left Mr. Spencer. The meeting had proved a deep disappointment. Mr. George seldom outside the family circle spoke of it, but to Dr. Edward R. Taylor he wrote soon after the occurrence (March, 1882): "Discount Herbert Spencer. He is most horribly conceited, and I don't believe really great men are." (Henry George, Jr., The Life of Henry George, Robert Schalkenbach Foundation, New York, 1960. Pp. 369-370)
"I am afraid there is no show to get Spencer translated here in Germany. They have never heard of him, and there is great contempt for English "philosophy."" (Letter from Edward L. Youmans to his sister, Eliza A. Youmans, dated November 17, 1871. Quoted in John Fiske, Edward Livingston Youmans, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. P. 287)

"Spencer will in time reap his greatest conquest in Germany. The whole nation is pervaded with religious skepticism, and they are without any philosophic guidance. Spencer's subject on the list of the International Scientific Series, The Study of Sociology, interested them more than any other, and with the publication of his little book, which I bullied him to write, there will be a prompt demand for the Philosophy." (Letter from Edward L. Youmans to his sister, Eliza A. Youmans, dated December 2, 1871. Quoted in John Fiske, Edward Livingston Youmans, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. P. 290)

"To say just a word in passing about Spencer on the continent, I can not forget that after my Harvard studies in philosophy, during the years of which I was constantly sent to the works of the great continentals, I went to Berlin and Heidelberg only to find that the continentals were frequently referring their students to Locke, Spencer and others across the Channel with great respect." (A. H. Lloyd, "The Philosophy of Herbert Spencer," The Scientific Monthly, Vol. 11, pp. 97-111, 1920. P. 98)
"In 1873 there occurred a brief passage at arms between Gladstone and Herbert Spencer, in which the great statesman's intellect looked amusingly small and commonplace in contrast with the giant mind of the philosopher. The defeated party was left with no resources except rhetorical artifice to cover his retreat, and his general aspect was foxy, not to say Jesuitical. At least so Huxley declared, and I thoroughly agreed with him." (John Fiske, "Reminiscences of Huxley," Smithsonian Institution Annual Report, 1900 (1901), pp. 713-728. P. 718. /Reprinted from Atlantic Monthly, February, 1901/)

"In 1773 [sic, 1873] there occurred a brief passage at arms between Gladstone and Herbert Spencer, in which the great statesman's intellect looked amusingly small and commonplace in contrast with the giant mind of the philosopher. The defeated party was left with no resources except rhetorical artifice to cover his retreat, and his general aspect was foxy, not to say Jesuitical." At least so Huxley declared, and I thoroughly agreed with him." (John Fiske, "Reminiscences of Huxley," pp. 199-226, in Essays Historical and Literary, 2 Vols., The Macmillan Company, New York, 1902. Vol. 2, pp. 208-209)

"But my real love still belonged to biology—which was not taught at all in the upper grades of the Gymnasium in Frankfort, Germany—and I read in earnest whatever biological works were accessible. Darwin, Haeckel, Huxley, Spencer became my heroes, and whenever my class made one of the regular school hikes I would assemble a group of boys around me and try to put over the belief in evolution and, as I was led to believe, its correlate, monism." (Richard B. Goldschmidt, In and Out of The Ivory Tower; The Autobiography of Richard B. Goldschmidt, University of Washington Press, Seattle, 1960. P. 29)
"Voltaire's saying here holds true: that if there was no God known, it would be necessary to invent one. It is the best, if not the only hypothesis for the explanation of the facts. Whether the philosophy of Herbert Spencer (which is not to our liking) is here fairly presented, we have little occasion and no time to consider."

"In the great shifts of opinion following the publication of the *Origin of Species*, the followers of Spencer had replaced Agassiz as the American idealists, the allies of transcendentalism, and the believers in nature as the reflection of an immanent deity. Evolution had a central place with them, but the *a priori* method of reasoning belonged to the tradition of Agassiz rather than to that of Darwin. Gray was against closed ideal systems of philosophy, / regardless of the place they gave to evolution. Both Spencer and his followers and the German evolutionists by then on the rise were in Gray's eyes speculative rather than scientific."

"One hardly knows what brought Herbert Spencer / to the United States/. He seems most to have enjoyed Niagara, where he stayed a week. I do not think the dinner demonstration for him at New York amounted to very much; nor do I take stock in the statement, the truth of which he took for granted, that the hair turns gray in the United States ten years earlier than in England. I should say the only difference is, that there is more hair remaining here to turn gray at middle age or later. Spencer also told us of a discovery he had made, that all Americans had the outer corners of their eyes lower than the inner, the opposite of our antipodes, the Mongols."

"By turning his back on the alliance of Spencer and Darwin, Gray / was refusing to give his assent to all extensions of evolutionary theory into the sphere of social and political development. Social Darwinism was to have a great vogue in America, but without Spencer it would have been a very different movement. Gray in disassociating himself from the philosophy of Spencer also cut himself off from social Darwinism. Instead of becoming the tame scientist in the service of propagandists such as Youmans and John Fiske he held himself politely aloof from them. That this decision hurt his prestige both in the Darwin inner circle and before the American people there is no doubt. But as social Darwinism moved further from science and became a monstrous worship of blind competition and brute force, Gray and Chauncey Wright have gained a certain posthumous grandeur in resisting the rush to Spencer." (A. Hunter Dupree, *Asa Gray*, The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1959. Pp. 302-303)
"In December 1860, Gray lightly mentioned to Hooker his judgment on Spencer. "You think so much—you & Darwin—of Herbert Spencer that I subscribed for the new issue of his writings—and have just glanced at his 'principles.' Can't say I like his principles, and am amused to see him run 'the philosophy of the conditional' into positivism...." This dislike of Spencer, whose all-encompassing philosophy was open to many of the objections Gray had found to Agassiz's, deepened as time went on. It was one of his great bonds with Chauncey Wright, who spent much of his energy combatting Spencer. The neutrality of science meant that a hypothesis such as Darwin's served no better for Spencer than for any other all-inclusive philosophical or theological system. When Wright died, Gray said that "he points out clearly the essential difference between Darwinism, which is scientific, and Spencerism, which is 'philosophical.' Save the mark!" (A. Hunter Dupree, Asa Gray, The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press. Cambridge, 1959. P. 302)

"A good number of our English acquaintances have been over this autumn.... One hardly knows what brought Herbert Spencer. He seems to have enjoyed Niagara, where he stayed a week. I do not think the dinner demonstration for him at New York amounted to very much; nor do I take stock in the statement, the truth of which he took for granted, that the hair turns gray in the United States ten years earlier than in England. I should say the only difference is, that there is more hair remaining here to turn gray at middle age or later. Spencer also told us of a discovery he had made, that all Americans had the outer corners of their eyes lower than the inner, the opposite of our antipodes, the Mongols." (Letter from Asa Gray to Sir Edward Fry, dated December 1, 1882. Letters of Asa Gray, 2 Vols., edited by Jane Loring Gray, Burt Franklin, New York, 1973. Vol. 2, p. 740)
Spencer first attacked the Great Man theory of history in *The Study of Sociology* (pp. 28ff.), and returned to it in *Principles of Sociology*. He perhaps reacted to it in the strident way in which Carlyle had proclaimed it. (See *The Study of Sociology*, before p. 28.)


"... the single fact that division of labour has been progressing in all advancing nations regardless of the wills of law-makers, and unobserved by them, suffices to show that the forces which mould societies work out their results apart from, and often in spite of, the aims of leading men ..." (Herbert Spencer, *The Principles of Ethics*, 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1904. Vol. 1, p. 519)


"But Spencer and others have found it quite easy to show that great men are the creatures and not the creators of their age." (Arthur M. Lewis, *Vital Problems in Social Evolution*, Charles H. Kerr & Company, Chicago, 1909. P. 8)

"It was H. Mallock's book, *Aristocracy and Evolution*, a defense of the Great Man Theory of history, is the wiggling of the tail of the snake (i.e., in its death throes) that Herbert Spencer killed thirty years ago with his little book "*The Study of Sociology."" (p. 18) "But while Spencer's Study of Sociology is the most signal and brilliant refutation of the Great Man Theory, no one man really killed that theory." (pp. 18-19) (Robert Rives La Monte, *Socialism: Positive and Negative*, Charles H. Kerr & Company, Chicago, 1912)


"Spencer was the first to shatter the heroiic "drum and trumpet" idea of history." (Samuel Chugerman, *Lester Ward, The American Aristotle*, Duke University Press, Durham, N.C., 1939. P. 278)
"Even should it [sociology] be developed to its utmost possible extent, the biographical and quasi-biographical details will form an ample field where great men and Providence may still be supposed to reign without interfering offensively with the investigations of sociologists." (Alexander Gibson, review of Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, The Academy, Vol. 6, pp. 44-46, 1874, July 11. P. 45)

"Those who regard the histories of societies as the histories of their great men, and think that these great men shape the fates of their societies, overlook the truth that such great men are the products of their societies." (Herbert Spencer, "The Social Organism," In Essays: Scientific, Political, & Speculative, Vol. 1, pp. 265-307, William S and Norgate, London, 1891. Vol. 1, p. 268)

"Given a Shakespeare, and what dramas could he have written without the multitudinous traditions of civilized life—without the various experiences which, descending to him from the past, gave wealth to his thought, and without the language which a hundred generations had developed and enriched by use? Suppose a Watt, with all his inventive power, living in a tribe ignorant of iron, or in a tribe that could get only as much iron as a fire blown by hand-bellows will smelt; or suppose him born among ourselves before lathes existed; what chance would there have been of the steam-engine? Imagine a Laplace unaided by that slowly-developed system of Mathematics which we trace back to its beginnings among the Egyptians; how far would he have got with the Mécanique Céleste?" (Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1891. P. 35)

"Even were we to grant the absurd supposition that the genesis of the great man does not depend on the antecedents furnished by the society he is born in, there would still be the quite-sufficient facts that he is powerless in the absence of the material and mental accumulations which his society inherits from the past, and that he is powerless in the absence of the co-existing population, character, intelligence, and social arrangements." (Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1891. P. 35)

"The utter failure of Cromwell permanently to establish a new social condition, and the rapid revival of suppressed institutions and practices after his death, show how powerless is a monarch to change the type of the society he governs. He may disturb, he may retard, or he may aid the natural process of organization; but the general course of this process is beyond his control." (Herbert Spencer, "The Social Organism," The Westminster Review, Vol. 73, pp. 51-68, [90-121 in something], 1860. P. 52)

"If ... you suppose that a Newton might be born in a Hotten-tot family, that a Milton might spring up among the Andamanese, that a Howard or a Clarkson might have Fiji parents, then you may proceed with facility to explain social progress as caused by the actions of the great man." (Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1891. P. 34)

"And if you wish to understand these phenomena of social evolution, you will not do it though you should read yourself blind over the biographies of all the great rulers on record, down to Frederick the Greedy and Napoleon the Treacherous." (Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1891. P. 37)

"... such social changes as are immediately traceable to individuals of unusual power, are still remotely traceable to the social causes which produced these individuals; and hence, from the highest point of view, such social changes also, are parts of the general developmental process." (Herbert Spencer, "The Social Organism," In Essays: Scientific, Political, & Speculative, Vol. 1, pp. 265-307, Williams and Norgate, London, 1891. Vol. 1, p. 269)

"If it be a fact that the great man may modify his nation in its structure and actions, it is also a fact that there must have been those antecedent modifications constituting national progress before he could be evolved. Before he can re-make his society, his society must make him. So that all those changes of which he is the proximate initiator have their chief causes in the generations he descended from. If there is to be anything like a real explanation of these changes, it must be sought in that aggregate of conditions out of which both he and they have arisen." (Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1891. P. 35)

"Thus the great-man theory of History finds everywhere a ready-prepared conception—is, indeed, but the definite expression of that which is latent in the thoughts of the savage, tacitly asserted in all early traditions, and taught to every child by multitudinous illustrations." (Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1891. P. 32)

"An allied class, equally unprepared to interpret sociological phenomena scientifically, is the class which sees in the course of civilization little else than a record of remarkable persons and their doings." (Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1891. P. 30)
Spencer shows that it was not the personal initiative of Kleisthenes that "really" brought about democratic organization in Athens, but rather that his political reorganization was possible and successful only because of the masses of non-clan organized people in Athens. (Vol. 2, pp. 424-425).

For an example of Spencer's position that individuals were only the agents through whom causes worked, rather than the prime movers themselves, see the discussion of Lycurgus and the origin of the Spartan constitution. (Vol. II, p. 376n.) (Spencer opposed William James on the great man theory.)

"I saw Greeley last night with reference to publishing your articles [in the New York Tribune]. He is as ignorant as a Bushman and as prejudiced as a papist, so that conversation on the subject is hardly possible. "As for sociology," he said to me, "Fourier proclaimed more, thirty years ago, than this generation can appreciate." When your name was mentioned he broke out that he was "dead and forever opposed to that whole laissez-faire school, and if the articles contained any of that, he didn't want them." I urged him as much as I could, and he ended by saying, "When your articles come, let us see them."" (Letter from Edward L. Youmans to Herbert Spencer dated March 14, 1872. Quoted in John Fiske, Edward Livingston Youmans, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. P. 300)
"It is a physiological law, first pointed out by M. Isidore St. Hilaire, and to which attention has been drawn by Mr. Lewes in his essay on Dwarfs and Giants, that there is an antagonism between growth and development. By growth, as used in this antithetical sense, is to be understood increase of size; by development, increase of structure." (Herbert Spencer, Education: Intellectual, Moral, and Physical, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1862. P. 271)

The account of the distinction between growth and development. First made by Spencer; cited by biologists (e.g., Brody); ignored or unknown to anthropologists.

"Not only has a society as a whole a power of growth and development, but each institution set up in it has the like—draws to itself units of the society and nutriments for them, and tends ever to multiply and ramify. Indeed, the instinct of self-preservation in each institution soon becomes dominant over everything else; and maintains is when it performs some quite other function than that intended, or no function at all." (Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1891. P. 19)
"At the beginning of June Mr. Herbert Spencer had sent her [Mrs. Elizabeth] Lynn Linton a presentation copy of the Ethics in recognition of the service she had rendered him in playing the part, as he expressed it, of "Grundyometer" to certain chapters which he fancied might shock the more susceptible." (George Somes Layard, Mrs. Lynn Linton, Her Life, Letters, and Opinions, Methuen & Co., London, 1901. P. 305)
"In 1852 Herbert Spencer demonstrated minutely, and in a very clear and philosophic manner, the necessity of the Doctrine of Filialation, and established it more firmly in his excellent "Essays," which appeared in 1858, and in his "Principles of Biology," which was published at a later date [1864 and 1867]. He has, at the same time, the great merit of having applied the theory of development to psychology, and of having shown that the emotional and intellectual faculties could only have been acquired by degrees and developed gradually." (Ernst Haeckel, The History of Creation, translated from the German, 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1884. Vol. 1, p. 119)

"I had Munger and Herbert Spencer out with me, and it is not only that the Heavens are opened, which they have always been, but I can see that they are opened." (Letter from Gail Hamilton to John G. Whittier dated 1885. Quoted in Gail Hamilton's Life in Letters, edited by H. Augusta Dodge, 2 Vols., Lee and Shepard, Boston, 1901. Vol. 2, p. 862)


"Herbert Spencer and Matthew Arnold and John Fiske are the company that I drive M. to bed with. How should I remember where Mary C. was to take her lessons? I don't know St. James from St. Herbert Spencer. But won't the family generally be glad when they have ploughed through Herbert Spencer and can lie down under the apple-trees and enjoy themselves?" (Letter from Gail Hamilton to John G. Whittier dated 1886. Quoted in Gail Hamilton's Life in Letters, edited by H. Augusta Dodge, 2 Vols., Lee and Shepard, Boston, 1901. Vol. 2, p. 866)

"But I have been so interested in Herbert Spencer of late that I subordinate every one else to him. And, my dear Mr. Whittier, it is absolutely surprising to see how that man is misunderstood. Why, dear, has it ever occurred to you that most people are numskulls? I don't know how to spell the word, but they don't know how to read. Patriotically, I can but be glad after a fashion to see that the English literary folk are as unscholarly and stupid and inaccurate and reckless as our American, and misunderstand and misrepresent Herbert Spencer. But I have seen the heavens opened!" (Letter from Gail Hamilton to John G. Whittier dated August 29, 1885. Quoted in Gail Hamilton's Life in Letters, edited by H. Augusta Dodge, 2 Vols., Lee and Shepard, Boston, 1901. Vol. 2, p. 865)
"He [Karl Marx] made much the same impression on me [when Harris called on him in the early 1880's] that Herbert Spencer made twenty years later; but Spencer was contemptuously angry under contradiction [i.e., when Harris contradicted him], whereas Karl Marx was inattentively courteous. But both had shut themselves off from hearing anything against their pet theory, one sided though it was. And just as Herbert Spencer was worth listening to on everything but "the field I've made my own", so was Karl Marx." (Frank Harris, His Life and Adventures; An Autobiography, The Richards Press, London, 1952. P. 177)
"The college [Harvard] is in the midst of a ferocious fight between the scientists and the classicists, the latter having become alarmed at the inroads of the former." (Letter from Edward L. Youmans to Herbert Spencer dated November 23, 1863. Quoted in John Fiske, Edward Livingston Youmans, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. P. 164)

"Dr. Thomas Hill, president of the college [Harvard], told me that he was not a subscriber to the serial and had not read First Principles; but he had prepared a sermon directed against its doctrines (no names being mentioned), which he considered but a reproduction of the French atheism of the last century." (Letter from E. L. Youmans to Herbert Spencer dated November 23, 1863. Quoted in John Fiske, Edward Livingston Youmans, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. P. 164)

"Prof. Wm. B. Rogers [of Harvard, apparently], who has constant fights with Agassiz about the development hypothesis, was another of those appreciative friends who acknowledged the value of your labours and expressed a desire to be of assistance to our project." (Letter from Edward L. Youmans to Herbert Spencer dated November 23, 1863. Quoted in John Fiske, Edward Livingston Youmans, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. P. 165)
"When one has read Spencer, one has digested the most nutritious portion of all human knowledge. Also the style is worth the labour,—puissant, compact, and melodious." (Letter from Lafcadio Hearn to Elizabeth Bisland, April 14, 1887. Quoted in Elizabeth Bisland, The Life and Letters of Lafcadio Hearn, 2 Vols., Houghton, Mifflin and Company, Boston, 1906. Vol. 1, p. 392)

"I am an Evolutionist, and as thorough a disciple of Spencer as it is possible for one not a practical scientist to be ...." (Letter from Lafcadio Hearn to George M. Gould, April, 1887. Quoted in Elizabeth Bisland, The Life and Letters of Lafcadio Hearn, 2 Vols., Houghton, Mifflin and Company, Boston, 1906. Vol. 1, p. 394)

"When one has read Spencer, one has digested the most nutritious portion of all human knowledge. Also the style is worth the labour,—puissant, compact, and melodious." (Letter from Lafcadio Hearn to Elizabeth Bisland dated April 14, 1887. In Elizabeth Bisland, editor, The Life and Letters of Lafcadio Hearn, 2 Vols., Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1906. Vol. 2, p. 235)

"Although I have played "aesthetically" with metaphysical ideas in my books, I believe that I have a fair knowledge of the whole system of Synthetic Philosophy, and that I may call myself a disciple of its author." (Letter from Lafcadio Hearn to Professor Yrjö Hirn, December, 1890. Quoted in Elizabeth Bisland, The Life and Letters of Lafcadio Hearn, 2 Vols., Houghton, Mifflin and Company, Boston, 1906. Vol. 1, p. 20)

"The colossal brain which first detected the necessity of evolution as a cosmic law,—governing the growth of a solar system as well as the growth of a gnat,—the brain of Spencer, discerned that law by pure mathematical study of the laws of force. And the work of the Darwins and Huxleys and Tyndals is but detail—small detail—in that tremendous system which has abolished all preexisting philosophy and transformed all science and education." (Letter from Lafcadio Hearn to Basil Hall Chamberlain, April, 1895. Quoted in Elizabeth Bisland, The Life and Letters of Lafcadio Hearn, 2 Vols., Houghton, Mifflin and Company, Boston, 1906. Vol. 2, p. 235)

"You know what my fantastic metaphysics were. A friend disciplined me to read Herbert Spencer. I suddenly discovered what a waste of time all my Oriental metaphysics had been.... In short, from the day when I finished the 'First Principles,' a totally new intellectual life opened for me; and I hope during the next few years to devour the rest of this oceanic philosophy." (Letter from Lafcadio Hearn to Henry Edward Krehbiel, date not given. Quoted in Elizabeth Bisland, The Life and Letters of Lafcadio Hearn, 2 Vols., Houghton, Mifflin and Company, Boston, 1906. Vol. 1, p. 36)
"It would be difficult to overemphasize the influence of Spencer on Herndon's thinking. Herndon carefully annotated and indexed his copy of Spencer's *Principles of Psychology* (London, 1855) and evidently used it frequently. It is now owned by Mrs. Bertie Trainer of Springfield, Illinois." (William Herndon was Abraham Lincoln's friend and law partner. He had the best private library in Springfield, and one of the best in the West. (p. 54)) (Donald David Donald, *Lincoln's Herndon*, Alfred A Knopf, New York, 1948. P. 59n.)
"I received the other day—sent, I suppose, by you, though I did not see the address—a copy of No. 1 of the Journal of Speculative Philosophy, containing a long criticism on me from a Hegelian point of view. You named it, I fancy, some time ago. It has some sharpness here and there, but I am not conscious of being hurt by it." (Letter from Herbert Spencer to Edward L. Youmans dated July 20, 1867. Quoted in John Fiske, Edward Livingston Youmans, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. P. 238)

"Early in the summer of 1866 William T. Harris submitted an article on Herbert Spencer to the North American Review. Charles Eliot Norton, associate editor with James Russell Lowell, asked Chauncey Wright to read it. Wright read it aloud to his close friend E. W. Gurney, Professor of History at Harvard. Gurney pronounced it "a howling wilderness," and Wright reported to Norton that it was "the mere dry husk of Hegelianism,—dogmatic, without the only merit of dogmatism, distinctness of definition." (Thayer, J. B., (editor): Letters of Chauncey Wright. 87.) Harris read Norton's letter of rejection to a group assembled in Brokmeyer's law office in St. Louis, and who had started him reading Hegel, and said the time had come for the St. Louis movement to have an organ of its own. In January, 1867, the first number of The Journal of Speculative Philosophy appeared, with "Herbert Spencer" as the leading article." (Paul Russell Anderson and Max Harold Fisch, Philosophy in America, from the Puritans to James, D. Appleton-Century Company, New York, 1939. P. 474)

Chauncey Wright's reaction to a manuscript, apparently the one by William T. Harris, attacking Spencer along Hegelian lines: "It is the mere dry husk of Hegelianism,—dogmatic, without the only merit of dogmatism, distinctness or definition." (Letter from Chauncey Wright to Charles Eliot Norton, dated July 24, 1866. Quoted in James Bradley Thayer, ed., Letters of Chauncey Wright, Press of John Wilson and Son, Cambridge, Mass., 1878. P. 87)

"Whether it was the influence of Hegel, whom he discovered after migrating to St. Louis in 1857, or his rapid success as a teacher and administrator in the schools of that city, which sobered his radicalism, one cannot be certain. In any case, the idealism which had been nourished in him by transcendentalism ... flourished on the new-found German philosophy, and his opposition to the determinism and empiricism of Spencer became pronounced.... The agnostic and deterministic ideas of Spencer were proving popular in many circles, and the doctrines of Darwin were challenging the faith of orthodox Christians. Yet many Americans were eagerly seeking for a philosophic justification of faith in God, freedom, and immortality. Harris, by popularizing the absolute idealism of Hegel, provided them with able and authoritarian support for their cherished views." (Merle Curti, The Social Ideas of American Educators, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1935. P. 312)
"I measure my words when I say that in my judgment Dr. [William T. Harris] had the one truly great philosophical mind which has yet appeared on the western continent." (Nicholas Murray Butler, Quoted in Paul Russell Anderson and Max Harold Fisch, Philosophy in America, from the Puritans to James, D. Appleton-Century Company, New York, 1939. P. 471)

"I suppose Hegelianism is rife in Edinburgh as it is in Oxford and Cambridge. This is one of those inevitable rhythms which prevade opinion, philosophical and other, in common with things at large. But our Hegelianism, or German Idealism in England, is really the last refuge of the so-called orthodox. As I have somewhere said, what could be a better defence for incredible dogmas than behind unthinkable propositions?" (Letter from Herbert Spencer to David Masson, dated April 26, 1902. Quoted in Life and Letters of Herbert Spencer by David Duncan, 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1908. Vol. 2, p. 202)

"I not unfrequently think of the disgust you must feel at the fate which has overtaken Mind. That you, after establishing the thing and maintaining it for so many years at your own cost, should now find it turned into an organ for German idealism must be extremely exasperating.... Oxford and Cambridge have been captured by this old-world nonsense. What about Scotland? I suppose Hegelianism is rife there also." (Letter from Herbert Spencer to Alexander Bain, dated April 25, 1902. Quoted in Life and Letters of Herbert Spencer by David Duncan, 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1908. Vol. 2, p. 201)

"... the [even] stronger ignorance of Mr. Spencer's own existence avowed in 1881 by Michelet, the legendary mantle-bearer of Hegel." (John Emerich Edward Dalberg-Acton, First Baron Acton / Lord Acton, Historical Essays & Studies, Macmillan and Co., Limited, London, 1907. P. 283)

"The influx of German immigrants during the second quarter of the nineteenth century afforded a more direct knowledge of German philosophy than the early transcendentalists possessed. One of the first men to introduce Hegel was Frederick A. Rauch, President of Franklin and Marshall College from 1836 to 1841. His book Psychology: or, A View of the Human Soul; Including Anthropology (1841) was a purer form of Hegelianism than anything which followed in the next generation. The St. Louis Movement, Hegelian in large part, came into being through the formation of the St. Louis Philosophical Society in 1866, by ... By the 1860's transcendentalism had run its course, although later idealism was in part a revival of it." (Paul Russell Anderson, Max Harold Fisch, Philosophy in America, from the Puritans to James, D. Appleton-Century Company, New York, 1939. P. 326)
"In the local societies, in the journals and in the colleges there was widespread preoccupation with the question of what type of philosophy was most congenial to the American spirit and its institutions. The Journal of Speculative Philosophy was criticized for the "Un-American character" of its contents. Harris replied that what was needed was not American thought so much as American thinkers, and that we should not have them until the great thinkers of the past--the Greeks and Germans especially--were as thoroughly digested as the works of Herbert Spencer. In the end he thought it would be found, as the poet Walt Whitman was saying, that "only Hegel is fit for America--is large enough and free enough." Whitman, in fact, saw in Hegel's philosophy "an essential and crowning justification of New World democracy," and was puzzled to account for its appearance in the Old World." (Paul Russell Anderson and Max Harold Fisch, Philosophy in America, from the Puritans to James, D. Appleton-Company, New York, 1939. P. 443)

"Up to this time [ca. 1857], the prevailing leaning in American philosophy had been toward some form of supernaturalism, except for the period of the Age of Reason during which a half-hearted naturalism was temporarily in the limelight. The majority view from the Puritans to Harris had inclined toward a priori analysis, had been highly saturated with traditional religious tenets, and had seen the world in terms, either literally or figuratively, of certain axiomatic truths on the basis of which its system of thought had been constructed. Those sharing this view were inclined to adjust experience to reason and the natural world to the supernatural. Their cosmology was neat even if only hypothetically or symbolically true; this neatness was conducive to a certain smugness which made its exponents somewhat unreceptive to a new scientific point of view which sooner or later they were forced to confront." (Paul Russell Anderson and Max Harold Fisch, Philosophy in America, from the Puritans to James, D. Appleton-Century Company, New York, 1939. P. 327)

"Instead of a bleak, evolutionary positivism of the kind that many Englishmen and Americans found congenial in the work of Herbert Spencer, who was also trying to reconcile science and religion, young men all over the Western world were provided with the works of Hegel with a rich, highly complex philosophical system that covered every corner of the universe in deep rich velvet, soft to the touch and warming." (Morton White, The Age of Analysis, Mentor Book, The New American Library, New York, 1955. P. 15)

In Spencer's conception of "physiological units" we have the first statement of particulate inheritance, and therefore a clear anticipation of the gene theory of heredity. (See Principles of Biology, Vol. 1, pp. 183, 253-254. This is indicated as the revised edition of 1898, but may be the edition of 1866. Check in the latter.)

"Spencer has alone I think tried to account for variation on scientific grounds. I thought at the time his ways were good but not all in the right direction—but I forget what they were!" (Letter from Joseph D. Hooker to T. H. Huxley dated March 27, 1888. Quoted in Leonard Huxley, Life and Letters of Sir Joseph Dalton Hooker, 2 Vols., D. Appleton & Company, New York, 1918. Vol. 2, p. 306)

"In particular, his theory of 'physiological units' was an anticipation of Darwin's theory of pangenesis, and the parent of all the various theories of vital units, promulgated during the last fifty years, as explanations of vital phenomena; particularly of the phenomena of specific transformations, of inheritance and variation." (Gilbert Charles Bourne, Herbert Spencer and Animal Evolution. The Herbert Spencer Lecture for 1909. The Clarendon Press. Oxford, 1910. Pp. 5-6.)


"I formerly thought that the "physiological units" of Herbert Spencer ('Principles of Biology,' vol. 1, chaps. iv and viii, 1863-64) were the same as my gemmules, but I now know that this is not the case." (Charles Darwin, The Variation of Animals and Plants under Domestication, 2nd ed., 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1892. Vol. 2, p. 371n.)
"Whether or not natural selection itself was accepted as the chief method by which evolution was achieved, any attempt to account for the process by natural means must inevitably include a knowledge of the laws governing the inheritance of minor variations. Herbert Spencer was amongst the first to realise this and his account of evolution, which appeared in his Principles of Biology (published in 1864 / and in 1869), included what was virtually a complete theory of generation. In 1868, Darwin published The Variations of Animals and Plants under Domestication in which he suggested his hypothesis of pangenesis. Both Spencer's theory of physiological units and Darwin's theory of pangenesis were very reminiscent of the theories of generation which had been produced a hundred years before. Both covered the same range of phenomena and both were very speculative. They differed from the eighteenth century's theories in two respects. Since they were produced as part of an attempt to account for evolution, their emphasis was on the transmission of variations and not in the preservation of type. Secondly, although neither Spencer nor Darwin were familiar with the details of the cell theory, both authors assumed that the parental contributions to the new organism were cells or cellular structures." (Elizabeth B. Gasking, Investigations into Generation 1651-1828. The Johns Hopkins Press, Baltimore, 1966. Pp. 161-162)

"In 1861, the physiologist Brücke emphasised the usefulness of assuming the existence of biological units (Elementarorganismen) ranking between the molecule and the cell. In July, 1863, Herbert Spencer adopted a somewhat similar hypothesis of "physiological units," lower in degree than the visible cell-units, but more complex than the chemical molecules. As there is much in his argument which seems useful today, we give a brief summary (see Principles of Biology (1st ed.), vol. l. p. 181 et seq.)." (J. Arthur Thomson, Heredity, John Murray, London, 1908. Pp. 403-404)

"To me it seems that whatever merit Häckel's views may have in this matter [the explanation of heredity], they certainly have no claim to be regarded as original; for I cannot see that his 'Plastidules' differ in anything but in name from Spencer's 'Physiological Units.' Why he does not acknowledge this, it is difficult to understand." (Ethel Duncan Romanes, editor, The Life and Letters of George John Romanes. New edition, Longmans, Green, and Co. London, 1896. Letter from Romanes to Charles Darwin, undated, but written in 1880. P. 98.)

"By this post I return you Häckel's essay on Perigenesis.... To me it seems that whatever merit Häckel's views may have in this matter, they certainly have no claim to be regarded as original; for I cannot see that his 'Plastidules' differ in anything but in name from Spencer's 'Physiological Units.' Why he does not acknowledge this, it is difficult to understand. Anyhow, the theories being the same, the same objections apply; and to me it has always seemed that this theory is unsatisfactory because to general." (Letter from George J. Romanes to Charles Darwin, undated but written in 1881. Mrs. E. Romanes, The Life and Letters of George John Romanes, Longmans, Green, and Co., London, 1896. P. 93)

"His Turner's lists of books read for the next three years (1881-1883, when he was 20-22 years old) include writings of Carlyle, Horace "in original Latin," Tacitus, Emerson, Parkman, Shelley, Dante, Herbert Spencer, Darwin, and Lucretius." (p. 8) "Herbert Spencer and Charles Darwin gave him further incentive to study the changing forces of history. "New poets," he wrote in the second commonplace book, "will read a lesson from Spencer & Darwin & sing Man and Nature." "Evolution & its accompanying features," he declared, "is now in the intellect, when it reaches the hearts of men, then may we not look for a new age, a renaissance in thought."" (p. 9) "As Shelley's plea for freedom for the oppressed stimulated the thought of Turner, so did the evolutionism of Lucretius, Emerson, Spencer, and Darwin shape his view of historical causation and the true meaning of history." (p. 10) (Wilbur R. Jacobs, Frederick Jackson Turner's Legacy, The Henry E. Huntington Library, San Marino, Calif., 1965)

"But Spencer had no historical sense ....." (Hugh Elliot, Herbert Spencer, Constable & Company Ltd, London, 1916. P. 101)

"Herbert Spencer read the table of contents of a copy of John William Draper's The Intellectual Development of Europe, given to him by a student (?) of Draper/ and some of the marginal heads, and he thought that when he got around to it the text would "interest" him. Reference to a letter from Spencer to Draper dated July 15, 1863,. "It bears on the face of it, an aspect of scientific comprehensiveness, which I am glad to see showing itself in the treatment of the subject—a subject which has hitherto been left in the hands of men who were little more than learned gossips."" (Donald Fleming, John William Draper and the Religion of Science, University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, 1950. P. 75)

"Yet that societies are not artificially put together, is a truth so manifest, that it seems wonderful men should have ever overlooked it. Perhaps nothing more clearly shows the small value of historical studies as they have been commonly pursued. You need but to look at the changes going on around, or observe social organization in its leading peculiarities, to see that these are neither supernatural, nor are determined by the wills of individual men, as by implication historians commonly teach; but are consequent on general natural causes. The one case of the division of labour suffices to show this. It has not been by the command of any ruler that some men have become manufacturers, while others have remained cultivators of the soil." (Herbert Spencer, "The Social Organism," The Westminster Review, Vol. 73, pp. 51-68 [90-121 in something], 1860. P. 52)
In an article entitled "What Knowledge is of Most Worth?", written in 1859, Spencer took historians to task for presenting trivial rather than essential facts of the human past in their work: "That which constitutes History, properly so called, is in great part omitted from works on the subject. Only of late years have historians commenced giving us, in any considerable quantity, the truly valuable information. As in past ages the king was everything and the people nothing; so, in past histories the doings of the king fill the entire picture, to which the national life forms but an obscure background.... The thing it really concerns us to know, is the natural history of society." (p. 32) "The only history that is of practical value, is what may be called Descriptive Sociology. And the highest office which the / historian can discharge, is that of so narrating the lives of nations, as to furnish materials for a Comparative Sociology; and for the subsequent determination of the ultimate laws to which social phenomena conform." (pp. 33-34) (Education; Intellectual, Moral, and Physical. Thinker's Library Edition. Watts & Co. London, 1949)

"I take but little interest in what are called histories, but am interested only in Sociology, which stands related to these so-called histories much as a vast building stands related to the heaps of stones and bricks around it." (Auto. II, 185)

Spencer sees the unity of world culture. He gives us many illustrations taken from all ages of European history. He is deeply familiar with European history, and makes masterful use of it.
"The biographies of monarchs (and our children earn little else) throw scarcely any light upon the science of society. Familiarity with court intrigues, plots, usurpations, or the like, and with all the personalities accompanying them, aids very little in elucidating the causes of national progress." (Herbert Spencer, "What Knowledge Is of Most Worth?", in Essays on Education, Etc., pp. 1-44, Everyman's Library, J. M. Dent & Sons Ltd., London, 1911. P. 26)

"While anxious that their sons should be well up in the superstitions of two thousand years ago ...." (Herbert Spencer, "What Knowledge Is of Most Worth?", in Essays on Education, Etc., pp. 1-44, Everyman's Library, J. M. Dent & Sons Ltd., London, 1911. P. 14)

"The births, deaths, and marriages of kings, and other like historic trivialities, are committed to memory, not because of any direct benefits than can possibly result from knowing them: but because society considers them parts of a good education ...." (Herbert Spencer, "What Knowledge Is of Most Worth?", in Essays on Education, Etc., pp. 1-44, Everyman's Library, J. M. Dent & Sons Ltd., London, 1911. P. 3)

"While that kind of information which, in our schools, usurps the name History—the mere tissue of names and dates and dead unmeaning events—has a conventional value only: it has not the remotest bearing on any of our actions; and is of use only for the avoidance of those unpleasant criticisms which current opinion passes upon its absence." (Herbert Spencer, "What Knowledge Is of Most Worth?", in Essays on Education, Etc., pp. 1-44, Everyman's Library, J. M. Dent & Sons Ltd., London, 1911. P. 10)

"Well, apply the same test to the great mass of historical facts, and you will get the same result. They are facts from which no conclusions can be drawn—unorganisable facts; and therefore facts of no service in establishing principles of conduct, which is the chief use of facts. Read them, if you like, for amusement; but do not flatter yourself they are instructive." (Herbert Spencer, "What Knowledge Is of Most Worth?", in Essays on Education, Etc., pp. 1-44, Everyman's Library, J. M. Dent & Sons Ltd., London, 1911. P. 27)

(Spencer's attack on history as conventionally taught was part of a more general attack on education in general, including, for example, the emphasis on the teaching of the classics, which he thought contributed very little to an understanding of man's existence, place in nature, and evolution.)

"History, it has been said, is philosophy teaching by examples." — Thomas Babington Macaulay
"When I go to see a ruined abbey or the remains of a castle, I do not care to learn when it was built, who lived or died there, or what catastrophes it witnessed. I never yet went to a battlefield, although often near to one: not having the slightest curiosity to see a place where many men were killed and a victory achieved. The gossip of a guide is to me a nuisance; so that, if need were, I would rather pay him for his silence than for his talk: much disliking, as I do, to be disturbed while experiencing the sentiments excited in me by the forms and colours of time-worn walls and arches. It is always the poetry rather than the history of a place that appeals to me." (Herbert Spencer, An Autobiography, 2 Vols., Watts & Co., London, 1926. Vol. 2, p. 187)

"To have before us, in manageable form, evidence proving the correlations which everywhere exist between great militant activity and the degradation of women, between a despotic form of government and elaborate ceremonial in social intercourse, between relatively peaceful social activities and the relaxation of coercive institutions, promises furtherance if human welfare in a much greater degree than does learning whether the story of Alfred and the cakes is a fact or a myth, whether Queen Elizabeth intrigued with Essex or not, where Prince Charles hid himself, and what were the details of this battle or the other siege—pieces of historical gossip which cannot in the least affect men's conceptions of the ways in which social phenomena hang together, or aid them in shaping their public conduct." (Herbert Spencer, An Autobiography, 2 Vols., Watts & Co., London, 1926. Vol. 2, p. 265)

"... the ordinary historian who, thinking of little else but the doings of kings, court-intrigues, international quarrels, victories and defeats, concerning all which no definite forecasts are possible, asserts that there is no social science ...." (Herbert Spencer, An Autobiography, 2 Vols., Watts & Co., London, 1926. Vol. 2, p. 253)

"... the facts with which historians fill their pages mostly yield no material for Science." (Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1891. P. 386)

"Occupied as they [historians] had all along been in narrating the events in the lives of societies, they had paid little or no attention to the evolution of their organizations." (Herbert Spencer, An Autobiography, 2 Vols., Watts & Co., London, 1926. Vol. 2, p. 253)


"... the Humanities, to which the attention of the young is mainly given, are concerned with personalities. After the traditional doings of gods and heroes, of great leaders and their conquests, come the products of the poets, of the historians, of the philosophers. And when study of earlier ages is supplemented by study of later ages, we find the so-called history composed of kings' biographies, the narratives of their conflicts, the squabbles and intrigues of their vassals and dependents. In the consciousness of one who has passed through the curriculum universally prevailing until recently, there is no place for natural causation. Instead, there exists only the thought of what, in a relative sense, is artificial causation—the causation by appointed agencies and through force directed by this or that individual will. Small changes wrought by officials are clearly conceived, but there is no conception of those vast changes which have been wrought through the daily process of things undirected by authority." (Herbert Spencer, Facts and Comments, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1902. P. 34)

"My position, stated briefly, is that until you have got a true theory of humanity, you cannot interpret history; and when you have got a true theory of humanity you do not want history.... For myself, looking as I do at humanity as the highest result yet of the evolution of life on the earth, I prefer to take in the whole series of phenomena from the beginning as far as they are ascertainable. I, too, am a lover of history; but it is the history of the Cosmos as a whole. I believe that you might as reasonably expect to understand the nature of an adult man by watching him for an hour (being in ignorance of all his antecedents), as to suppose that you can fathom humanity by studying the last few thousand years of its evolution." (Letter from Herbert Spencer to Edward Lott, dated April 23, 1852. Quoted in David Duncan, Life and Letters of Herbert Spencer, 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1908. Vol. 1, pp. 80-81) (Referring to first of these statements by Spencer, J. D. Y. Peel speaks of "His absurd attitude to history ...." (J. D. Y. Peel, "Spencer and the Neo-Evolutionists," Sociology, Vol. 3, pp. 173-191, 1969. P. 181)

"The births, deaths, and marriages of kings, and other like historic trivialities, are committed to memory, not because of any direct benefits that can possibly result from knowing them: but because society considers them parts of a good education ...." (Herbert Spencer, "What Knowledge Is of Most Worth?", in Essays on Education, Etc., pp. 1-44, J. M. Dent & Sons Ltd., London, 1911. P. 3)

"No teacher with a spark of imagination or with an idea of scientific method can have helped dreaming of the immortality that would be achieved by the man who should successfully apply Darwin's method to the facts of human history." [Of course, in a very real sense, this is exactly what Spencer did.] (Henry Adams, "The Tendency of History," Annual Report of the American Historical Association, for the Year 1894, pp. 17-23, Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., 1895. P. 19)

"History had to develop according to Spencer's own idea to have any interest for him. Where it did not so develop it was so much the worse for the history." (A. M. Fairbairn, "Herbert Spencer," The Contemporary Review, Vol. 85, pp. 1-11, 1904. P. 10)

"I would be hard to find another intellect of first class rank so devoid of historical sense and interest as was Spencer's ...." (John Dewey, "The Philosophical Work of Herbert Spencer," The Philosophical Review, Vol. 13, pp. 159-175, 1904. P. 163)

"... how can we agree to eliminate from historical studies the biography of great men and the narrative of noble deeds?" (Said in relation to Spencer's conception of how history should be taught.) (Gabriel Compayre, Herbert Spencer and Scientific Education, translated from the French by Maria E. Findlayson, Thomas Y. Crowell & Co., New York, 1907. P. 39)

(For Spencer's views on history, see Duncan, Life and Letters of Herbert Spencer, Williams & Norgate, 1908. Vol. ?, p. 62; The Study of Sociology, pp. 31-35, 37-47; Education, pp. 39-43.)

"... Spencer's contempt for history and his disregard of the particular ...." (J. D. Y. Peel, Herbert Spencer of Evolution, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1972. P. 1 [that is, Roman number 507])

"These facts [of the culture of societies], given with as much brevity as consists with clearness and accuracy, should be so grouped and arranged that they may be comprehended in their ensemble, and contemplated as mutually-dependent parts of one great whole. The aim should be so to present them that men may readily trace the consensus subsisting among them; with the view of learning what social phenomena co-exist with what other. And then the corresponding delineations of succeeding ages should be so managed as to show each belief, institution, custom, and arrangement was modified; and how the consensus of preceding structures and functions was developed into the consensus of succeeding ones." (Herbert Spencer, "What Knowledge Is of Most Worth?", in Essays on Education, Etc., pp. 1-44, Everyman's Library, J. M. Dent & Sons Ltd., London, 1911. P. 29)
"I am constantly irritated by the new-fashioned historians and philosophers (including H. Spencer), who talk with contempt of histories that record battles. They are really and truly the most important events in the world's annals, however you look at them." (Letter from Alfred Lyall to ? written in 1882 at the time that a war Lyall had foreseen was coming on in Egypt. Quoted in Sir Mortimer Durand, Life of the Right Hon. Sir Alfred Comyn Lyall, William Blackwood and Sons, Edinburgh, 1913. P. 266. Lyall was for many years a British administrator in India.)

Andrew D. White thought that Spencer's remarks on what history should be (in "What Knowledge is of Most Worth?") went too far. "... some of his statements seem to me to require limitation. He seems at times to confuse the study of history with the study of statistics, and thus to demand scientific proof when the nature of the material can only give moral proof." (p. 13) White defended the study of memoirs, court intrigues, and battles, which Spencer had criticized, saying that much of interest and value-practical value, like keeping up a people's courage during war—could be extracted from them. "Meeting our ethical necessity for historical knowledge with statistics and tabulated sociology entirely or mainly, is like meeting our want of food by the perpetual administration of concentrated essence of beef." (pp. 18-19) (Andrew D. White, "On Studies in General History and the History of Civilization," Papers of the American Historical Association, Vol. 1, No. 2, 1885.


"If the view which tends to split up history into a series of biographies represents one extreme, surely Mr. Spencer's reduction of history to a comparison of scattered elements represents another, as fatal and less interesting. If it is a mistake to think of the history of the English Reformation as if it were only the product of Henry VIII.'s change of wives, an account of the Great Rebellion, which relegates Charles I. and Oliver Cromwell to a thin column, is equally mistaken and misleading." (David G. Ritchie, The Principles of State Interference, Swan Sonnenschein & Co., London, 1891. P. 77)

"And we [Keller and his fellow graduate students?] had heard an eminent historian, George B. Adams, in the course of an attack on "sociology," qualify his strictures by saying that the view Spencer had given of society as a whole and in the articulation of its parts had made it impossible for history ever again to be written as it had been before Spencer's time." (Albert G. Keller, Reminiscences (Mainly Personal) of William Graham Sumner, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1933. Pp. 31-32)
James Bryce noted the rise of a school which "... claims the name of Scientific ..." (p. 354), which "... seeks to raise, or reduce, history to the level of an exact science ..." (p. 354), and which "... regards the course of human affairs as determined by general laws ..." (p. 354). "The objection to this method and procedure as we see it practiced by the votaries of this school is that it is not scientific. Nothing accords less with scientific principles than to treat as similar things essentially dissimilar." (p. 355)

"Here is the historian seeing each event as irreducibly unique." (p. 355)

"But the features of human society are wholly different in different races and different countries. Even in the same countries they were a thousand years ago unlike what they are now. Their study is for this and other reasons incomparably more difficult than is the study of natural phenomena." (p. 355)

Bryce then warns against broad generalizations. "No habit is more seductive." (p. 356) "So one may say that the longer a man studies either a given country or a given period, the fewer, the more cautious, and the more carefully limited and guarded in statement will his generalizations be." (p. 356)


"The more recent writers of this school [of scientific history] — its Coryphaeus was the late Mr. Herbert Spencer — but it has representatives in Continental Europe also — have not (so far as I know) contributed to history either any sound theories, or any illuminative suggestions which competent historians did not know already, and did not know better, because they were known as the result of a wide and critical mastery of details. What the school has given is a mass of general propositions couched in what sounds like scientific language, but the contents and substance of which are either threadbare truths so dressed up in solemn phraseology as to appear to be novelties, or theories too vague and abstract to be serviceable either as interpretations or as summaries of facts." (James Bryce, "On The Writing and Teaching of History," Commencement Address as Chancellor of Union College, Schenectady, N.Y., June, 1911, pp. 341-364, in University and Historical Addresses. The Macmillan Company, New York, 1913. Pp. 357-358)

"Of what services the school [of Herbert Spencer] has rendered to subjects other than history I will not venture to speak, but as respects the results attained in history and subjects cognate thereto, the view I have tried to convey to you is, I believe, that pretty generally held by historical students both here and in England. Perhaps the disappointment one feels in perusing books where one seeks for bread and seems to receive only stones may perhaps bias those of us who were trained in another school. Judge therefore for yourselves and see if you can extract new and profitable truths where we have not been able to discover them." (James Bryce, "On The Writing and Teaching of History," Commencement Address as Chancellor of Union College, Schenectady, N.Y., June, 1911, pp. 341-364, in University and Historical Addresses. The Macmillan Company, New York, 1913. P. 359)
"This type of history, now happily obsolete, or nearly so, has been well styled "drum and trumpet history." Among the pioneers who wrought the change from this to scientific history Herbert Spencer holds a foremost place." (Arthur M. Lewis, An Introduction to Sociology, Charles H. Kerr & Company, Chicago, 1913. P. 59)

"... his "Spencer's" "Descriptive Sociology," wherein the chronological sequence of events is faithfully abided by; yet what one might call his historical blindness was appalling. Nothing is more pitiful, nothing more calculated to make one doubt his genius, than the meagre notes he wrote while travelling in Egypt and Italy; to him the past was dead." (George Sarton, "Herbert Spencer, 1820-1920," Scribner's Magazine, Vol. 67, pp. 695-701, 1920. P. 699)

Reacting to Spencer's assertion that "The only history that is of practical value, is what may be called Descriptive Sociology," Coursault said: "Far from being a mere servant, a mere hewer of wood and drawer of water for the sociologist, the historian has an independent mission of his own and aids human development in a practical way that is just as necessary, useful, and honorable as the work of the sociologist." (Jesse H. Coursault, The Principles of Education, Silver, Burdett and Company, Boston, 1920. P. 184. Coursault was Professor of the History and Philosophy of Education at the University of Missouri.)

"As a consequence ... of his ignorance of history, he wrote mainly of a society which was in the unhistoric past. His conclusions for the future lack vitality and validity, because they are not enlightened by an understanding of the proximate evolution of the great European society in which he himself lived." (L. L. Bernard, "Herbert Spencer's Work in the Light of His Life," The Monist, Vol. 31, pp. 1-35, 1921. Pp. 6-7)

In criticizing Spencer's sociology, Robertson says: "... and still less will he study continuously the history of the higher societies ...." (J. M. Robertson, Explorations, Watts & Co., London, n.d., (ca. 1923). P. 127. This criticism appears to indicate a failure to read Principles of Sociology carefully.)

"Spencer, who approached the sociological problem with his unfailing energy of ratiocination, but with more than Comte's insufficiency of historical knowledge and the more serious defect of lack of interest in history, achieved rather an anatomy of social forms than a recognition of a universal process of causation in terms of mental action, of choices, of all that is signified on that side of things by the concept of "creative evolution."" (J. M. Robertson, A History of Freethought in the Nineteenth Century, Watts & Co., London, 1929. P. 343)
"... Spencer's method was the reverse of historic, and Spencer himself despised history as a subject fit only for the attention of "immature minds."" (F. J. C. Hearnshaw, "Herbert Spencer and the Individualists," in The Social & Political Ideas of Some Representative Thinkers of the Victorian Age, ed. by F. J. C. Hearnshaw, pp. 53-83, George G. Harrap & Co. Ltd., London, 1933. P. 53)

"In his Study of Sociology, Spencer does lip service to the historical method; but there is very little intelligent use of the historical method in his work ...." (Charles A. Ellwood, A History of Social Philosophy, Prentice-Hall, Inc., New York, 1938. P. 446)

"The thing that I used, in my simple youth, to call history, is now labelled 'political, military, religious, and constitutional history'. This is a dire blow to the poor Victorian: with the greatest desire to avoid narrow-mindedness, I still cannot rise to the duty of acquainting myself with and mastering the history of flint-knapping, or of Chinese music. There are some people--I think Mr. Wells is one of them, who find more pleasure in contemplating the development of cereal agriculture, or telegraphy, than in following the story of Julius Caesar, the Crusades, or Napoleon. And no doubt I ought to be mastering all the folio pages of Herbert Spencer's tabulated indices on the manners and customs of savage tribes, and following all the suggestions of The Golden Bough with enthusiasm, rather than reading La Noue and Montluc about the Huguenot Wars of France, or puzzling out the evidence concerning the Massacre of St. Bartholomew. From the point of view of the advocates of the 'Wider Oneness' in history, the fortunes of sixteenth-century England or France are relatively unimportant. I fear, therefore, that I must confine myself to collecting my premises and drawing my conclusions about a 'History' that is taken more or less in the old sense, and that does not include ...." (Sir Charles Oman, On The Writing of History, E. P. Dutton and Company Inc., New York, 1939. Pp. 5-6)


"It is a temptation to believe that Spencer's self-imposed alienation from society and his studied ignorance of history were employed as antiseptics against cultural contamination and the loss of perspective that he thought went with it." (Abram Kardiner and Edward Preble, They Studied Man, The World Publishing Company, Cleveland, 1961. P. 48n.)
When Spencer wrote, "Only in late years have historians commenced giving us, in any considerable quantity, the truly valuable information," he might have had in mind Thomas Babington Macaulay's *The History of England*. Chapter 3 of Vol. 1 of that work, entitled "State of England in 1685," (pp. 279-427) presented what seems to have been a good picture of the culture of England at that time. (Volume 1, Longman, Brown, Green, and Longmans, London, 1849, 1st edition.) (The full title of the work is *The History of England from the Accession of James II.*)

"Yet this commentary on the moral code—this History as we call it—men for ever read in vain! Poring with microscopic eye over the symbols in which it is written, they are heedless of the great facts expressed by them. Instead of collecting evidence bearing upon the all-important question—What are the laws that determine national success or failure, stability or revolution?—they gossip about state intrigues, sieges and battles, court scandal, the crimes of nobles, the quarrels of parties, the births, deaths, and marriages of kings, and other like trifles. Minutiae, pettifogging details, the vanity and frippery of bygone times, the mere decorations of the web of existence, they examine, analyze, and learnedly descant upon; yet are blind to those stern realities which each age shrouds in its superficial tissue of events—those terrible truths which glare out upon us from the gloom of the past. From the successive strata of our historical deposits, they diligently gather all the highly-coloured fragments, pounce upon everything that is curious and sparkling, and chuckle like children over their glittering acquisitions; meanwhile the rich veins of wisdom that ramify amidst this worthless debris, lie utterly neglected. Cumbrous volumes of rubbish are greedily accumulated, whilst those masses of rich ore, that should have been dug out, and from which golden truths might have been smelted, are left unthought of andunsought." (Herbert Spencer, *Social Statics*, John Chapman, London, 1851. P 49)

"Again, when we were in Edinburgh Castle, in the bedroom of Mary, Queen of Scots, where her son was born, and let down outside through the window, an old Scotchman was trying to rally his recollections about some details, and appealed to Spencer. "I am happy to say I don't know," he replied. The old man was thunderstruck, and said he wished he knew all about history. "I should hate to have my head filled up with it, for it would exclude better things."" (Letter from Edward Livingston Youmans to his sister, Eliza A. Youmans, dated August 24, 1862. Quoted in John Fiske, *Edward Livingston Youmans*, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. Pp. 125-126)

"Then, too, there is the fact that I ignore utterly the personal element in history, and, indeed, show little respect for history altogether as it is ordinarily conceived." (Letter from Herbert Spencer to James Knowles, probably late in 1896. Quoted in David Duncan, Life and Letters of Herbert Spencer, 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1908. Vol. 2, p. 123)

"Though the greater parts of the facts from which true sociological generalizations may be drawn, are presented only by those savage and semi-civilized societies ignored in our educational courses, there are also required some of the facts furnished by the histories of developed nations." (Herbert Spencer, The Principles of Ethics, 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1904. Vol. 1, p. 518)


Spencer's command of the wealth of relevant facts from European history is not matched or even approached by any contemporary historical sociologists.

Spencer had a very commanding grasp of the existing ethnographic data, and a better command of the history of Europe and Classical Antiquity than any modern ethnologist.

"... a student who took them [Spencer's tables in Descriptive Sociology] as guides in a course of historical reading would find his notion of what constituted history almost reversed; that is, he would find the class of facts of which nearly all histories are now composed relegated to a position not simply subordinate but almost insignificant; and another class which historians only notice incidentally, if at all, spread over the whole field." (Anonymous (E. L. Godkin), "Spencer's Descriptive Sociology," The Nation, Vol. 19, pp. 288-289, 1874. P. 289. This is a review of the first 2 volumes of Descriptive Sociology.)

"As an undergraduate at Oxford (1883-87) I was greatly interested in questions of social reform, but in probing them I came upon real or apparent difficulties, sociological and philosophical. I rather innocently took Herbert Spencer's evolutionary theories as the last word in science, and though attracted by T. H. Green's social and ethical outlook I could not see in his metaphysics a valid philosophical solution." (L. T. Hobhouse, "The Philosophy of Development," in Contemporary British Philosophy, Personal Statements (First Series), ed. by J. H. Muirhead, pp. 149-188, George Allen & Unwin Ltd., London, 1924. P. 150)

"The work of Herbert Spencer in particular did much to popularize the conceptions of sociology in this country, but at the same time gave a great impulse to the tendency to subordinate the new sciences /sic/ to biology.... Social questions came to be referred to the biological principles which underlay the life of society, for decision. It was held that the struggle for existence, natural selection and the survival of the fittest, were the key to all possible progress upon this earth." (L. T. Hobhouse, "The Roots of Modern Sociology," in Sociology and Philosophy, by L. T. Hobhouse, pp. 3-19, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1966. P. 11)

"This theory /that competition and survival by natural selection is the motive force of social evolution/ admits / of many applications: It may be used, as by Spencer himself, to exalt free competition in industry. It may be applied where, oddly enough, Spencer did not apply it at all, to the rivalry of communities. /How could Hobhouse say this?/ That is to say, that just as in a community there should be no legislation to interfere with the victory of the stronger, so as between two communities there should be no humanitarian sentimentalism which should interfere with the natural, healthy process by which the weaker goes to the wall." (L. T. Hobhouse, "The Roots of Modern Sociology," in Sociology and Philosophy, by L. T. Hobhouse, pp. 3-19, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1966. Pp. 11-12)

"Philosophically Mr. Spencer was not a materialist. But his metaphysical safeguards did not rescue the evolution theory from some of the most unfortunate consequences of a materialistic system. Evolution, as thus interpreted, meant, in its bearing on human life and action, essentially two things. It meant that the human mind must be regarded as an organ like the lungs or the liver /no comma/ evolved in the struggle for existence with the function of adjusting the behaviour of the organism to its environment. It was / to be thought of ... as a sort of glorified reflex action. Cunningly constructed as it was, it had no special significance in the evolutionary scheme and though it made man for a time the dominant animal, yet the ultimate goal of its efforts would be to establish an equilibrium which would prove, as Mr. Spencer candidly admitted, the first stage of decay." (L. T. Hobhouse, Development and Purpose, Macmillan and Co., Limited, London, 1913. Pp. xv-xvi)
"The appearance of an upward process in Spencer's concept of evolution then was illusory. It was due to the position of the human observer, who could not clearly see beyond the segment of the curve on which he himself happened to be placed. So far as there was anything like progress, it was due to the internecine struggle for existence. But a little reflection suffices to show that if progress means anything which human beings can value or desire, it depends on the suppression of the struggle for existence, and the substitution in one form or another of social cooperation. There was here a conflict between the scientific and the ethical points of view which threatened social ethics with extinction." (L. T. Hobhouse, Development and Purpose, Macmillan and Co., Limited, London, 1913, P. xvi)

"Like Spencer, Hobhouse developed his sociological system as a part of a general philosophy of evolution. There is still more intimate similarity between the two systems, in that while Spencer conceived of the evolutionary process as one of progressive differentiation and adjustment, Hobhouse views it as a growth in correlation and harmony, and both look upon society as an organic unity. But here the resemblance ceases; Spencer held that the course of evolution moved on automatically, regardless of the interference of man, and believed that the latter could at the best have only an indifferent effect and was extremely likely to hinder the process. Hobhouse claims, on the contrary, that however much the evolutionary process may depend upon automatically working factors, such as the struggle for existence, social evolution has come more and more to rest upon conscious control by the human mind, and that, from this stage on, progress depends primarily upon the conscious direction of social conduct by the social mind." (Harry Elmer Barnes, "Some Typical Contributions of English Sociology to Political Theory. Part II. Leonard T. Hobhouse and the Neo-Liberal Theory of the State," The American Journal of Sociology, Vol. 27, pp. 442-485, 1921-22. Pp. 442-443)

In accounting for Hobhouse's disregard of Spencer's work Carter remarks: "In Spencer there is more than a suggestion of a mechanistic world and from mechanism Hobhouse turned away with complete distaste." (Hugh Carter, The Social Theories of L. T. Hobhouse, The University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, 1927. P. 12.)

"... Hobhouse, who was greatly influenced by Spencer, ...." (T. B. Bottomore, Sociology, George Allen & Unwin Ltd, London, 1962. P. 174n.)

"... it was Hobhouse who made possible a convergence of ameliorism and sociology by finding a way to stand Herbert Spencer on his head. He contrived an evolutionary sociology which endorsed reformism without requiring society to progress in any particular direction." (Philip Abrams, The Origins of British Sociology: 1834-1914, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1968. P. 87)
"What Hobhouse had discovered was that one could accept Spencer's general understanding of the nature of scientific sociology without having to come to Spencer's own disagreeable political conclusions." (Philip Abrams, The Origins of British Sociology: 1834-1914, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1968. P. 87)

"In sum, given the defining properties of sociology as Hobhouse understood them, the science had to be built around a theory of evolution, but, imperatively, it had to be evolution without Spencer." (Philip Abrams, The Origins of British Sociology: 1834-1914, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1968. P. 91)

"But his [Spencer's] metaphysical safeguards did not rescue the evolution theory from some of the most unfortunate consequences of a materialistic system. Evolution, as thus interpreted, meant, in its bearing on human life and action, essentially two things. It meant that the human mind must be regarded as an organ like the lungs or the liver evolved in the struggle for existence with the function of adjusting the behaviour of the organism to its environment. It was / to be thought of ... as a sort of glorified reflex action." (L. T. Hobhouse, Development and Purpose, Macmillan and Co., Limited, London, 1913. Pp. xv-xvi)

"So far as there was anything like progress, it was [according to Spencer] due to the internecine struggle for existence. But a little reflection suffices to show that if progress means anything which human beings can value or desire, it depends on the suppression of the struggle for existence, and the substitution in one form or another of social co-operation. There was here a conflict between the scientific and the ethical points of view which threatened social ethics with extinction." (L. T. Hobhouse, Development and Purpose, Macmillan and Co., Limited, London, 1913. P. xvi)

"... a true philosophy, a really concrete interpretation of our experience as a whole, must aim rather at a synthesis in which the analysis of first principles figures as the keystone of the arch of science. In this respect Mr. Spencer, whatever the defects of his method, seemed to me to have been justly inspired." (L. T. Hobhouse, Development and Purpose, Macmillan and Co., Limited, London, 1913. P. xvii)

"In the middle of the "Eighties," when the writer was first studying philosophy, the biological theory of evolution was already very generally accepted, and the philosophical extension of the theory by Mr. Herbert Spencer was, except in academic circles, in the heyday of its influence." (L. T. Hobhouse, Development and Purpose, Macmillan and Co., Limited, London, 1913. P. xv)
"Mr. Herbert Spencer's philosophies invade, one after another, all the chief territories of human knowledge. The little volume before us talks in common sense in plain language, but it is impossible not to see that it is a master of all arts and sciences, so far as it is given to one man in our day to answer to such a title, who is discourse to us. A man's accuracy is tested by his statements, his breadth of view is shown by his illustrations. Every page of Mr. Spencer's writings is illuminated by those side lights which only a great scholar, in books, or nature, or both, can throw upon the subject with which he is dealing." (O.W.H. Oliver Wendell Holmes, Review of The Study of Sociology, by Herbert Spencer, The Boston Medical and Surgical Journal, Vol. 89, pp. 587-589, 1873. P. 587)

When Oliver Wendell Holmes' letter of greeting to Spencer was read aloud at the Farewell Dinner at Delmonico's Restaurant by William Maxwell Evarts: "I wish you could have seen how Spencer's face was illuminated and how he wriggled with delight during its reading. It was a revelation to me, the unconscious and surprised pleasure which he evidently received in listening." (Letter from Fordyce Barker to Oliver Wendell Holmes dated November 9, 1882. Quoted in A Bibliography of Oliver Wendell Holmes by Thomas Franklin Currier, edited by Eleanor M. Tilton, New York University Press, New York, 1953. P. 488)

"Theologians, statesmen, astronomers, physicists, biologists, including physicians and all the rest, find him handling their various specialties as if he had been in the pulpit, in the cabinet, in the observatory, in all laboratories of science and all workshops of art, and felt himself at home in all." (p. 587) "No specialist is safe from the omnivorous intelligence of Mr. Spencer. He picks everybody's pocket of his private store of knowledge and makes it serve a larger purpose than its owner ever dreamed of." (p. 588) (O.W.H. Oliver Wendell Holmes, Review of The Study of Sociology, by Herbert Spencer, The Boston Medical and Surgical Journal, Vol. 89, pp. 587-589, 1873)

"Every chapter of it is instructive and the spirit of it is that which should animate every man who calls himself a student of science; a willingness to embrace every new truth, even before it has received the baptism of general acceptance, and a tender respect for the memory of the half-truths which have helped the world along in their day, and are entitled to all the civilities of a decent interment." (O.W.H. Oliver Wendell Holmes, Review of The Study of Sociology, by Herbert Spencer, The Boston Medical and Surgical Journal, Vol. 89, pp. 587-589, 1873. P. 589)

"In an age like this of specialists and comminuted intellectual acquirements, it is a great pleasure to meet with a mind which is periscopic enough to survey the whole province of human knowledge." (O.W.H. Oliver Wendell Holmes, Review of The Study of Sociology, by Herbert Spencer, The Boston Medical and Surgical Journal, Vol. 89, pp. 587-589, 1873. P. 587)
"One cannot read this book without feeling that the writer
is, or at least means to be, perfectly fair, candid, passionless,
that his mind is as nearly achromatic, if we may recur to the si-
mile / already used, as the media through which truth is seen can
well allow a human intelligence to be." (O.W.H. Oliver Wendell
Holmes, Review of The Study of Sociology, by Herbert Spencer, The

"... Mr. Justice Holmes retained to the very end of his long
life a deep sense of gratitude to Herbert Spencer as the thinker
who, above all others in his youth, had released that generation
from philosophies set in a quasi-theological context and made it
understand that there was an ultimate conflict between the indivi-
dual and the state power which no amount of Hegelian moonshine
could reconcile." (Harold J. Laski, The American Democracy, The

"Mr. Spencer has come nearer to the realization of Bacon's
claim of all knowledge as his province than any philosopher of his
time. (p. 84) " ... we look with amazement upon the reach and com-
pass of his vast triangulation of the universe." (p. 84) "May he
live to place the cap-stone on that pyramid of achievements which
is already one of the wonders of the modern intellectual world!"
(Letter from Oliver Wendell Holmes to W. J. Youmans dated November
6, 1882. Read aloud at the Spencer Farewell Dinner by Fordyce Bar-
ker. Quoted in Edward L. Youmans, editor Herbert Spencer on The
Americans and The Americans on Herbert Spencer, D. Appleton and
Company, New York, 1883)

The quotation you are looking for is in a case called Lochner v. New York,
198 U.S. 45, 25 Sup. Ct. 539, 49 L. Ed. 937 (1905). The case itself in-
volved a New York law setting a 60 hour maximum work week for bakers. The
case, in an opinion by Justice Peckham, held the law unconstitutional on
the grounds that the statute forbids an employer from exercising his right
to contrast freely under the 14th Amendment. It was also stated that the
law was not within the police power as the public interest was not affected.

The quotation you cite was by Justice Holmes in his dissent to the above
noted opinion. The context is as follows:
"The liberty of the citizen to do as he likes so long as he does not
interfere with the liberty of others to do the same, which has been a
shibboleth for some well-known writers, is interfered with by school
laws, by the Post Office, by every state or municipal institution
which takes his money for purposes thought desirable, whether he likes
it or not. The 14th Amendment does not enact Mr. Herbert Spencer's
Social Statics. The other day we sustained the Massachusetts vaccination
law ..."

Holmes based his dissent on the grounds that if the statute was thought to
have a rational basis by rational men it ought not to be declared un-
constitutional in order to embody a particular economic theory i.e. laissez-
faire. (Letter from Eleanor E. Zabel, March 13, 1966)

tury," and Oliver Wendell Holmes doubted that "any writer of English except Darwin has done so much to affect our whole way of thinking about the universe."⁹


"The New York law establishing a ten-hour day for bakers was invalidated in the famous Lochner Case (1905), 198 U.S. 45. It is in this case that Justice Holmes made his celebrated observation: 'The Fourteenth Amendment does not enact Mr. Herbert Spencer's Social Statics.'" (William Seagle, The History of Law. Tudor Publishing Co. New York, 1946. P. 417n.)
"But Spencer taught me that, roughly speaking, what is, is the best possible at the moment, and can be made better only by Evolution, which can be promoted by gradual and experimental succession, but not by blind destruction. Social questions are very complicated, and can be wisely settled only by the slow methods of trial and error." (Henry Holt, Garrulities of an Octogenarian Editor, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1923. P. 53)
In 1867 Spencer was asked to become a candidate for the professorship of Mental Philosophy and Logic at University College, London, but he declined. Several other such offers were tendered to him in subsequent years, but he always turned them down. (Auto. II, 146-70)

Spencer could not have been more unacademic. He had practically no formal schooling at all. Never took an examination. Never taught a course, hardly ever lectured. Turned down every offer of an honorary degree.

"With a few exceptions these proffered honours were declined." (Duncan, p. 588n.) Spencer, between 1871 and 1903, was offered 32 academic honours, including memberships, honorary degrees, professorships, Fellowships, presidencies. (Duncan, pp. 588-589)
Hooker called Spencer "One of our deepest thinkers ...." (Joseph D. Hooker, "Address of the President," British Association for the Advancement of Science, Report of the Thirty-Eighth Meeting, 1868, pp. lviii-lxxv. P. lxxiv)

"And now next morning some more [Joseph] Hookerian reminiscence. He speaks unreservedly of Spencer; says "Spencer is the mighty thinker among us. And what a splendid talker! He talks right at you like a book, and his language is so fluent and adaptive! He is all right now. The recognition of his genius is now complete. What a lucky thing it was that he failed in getting a consulate or some other public appointment when he began his Philosophy! Had he succeeded, we never should have heard of the Philosophy."" (Letter from Edward L. Youmans to his sister, Eliza Youmans, dated London, August 19, 1871. In John Fiske, Edward Livingston Youmans, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. P. 282)

"... I do not think that any one, except a deeply read man, can appreciate the immensity of Spencer's converse with all that man has done in the spread of knowledge, and of its influence in the development of every phase of his advancement from the savage to the highest civilisation." (Letter from Joseph D. Hooker to Inglis Palgrave dated December 23, 1903. Quoted in Leonard Huxley, Life and Letters of Sir Joseph Dalton Hooker, 2 Vols., D. Appleton & Company, New York, 1918. Vol. 2, p. 454)

"... we must improve man before we can perfect his institutions ...." (E. A. Hooton, Apes, Men, and Morons, G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1937. P. 16)

Where, if anywhere, does Spencer face squarely the question of the kind of difference between the mind of man and the mind of subman? And if he did face the question squarely, what conclusion did he reach? Did he refer to Descartes, John Locke, and, perhaps, some other predecessors who insisted upon a difference of kind (I forgot to mention Tylor)? Or did he follow Darwin (The Descent of Man, Chaps. 3, 18) who maintained that the difference was merely one of degree?

Spencer's fullest discussion of the evolution of human intelligence appears to be that in Chapter 7, "Reason," in Vol. 1 of his Principles of Psychology. Although I did not find a clear-cut statement asserting that there is no fundamental distinction between the human mind and that of sub-human animals, this is the sense of what he is saying. There is a statement in which Spencer speaks disapprovingly of "the prevalent anxiety to establish some absolute distinction between animal intelligence and human intelligence ..." (p. 460). Early in the chapter Spencer says: "... the highest forms of psychical activity arise little by little out of the lowest, and cannot be definitely separated from them." (p. 453)

"... the supposed distinctions between different modes of Intelligence, marked as they eventually become, arise by degrees; and that there is a passage from the lowest to the highest without breach of continuity." (Herbert Spencer, "Mental Evolution," The Contemporary Review, Vol. 17, pp. 461-462, 1871. P. 461)
"... cardinal traits in societies are determined by cardinal traits in men, [and thus] it cannot be questioned that less-marked traits in societies are determined by less-marked traits in men ...." (Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1891. P. 52)

"... the existing type of industrial organization, like the existing type of political organization, is about as good as existing human nature allows. The evils there are in it are nothing but the evils brought round on men by their own imperfections." (Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1891. P. 252)

Spencer thought that a great deal of the changes in human conduct was the result of changes in human nature. Thus, individuals would gradually become more willing to accept those trammels on individual existence that social life, with its stress on altruism, forces on him. He did not realize how much the change in human conduct (culture) was purely cultural, not involving any change in human nature, and thus not removing that underlying chafing at social rules that the individual human organism will, from time to time, continue to feel. --RLC

"... forms of government are valuable only when they are products of national character. No cunningly-devised political arrangements will of themselves do anything. No amount of knowledge respecting the uses of such arrangements will suffice. Nothing will suffice but the emotional nature to which such arrangements are adapted—a nature which, during social progress, has evolved the arrangements. And wherever there is want of congruity between the nature and the arrangements—wherever the arrangements, suddenly established by revolution or pushed too far by reforming change, are of a higher type than the national character demands, there is always a lapse propor/tionate to the incongruity." (Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1886. Pp. 275-276)

"... the change of nature undergone by the human species since societies began to develop, has been an adaptation of it to the conditions implied by harmonious social life ...." (Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1891. Pp. 348-349)

"There can be no understanding of social actions without some knowledge of human nature ...." (Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1891. P. 390)
Spencer believed that existing social institutions were about as good as human nature would allow. (E.g., *The Study of Sociology*, Ann Arbor edition, p. 229)

"... human nature, though indefinitely modifiable, can be modified but very slowly ...." (Herbert Spencer, *The Study of Sociology*, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1886. P. 120)

"So that wild races deficient in the allegiance-producing sentiment cannot enter into a civilized state at all; but have to be supplanted by others that can." (Herbert Spencer, *Social Statics*, John Chapman, London, 1851. P. 425)


Spencer believed that "the desire to appropriate, and to keep that which has been appropriated, lies deep, not in human nature only, but in animal nature" (Vol. II, p. 554). (Resort to human nature.)

"Admitting that social evolution can result only if the natures of citizens issue in appropriate conduct ...." (Herbert Spencer, *The Study of Sociology*, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1891. P. 413)

"... our existing industrial system is a product of existing human nature, and can be improved only as fast as human nature improves." (Herbert Spencer, *The Study of Sociology*, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1891. P. 254)

"... the existing type of industrial organization, like the existing type of political organization, is about as good as existing human nature allows. The evils there are in it are nothing but the evils brought round on men by their own imperfections." (Herbert Spencer, *The Study of Sociology*, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1891. P. 252)
"... existence, generation after generation, ... produces an adapted type of nature; partly by daily habit and partly by survival of those most fit for living under such control."

(Vol. II, p. 369). Natural selection, Spencer thought, selects those personality traits most favorable to adjust to the prevailing conditions.

"And indications are not lacking that in the emotional sphere, as in the intellectual, an orthogenetic bias is ready to anticipate selective evolution. The trend of selection in the realm of emotions, of instinctive proclivities, of tastes we have already noted: it follows Spencer's hedonistic principle, according to which those races are best adapted for survival, in whom adjustment of agreeable feelings to beneficial action is most perfect."

(Alfred J. Lotka, Elements of Physical Biology, Williams & Wilkins Co., Baltimore, 1925, P. 430)

"... the constitutional energy needed for continuous labour, without which there cannot be civilized life and the massing of men presupposed by it, is an energy not to be quickly acquired; but is to be acquired only by inherited modifications slowly accumulated."


"... we have to get rid of the two beliefs that human nature is unchangeable, and that it is easily changed; and we have, instead, to become familiar with the conception of a human nature that is changed in the slow succession of generations by social discipline."

(Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1891, P. 145)

"... human nature, though indefinitely modifiable, can be modified but very slowly; and ... [thus] all laws and institutions and appliances which count on getting from it, within a short time, much better results than present ones, will inevitably fail."

(Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1891, P. 120)
"Within the ranks of the biologists, at that time (1851-1858), I met with nobody, except Dr. Grant of University College, who had a word to say for Evolution—and his advocacy was not calculated to advance the cause. Outside these ranks, the only person known to me whose knowledge and capacity compelled respect, and who was, at the same time, a thorough-going evolutionist, was Mr. Herbert Spencer, whose acquaintance I made, I think, in 1852, and then entered into the bonds of a friendship which, I am happy to think, has known no interruption. Many and prolonged ...." (Thomas Henry Huxley, Extract from "The Reception of the "Origin of Species" in Life and Letters of Charles Darwin, vol. 11, pp. 187-90 and 195-97. Quoted in Leonard Huxley, Life and Letters of Thomas Henry Huxley, 2 Vols., Macmillan and Co., Limited, London, 1900. Vol. 1, p. 168)

"I shall be most glad henceforth, as ever, to help your great undertaking (First Principles specifically, and the System of Philosophy generally) in any way I can. The more I contemplate its issues the more important does it seem to me to be, and I assure you that I look upon its success as the business of all of us. So that if it were not a pleasure I should feel it a duty to "push behind" as hard as I can." (Letter from Thomas Henry Huxley to Herbert Spencer dated October 10, 1860. Quoted in Leonard Huxley, Life and Letters of Thomas Henry Huxley, 2 Vols., Macmillan and Co., Limited, London, 1900. Vol. 1, p. 214)

"I know nothing of Necessity, abominate the word Law (except as meaning that we know nothing to the contrary), and am quite ready to admit that there may be some place, "other side of nowhere," par example, where \(2 + 2 = 5\), and all bodies naturally repel one another instead of gravitating together.... In other words, I believe in Hamilton, Mansell [sic] and Herbert Spencer so long as they are destructive, and I laugh at their beards as soon as they try to spin their own cobwebs." (Letter from Thomas Henry Huxley to Charles Kingsley dated May 22, 1863. Quoted in Leonard Huxley, Life and Letters of Thomas Henry Huxley, 2 Vols., Macmillan and Co., Limited, London, 1900. Vol. 1, p. 242)

"The only complete and systematic statement of the doctrine of evolution with which I am acquainted is that contained in Mr. Herbert Spencer's 'System of Philosophy,' a work which should be carefully studied by all who desire to know whither scientific thought is tending." (Thomas Henry Huxley, "On the Animals which are most nearly intermediate between Birds and Reptiles," Notices of the Proceedings at the Meetings of the Members of the Royal Institutions of Great Britain, Vol. 5, pp. 278-287, 1868. (P. 278n.) (Vol. 5 includes 1866-69; paper read on February 7, 1868)

"I have been his devil's advocate for a number of years, and there is no telling how many brilliant speculations I have been the means of choking in an embryonic state." (Letter from Thomas Henry Huxley to Dr. Anton Dohrn dated April 30, 1870. Quoted in Leonard Huxley, Life and Letters of Thomas Henry Huxley, 2 Vols., Macmillan and Co., Limited, London, 1900. Vol. 1, p. 333)
"The following is in reply to Mr. Spencer who had accused himself of losing his temper in an argument—" .... What your sins may be in this line to other folk I don't know, but so far as I am concerned I assure you I have often said that I know no one who takes aggravated opposition better than yourself, and that I have not a few times been ashamed of the extent to which I have tried your patience."" (Letter from Thomas Henry Huxley to Herbert Spencer dated November 8, 1868. Quoted in Leonard Huxley, Life and Letters of Thomas Henry Huxley, 2 Vols., Macmillan and Co., Limited, London, 1900. Vol. 1, p. 278)

"Mr. Herbert Spencer, a frequent visitor to Huxley's house in Marlborough Place, which Huxley built in 1872, was an authority on music." (Leonard Huxley, Life and Letters of Thomas Henry Huxley, 2 Vols., Macmillan and Co., Limited, London, 1900. Vol. 2, pp. 421-422)

"One incident of the move to a new house by the Huxley family, however, was more agreeable. Mr. Herbert Spencer took the opportunity of sending a New Year's gift for the new house, in the shape of a handsome clock, wishing, as he said, "to express in some way more emphatic than by words, my sense of the many kindnesses I have received at your hands during the twenty years of our friendship. Remembrance of the things you have done in furtherance of my aims, and of the invaluable critical aid you have given me, with so much patience and at so much cost of time, has often made me feel how much I owe to you." After a generous reference to occasions when the warmth of debate might have betrayed him into more vigorous expressions that he intended, he concludes:—"But inadequately as I may ordinarily show it, you will (knowing that I am tolerably candid) believe me when I say that there is no one whose judgment on all subjects I so much respect, or whose friendship I so highly value." (Leonard Huxley, Life and Letters of Thomas Henry Huxley, 2 Vols., Macmillan and Co., Limited, London, 1900. Vol. 1, p. 385)

"The question of the expediency of any form of State Education is, in fact, a question of those higher politics which lie above the region in which Tories, Whigs, and Radicals "delight to bark and bite." In discussing it in my address on "Administrative Nihilism," I found myself, to my profound regret, led to diverge very widely (though even more perhaps in seeming than in reality) from the opinions of a man of genius to whom I am bound by the twofold tie of the respect due to a profound philosopher and the affection given to a very old friend. But had I no other means of knowing the fact, the kindly geniality of Mr. Herbert Spencer's reply in "Specialized Administration" assures me that the tie to which I refer will bear a much heavier strain than I have put, or ever intend to put, upon it, and I rather rejoice that I have been the means of calling forth so vigorous a piece of argumentative writing." (Thomas Henry Huxley, Critiques and Addresses, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1873. P. vi)
"It may be remembered that the 1872 address on "Administrative Nihilism" led to a reply from the pen of Mr. Spencer, as the champion of Individualism. When my father sent him the volume in which this address was printed, he wrote back a letter (Sept. 29, 1873) which is characterised by the same feeling. It expresses his thanks for the book, "and many more for the kind expression of feeling in the preface. If you had intended to set an example to the Philistines of the way in which controversial differences may be maintained without any decrease of sympathy, you could not have done it more perfectly." (Leonard Huxley, Life and Letters of Thomas Henry Huxley, 2 Vols., Macmillan and Co., Limited, London, 1900. Vol. 1, p. 385)

"... a man of genius to whom I am bound by the twofold tie of the respect due to a profound philosopher and the affection given to a very old friend. But I had no other means of knowing the fact that, the kindly geniality of Mr. Herbert Spencer's reply "Specialized Administration" assures me that the tie to which I refer will bear a much heavier strain than I have put, or ever intend to put, upon it, and I rather rejoice that I have been the means of calling forth so vigorous a piece of argumentative writing. Nor is this disinterested joy at an attack upon myself diminished by the circumstance, that, in all humility, but in all sincerity, I think it may be repulsed." (Thomas Henry Huxley, Preface to Critiques and Addresses, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1873. P. vi)

"We find him [T. H. Huxley] also reading over proofs for Mr. Herbert Spencer, who, although he might hesitate to ask for his criticism with respect to a subject on which they had a "standing difference," still "concluded that to break through the long-standing usage, in pursuance of which I have habitually submitted my biological writing to your castigation, and so often profited by so doing, would seem like a distrust of your candour—a distrust which I cannot entertain." (Letter from Herbert Spencer to Thomas Henry Huxley dated January, 1886. Quoted in Leonard Huxley, Life and Letters of Thomas Henry Huxley, 2 Vols., Macmillan and Co., Limited, London, 1900. Vol. 2, p. 127)

"But you were infinitely better off than I in the matter of education. I had two years of a Pandemonium of a school (between 8 and 10) and after that neither help nor sympathy in any intellectual direction till I reached manhood. Good heavens! if I had had a father and uncle who troubled themselves about my education as / yours did about your training, I might say as Bethell said of his possibilities had he come under Jowett, "There is no knowing to what eminence I might not have attained."" (Letter from Thomas Henry Huxley to Herbert Spencer, dated November 25, 1886. Quoted in Leonard Huxley, Life and Letters of Thomas Henry Huxley, 2 Vols., Macmillan and Co., Limited, London, 1900. Vol. 2, pp. 145-146)
"Reading your account of me /in proofs of Spencer's Autobiography/. I had the sensation of studying a fly in amber. I had utterly forgotten the particular circumstances that brought us together. Considering what wilful tykes we both are (you particularly), I think it is a great credit to both of us that we are firmer friends now than we were then. Your kindly words have given me much pleasure." (Letter from Thomas Henry Huxley to Herbert Spencer dated January 18, 1887. Quoted in Leonard Huxley, Life and Letters of Thomas Henry Huxley, 2 Vols., Macmillan and Co., Limited, London, 1900. Vol. 2, p. 183)

"Now you may be sure that I should be glad enough to be associated with you in anything; but considering the innumerable battles we have fought over education, vaccination, and so on, it seemed to me that if the programme of the League /the London Liberty Club/ were wide enough to take us both for figure-heads, it must be so elastic as to verge upon infinite extensibility; and that one or other of us would be in a false position." (Letter from Thomas Henry Huxley to Herbert Spencer dated January 18, 1887. Quoted in Leonard Huxley, Life and Letters of Thomas Henry Huxley, 2 Vols., Macmillan and Co., Limited, London, 1900. Vol. 2, p. 183)

"Evolution as a philosophical doctrine applicable to all phenomena, whether physical or mental, whether manifested by material atoms or by men in society, has been dealt with systematically in the "Synthetic Philosophy" of Mr. Herbert Spencer. Comment on that great undertaking would not be in place here. I mention it because, so far as I know, it is the first attempt to deal on scientific principles with modern scientific facts and speculations. For the "Philosophie positive" of M. Comte, with which Mr. Spencer's system of philosophy is sometimes compared, though it professes a similar object, is unfortunately permeated by a thoroughly unscientific spirit, and its author had no adequate acquaintance with the physical sciences even of his own time." (Thomas Henry Huxley, "Advance of Science in the Last Half Century," Smithsonian Institution Annual Report, 1887 (1889), pp. 57-98. Pp. 85-86)

"I am afraid it /"The Industrial Struggle for Existence" in The Nineteenth Century, February, 1888/ has made Spencer very angry—but he knows I think he has been doing mischief this long time." (Letter from Thomas Henry Huxley to Sir John Donnelly dated February 9, 1888. Vol. 2, p. 188) "However, he and Mr. Spencer wrote their minds to each other on the subject, and as Huxley remarks with reference to this occasion, "the process does us both good, and in no way interferes with our friendship."" (Leonard Huxley, Life and Letters of Thomas Henry Huxley, 2 Vols., Macmilland and Co., Limited, London, 1900. Vol. 2, p. 188)

"Professor Huxley /In his exchange of letters with Spencer in the London Times in November, 1882/ came at the philosopher in a bullheaded way that must have seemed very unkind." (George, Henry, A Perplexed Philosopher, Robert Schalkenbach Foundation, New York, 1965. P. 94)
"Professor Huxley at times disavows materialism as positing only "matter and force and mechanism." It is idle to make such statements without explaining how the so-called Materialist defines the terms matter and force. Professor Huxley writes as if their connotations were perfectly certain and invariable. I know of no "Materialism" which is, so to say, more "materialistic" than his own. But, like too many of our English thinkers, he is more concerned to evade compromising names than to clear them up." (John M. Robertson, Modern Humanists, Swan Sonnenschein & Co., London, 1891. Pp. 235-236.)

"It is the final expression of his essentially negative mind, which kept him denying evolution till the proofs were sufficient to stagger even bigots; set him controverting Spencer's so-called Nihilism without indicating a notion of what ought to be really done; and kept him opposing the exclusion of superstition from the schools, till he was fain himself to make a stand in order to exclude it from the forum. Thus may you contrive to have it formally on record that you were right, while the upshot of your career remains negation or practical nullity." (John M. Robertson, Modern Humanists, Swan Sonnenschein & Co., London, 1891. P. 243.)

"Enclosed you will find a copy of a letter just published in the Athenaeum. As you will see, it is drawn from me by Prof. Huxley's lecture on "Evolution & Ethics," which, if you have seen it, you will recognize as a gross misrepresentation. But is quite consists with his late attitude. For some years past he has lost no opportunity for direct or indirect attack upon me." (Letter from Herbert Spencer to John Fiske dated August 3, 1893. Henry E. Huntington Library, Cat. No. HM 13755. Unpublished)


In the London Times between November 7 and 27, 1899, there is an exchange of letters between Huxley and Spencer over the question of private vs. public land ownership. Spencer's letters were dated November 7, 11, 15, 19 and 27. One of Huxley's letters was dated November 18.

"To hear Herbert Spencer and him sometimes engage in conversational controversy was something to be remembered, even by one as little qualified as myself to form any sound mental reasons for awarding the palm of debate." (Justin McCarthy, M.P., Reminiscences, 2 Vols., Chatto & Windus, London, 1899. Vol. 2, p. 310.)
"I remember Huxley praising him one day, and when I objected he told me that Herbert Spencer had done almost as much for the theory of evolution as Darwin himself. I pointed out that the theory was more or less in the air of the time and that all good minds had had an inkling of it. He admitted that there was some truth in my contention, but stuck to his high estimate of Spencer. I could not agree with him. Coleridge, I argued, had grasped the theory of evolution half a century before Darwin; had even seen in talking of artistic creation that a man grows from the simple to the complex. Huxley seemed interested, but Spencer was a fetish to him." (Frank Harris, Contemporary Portraits, Second Series, Published by the Author, New York, 1919. P. 228)

"I was most interested that your recollection of Huxley was much the same as Mrs. Webb's as expressed in her book, My Apprenticeship. I think the vulgarity comes out even in the Life; but, of course, toned down by skilful filial affection. Mrs. Webb told me that the difference, at a dinner-party, between Spencer's grave courtesy and Huxley's beak and claws was an object lesson in manners." (Letter from Harold J. Laski to Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr., dated July 6, 1925. Quoted in Holmes-Laski Letters, The Correspondence of Mr. Justice Holmes and Harold J. Laski, 1916-1935, 2 Vols., edited by Mark DeWolfe Howe, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1935. Vol. 1, p. 759)

"The two rapidly became intimate. In one sense, it was a friendship between a plenum and a vacuum. Spencer thought busily to keep his head full of speculation. Huxley thought just as busily to keep his head antiseptically free from speculation. Huxley was full of facts. Spencer was full of ideas that craved facts." (William Irvine, Apes, Angels, and Victorians, McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., New York, 1955. P. 30)

"It was necessary that on my biological writings I should have the criticisms of an expert, and these were kindly given to me by Prof. Huxley; but I did not ask his criticisms on my psychological, sociological, and ethical writings, nor on my writings of a miscellaneous kind." (p. 148) "Out of sixteen published volumes he [Huxley] saw the proofs of three only, to which must be added the proofs of some small fragments." (p. 149) (Herbert Spencer, Facts and Comments, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1902)

"... the position he [Huxley] takes, that we have to struggle against or correct the cosmic process, involves the assumption that there exists something in us which is not a product of the cosmic process, and is practically a going back to the old theological notions which put man and nature in antithesis." (Herbert Spencer, letter to J. A. Skilton, June 29, 1893, quoted in David Duncan, Life and Letters of Herbert Spencer, Williams and Norgate, London, 1911. P. 336)
In 1857 and thereabouts, Spencer and Huxley had long walks together. "Involved as the hypothesis of organic evolution was in most of my thinking, it not unfrequently cropped up in our talk, and led to animated discusions in which, having a knowledge of the facts immensely greater than mine, he habitually demolished now this and now that argument which I used. But though continually knocked down, I continually got up again. The principle which he acted upon was that of keeping judgment in suspense in the absence of adequate evidence. But acknowledging, though I did, the propriety of his course, I found myself in this case unable to adopt it. There were, as it seemed to me, but two imaginable possibilities—special creation and progressive development; and since the doctrine of special creation, unsupported by evidence, was also intrinsically incredible, because incongruous with all we know of the order of Nature, the doctrine of development was accepted by me as the only alternative. Hence, fallacious as proved this or the other special reason assigned in support of it, my belief in it perpetually revived." (Auto. I, 505).

In a letter to Spencer, Huxley, who had been reading and criticizing proofs of Spencer's First Principles wrote: "It seems as if all the thoughts in what you have written were my own, and yet I am conscious of the enormous difference your presentation of them makes in my intellectual state. One is thought in the state of hemp yarn, and the other in the state of rope." (Letter from Thomas Henry Huxley to Herbert Spencer, dated September 3, 1860. Quoted in Leonard Huxley, Life and Letters of Thomas Henry Huxley, 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1900. Vol. I, p. 229)

"During the London years T. H. Huxley had held him Patrick Geddes not to waste time reading Spencer; so he read Spencer and seized upon the latter's emphasis on anabolism and katabolism, the processes of building up and tearing down, as fundamental to all forms of life. From this starting point Geddes read and observed, reasoned and guessed, till he convinced himself of a number of things in contradiction to currently held ideas of organic evolution in general, and the evolution of sex in particular." (Philip Boardman, Patrick Geddes, Maker of the Future, The University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, 1944. P. 126)

"Once [between 1874 and 1878] on returning from an inter-term vacation [from the School of Mines in London] nominally devoted to the study of chicken embryos, he reported to T. H. Huxley enthusiastically that in addition to he had found time to read Herbert Spencer's Principles of Biology. "You'd have done far better to spend all your time on embryology!" came the snorting rejoinder. Whereupon Geddes immediately reread Spencer to find out why Huxley disapproved of him ...." (Philip Boardman, Patrick Geddes, Maker of the Future, The University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, 1944. P. 34)
"In my undergraduate days at Oxford, J. Webb was born in 1867. The influence of Thomas Hill Green, whose death had taken place only a few years previously, and whose posthumous Prolegomena to Ethics had just been published, was at its height, and for my own generation of Oxford men the starting-point of our various philosophical developments is usually to be sought in the idealistic criticism of Mill and Herbert Spencer for which Green stood. This is true for the 'realists,' 'personal idealists,' and 'pragmatists' among us ... as well as for those who may seem to be more closely affiliated to Green's own type of philosophy." (Clement C. J. Webb, "Outline of a Philosophy of Religion," in Contemporary British Philosophy, Personal Statements (Second Series), ed. by J. H. Muirhead, pp. 335-359, The Macmillan Company, New York, n.d. Pp. 337-338)

"When I rub my eyes and look at things candidly, it seems evident to me that this world is the sort of world described by Herbert Spencer, not the sort of world described by Hegel or Bergson. At heart these finer philosophers, like Plato, are not seeking to describe the world of our daily plodding and commerce, but to supply a visionary interpretation of it, a refuge from it in some contrasted spiritual assurance, where the sharp facts vanish into a clarified drama or a pleasant trance. Far be it from me to deride the imagination, poetic or dialectical; but after all it is a great advantage for a system of philosophy to be substantially true." (George Santayana, "The Unknowable," The Herbert Spencer Lecture for 1923, The Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1923. P. 4)

"Spencer was not without honour in his own country, yet our national indifference to philosophy and to all systematic thinking, and the subserviency of a great part of our professional philosophers to the great German metaphysicians, have undoubtedly prevented his receiving from his countrymen during his lifetime the full measure of recognition that is due to his splendid services to science and philosophy." (Unsigned, Obituary of Herbert Spencer, Nature, Vol. 69, pp. 155-156, December 17, 1903. P. 155)

"In Ethics I found little help to me; the English Moralists repelled me, Mill and Spencer were used by me and others as mere butts of criticism, Green and Bradley passed over my head, Kant alone seemed to afford a solid framework of ethical theory (but a framework only)." (J. A. Smith, "Philosophy as the Development of the Notion and Reality of Self-Consciousness," in Contemporary British Philosophy, Personal Statements (Second Series), ed. by J. H. Muirhead, pp. 225-244, The Macmillan Company, New York, n.d. P. 229)

IDEALISM

"In fact, when we hear him saying of consciousness that it "contains no element, relation or law that is like any element, relation or law in the external body," it seems to be hardly distinguishable from idealism. And here Mr. Spencer belongs. He is an idealist, though a materialistic idealist." (Augustus Hopkins Strong, D.D., Philosophy and Religion, A. C. Armstrong, New York, 1888. P. 50)

"... the philosophy he was working out when his early death interrupted him is best described, if a brief description is needed, as a reply to Herbert Spencer by a profoundly student of Hume." (R. G. Collingwood, An Autobiography, Oxford University Press, London, 1939. Pp. 15-16)

"In admitting that there is something in our mind, which is not the result of our own & posteriri experience, Mr. Herbert Spencer is a thorough Kantian, ..." (Friedrich Max Müller, "Lectures on Mr. Darwin's Philosophy of Language," Fraser's Magazine, n.s., Vol. 7, pp. 525-541, 1873. P. 539)

"Hence it is that our academic philosophers, who, just now, are followers of Hegel—in accordance with the generalization that "Good German philosophers, when they die, go to Oxford"—....." (C. W. Saleeby, Evolution The Master-Key, Harper & Brothers Publishers, New York, 1906. P. 342)

"I could not accept his [the anatomist Robert Owen's] Platonic notion of an ideal vertebra, of which he considered each actual vertebra an embodiment ...." (Herbert Spencer, in The Life and Letters of Herbert Spencer, edited by David Duncan, 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1908. Vol. 2, p. 316)
"Effectual practice depends on superiority of ideas; methods that answer are preceded by thoughts that are true." (Herbert Spencer. Where does he say this? Social Statics? The Study of Sociology?)

"It is never the knowledge which is the moving agent in conduct; but it is always the feeling which goes along with that knowledge, or is excited by it." (Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1891. P. 359)


"I am glad to see that you take the same view as I do with respect to the supreme importance of true political theory, especially for you in the United States. I do not believe that a true theory will do much good, but one may at any rate say, contrariwise, that an untrue one does a great deal of harm; and at present much mischief is going on among you as a result of untrue theories." (Letter from Herbert Spencer to Edward L. Youmans dated June 13, 1881. Quoted in John Fiske, Edward Livingston Youmans, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. P. 371)
The cover of the Illustrated London News (Vol. 123, December 12, 1903) has a photograph of Herbert Spencer that I had not seen before (January 20, 1977). It is a formal portrait, and a good one. Spencer looks to be in his seventies when it was taken. Under the photo appears the caption "Copyright Photograph, Ernest H. Mills."

Spencer perceived that the incest taboo was not innate. (Vol. I, p. 637, 1st ed.)

Spencer is a very independent thinker. He never cites another theoretician (except, rarely, to disagree with him). He develops his own arguments, buttressing them with ethnographic evidence and fact rather than with scholarly opinions.
"As the concept of "social forces" was introduced by Ward in 1883, it amounted to the first impressive challenge of the fatalistic implications of Herbert Spencer’s rendering of the evolutionary theory. Whether Spencer would have accepted the categorical statement or not, many and for a while the most aggressive of his disciples got the impression from his interpretation of evolution that the development of society is beyond voluntary control. It was supposed to be determined rather by those physical laws of the redistribution of forces found working in the lower scale of nature. It was inferred that human volition can neither hasten nor retard the pace of this social evolution." (Albion W. Small, "Fifty Years of Sociology in the United States," The American Journal of Sociology, Vol. 21, pp. 721-864, 1916. P. 755)

"Until man was emancipated from the subjection to which Spencer and Sumner had consigned him and accorded some share in the control of the evolutionary process, evolution could have no consequential effects on the social sciences. It could describe but it could not prescribe; it could explain but it could not create." (Henry Steele Commager, The American Mind. Yale University Press. New Haven, 1950. P. 203)

"In any series of dependent changes, a small initial difference often works a marked difference in the results.... A hair's-breadth difference in the direction of some soldier's musket at the battle of Arcola, by killing Napoleon, might have changed events throughout Europe; though the social organization in each European country, would have been now very much what it is, yet in countless details it would have been different." (Herbert Spencer, The Principles of Biology, 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1904. Vol. 1, p. 265)

"... governmental evolution is essentially a result of social necessities. On tracing its earliest stages from savage life upwards, it becomes manifest that even a ministry is not the mere invention of a king. It arises everywhere from that augmentation of business which goes along with increase in territory and authority: entailing the necessity for deputing more and more work. Under its special aspect it seems to be wholly a result of the king's private action, but under the general aspect it is seen to be determined by the conditions of his existence. And it is so with governmental institutions at large. Without tracing these further it will suffice to quote the saying of Macintosh—'Constitutions are not made but grow.'" (p. 355) ("What Is Social Evolution?" The Ninteenth Century, Vol. 44, pp. 348-358, ¥ 1898)
Spencer saw the events of human history as the result of the interplay of social forces, rather than the achievement of individuals consciously striving for a result. This is a scientific theory. It says that there is a general flow to the culture process. It makes use of individual as its agents, as it must. But it directs them rather than being directed by them. As an interpretation of the course of events it is sound, and superior to one that makes man the prime mover, because it predicts the outcome of social trends much better than any Great Man Theory would be able to. But there is also a political philosophical component to Spencer's views on this point. He argues that individuals should not attempt to interfere with the normal flow of events because they will only thwart, "even if only temporarily, the orderly course of things. But here his philosophy is inconsistent with his science. In their attempted "interference" with the normal social process individuals are acting only as social forces direct them. They could not act otherwise. Thus Spencer is, in effect arguing that individuals should act in opposition to the determinism that directs them.

"It is only by fulfilling their individual wills ... that citizens produce these aggregate results which exhibit uniformities apparently independent of individual wills.... no such results could be produced did they not fulfill their wills." (Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1891. P. 413)

"To understand any fact in social evolution, we have to see it as resulting from the joint actions of individuals having certain natures. We cannot so understand it without understanding their natures ...." (Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1891. P. 117)

"Nothing comes out of a society but what originates in the motive of an individual, or in the united similar motives of many individuals, or in the conflict of the united similar motives of some having certain interests, with the diverse motives of others whose interests are different." (Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1891. P. 382)

"Each man in whom dissatisfaction is aroused by institutions which have survived from a less civilized past, or whose sympathies make certain evils repugnant to him, must regard his feelings thus excited as units in the aggregate of forces by which progress is to be brought about; and is called on to expend his feelings in appropriate deeds. An analogy will best show how there may be reconciled the two propositions that social evolution is a process conforming to natural laws, and yet that it results from the voluntary efforts of citizens." (Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1891. P. 412)
"Incongruity between character and institutions is the disturbing force, and a revolution is the act of restoring equilibrium. Accidental circumstances modify the process, but do not perceptibly alter the effect. They precipitate; they retard; they intensify or ameliorate; but, let a few years elapse, and the same end is arrived at, no matter what the special events passed through." (Herbert Spencer, Social Statics, John Chapman, London, 1851. P. 433)

"If such and such events had not occurred, say you, the result would have been otherwise; if this or that man had lived, he would have prevented the catastrophe. Do not be thus deceived. These changes are brought about by a power far above individual wills. Men who seem the prime movers, are merely the tools with which it works; and were they absent, it would quickly find others." (Herbert Spencer, Social Statics, John Chapman, London, 1851. P. 33)

"Nothing comes out of a society but what originates in the motive of an individual, or in the united similar motives of many individuals, or in the conflict of the united similar motives of some having certain interests, with the diverse motives of others whose interests are different. Always the power which initiates a change is feeling, separate or aggregated, guided to its ends by intellect; and not even an approach to an explanation of social phenomena can be made, without the thoughts and sentiments of citizens being recognized as factors." (Study, p. 349) 1886 ed., p. 352

"...the thoughts and actions of individuals, being natural factors that arise in the course of the evolution itself, and aid in furthering advancing it, cannot be dispensed with, but must be severally valued as increments of the aggregate force producing change." (Study, p. 365)

"Similarly, before there arise in human nature and human institutions, changes having that permanence which makes them an acquired inheritance for the human race, there must go innumerable recurrences of the thoughts, and feelings, and actions, conducive to such changes. The process cannot be abridged; and must be gone through with due patience. Thus, admitting that for the fanatic some wild anticipation is needful as a stimulus, and recognizing the usefulness of his delusion as adapted to his particular nature and his particular function, the man of higher type must be content with greatly-moderated expectations, while he perseveres with undiminished efforts. He has to see how comparatively little can be done, and yet find it worth while to do that little: so uniting philanthropic energy with philosophic calm." (Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1886. Pp. 402-403)
"I am chiefly concerned, however, to repudiate the conclusion that the "private action of citizens" is needless or unimportant, because the course of social evolution is determined by the natures of citizens, as working under the conditions in which they are placed. To assert that each social change is thus determined, is to assert that all the egocistic and altruistic activities of citizens are factors of the change; and is tacitly to assert that in the absence of any of these—say political aspirations, or the promptings of philanthropy—the change will not be the same. So far from implying that the efforts of each man to achieve that which he thinks best, are unimportant, the doctrine of social evolution implies that such efforts, severally resulting from the natures of the individuals, are indispensable forces." (Herbert Spencer, "A Note on the Preceding Article" actually two, by J. E. Cairnes, The Fortnightly Review, Vol. 17, n.s., pp. 214-216, 1875. P. 215)

"So far from implying that the efforts of each man to achieve that which he thinks best, are unimportant, the doctrine implies that such efforts, severally resulting from the natures of the individuals, are indispensable forces." (Herbert Spencer, The Man versus the State, Watts & Co., London, 1950. P. 137)

"The recognition of these effects of individual differences, in skill, aptitude, intelligence, etc., especially in early stages, may rightly go along with the assertion that all those great components of a society which carry on the various industries, making the life of the whole possible, all those specialised classes which have established and maintained the interdependence of the producing structures, by facilitating and regulating the exchange of their products, have arisen from the play of aggregate forces, constituted of men's desires directed by their respective sets of circumstances." (p. 356) ("What Is Social Evolution?" The Nineteenth Century, Vol. 44, pp. 348-358, 1898)

"Talking one day with the late E. L. Youmans, the great popularizer of Spencerianism in the United States, a man of warm and generous sympathies, whose philosophy seemed to me like an ill-fitting coat he had accidentally picked up and put on, he fell into speaking with much warmth of the political corruption of New York, of the utter carelessness and selfishness of the rich, and of their readiness to submit to it, or to promote it wherever it served their money-getting purposes to do so. He became so indignant as he went on that he raised his voice till he almost shouted. Alluding to a conversation some time before, in which I had affirmed and he had denied the duty of taking part in politics, I said to him, "What do you propose to do about it?" Of a sudden his manner and tone were completely changed, as remembering his Spencerianism, he threw himself back, and replied, with something like a sigh, "Nothing! You and I can do nothing at all. It's all a matter of evolution. We can only wait for evolution. Perhaps in four or five thousand years evolution may have carried men beyond this state of things. But we can do nothing." (Henry George, A Perplexed Philosopher, Robert Schalkenbach Foundation, New York, 1965. P. 136n.)
Despite his personal objection to despotism and his championing of individualism, Spencer saw that the evolution of culture was closely associated with strong autocratic rule. (Vol. II, p. 361).

"In his later writings, particularly in his "Study of Sociology," Mr. Spencer, as already stated, has modified, without retracting, these views on state interfering as put forth in his "Social Statics."" (Lester Frank Ward, Dynamic Sociology, 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1883, Vol. 1, p. 152)


"But, by a strange process of social evolution, what was called individualistic radicalism in 1842 (the year Spencer wrote his The Proper Sphere of Government) had come to be regarded as anti-socialistic conservatism in 1902 (the date of Spencer's last book, Facts and Comments)." (F. J. C. Hearnshaw, "Herbert Spencer and the Individualists," in The Social & Political Ideas of Some Representative Thinkers of the Victorian Age, ed. by F. J. C Hearnshaw, pp. 53-83, George G. Harrap & Co. Ltd., London, 1933, p. 69)

"Spencer did not seem to realize that, in demonstrating the possibility of a social science, in stressing the constant factors in human nature and its terrestrial environment, in depreciating the influence of great men, and, above all, in treating society as akin to an organism, he was laying the axe to the roots of his individualism." (F. J. C. Hearnshaw, "Herbert Spencer and the Individualists," in The Social & Political Ideas of Some Representative Thinkers of the Victorian Age, ed. by F. J. C Hearnshaw, pp. 53-83, George G. Harrap & Co. Ltd., London, 1933, p. 68)

"... many otherwise loyal adherents of Spencerianism have refused to follow their teacher into the extremes of his political thought; and, secondly, because of the opinion, widely diffused among them, that his social doctrines, espoused long before the working out of his general system, have since been cleverly dovetailed into that system, and form no proper part of it." (William Henry Hudson, An Introduction to the Philosophy of Herbert Spencer, revised edition, Watts & Co., London, 1906. P. 66n.)
"And having settled that question of the limited role that government should play to his own satisfaction in his early literary career, it was naturally difficult for him to re-open it, not to say to reverse his conclusion in later years after a more comprehensive survey of the field before him." (Lester Frank Ward, Dynamic Sociology, 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1883. Vol. 1, p. 151)

"...Spencer's early education and thorough individualist influences had emphasized for him the demand for a high degree of individual freedom from social control by state or other agencies of society. Spencer's liberalism, it is to be remembered, was a part of the development of industrial, middle-class capitalism, which did not recognize the dawning aspirations of the working class, nor realize the coming of a larger conception of democracy." (Walter Greenwood Beach, The Growth of Social Thought, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1939. P. 123)

"I am still reading hard; all my spare time in the day and sometimes half the night. I am now approaching the end of Herbert Spencer's system of philosophy. It has been a hard nut to crack, but I wanted first of all to get a good groundwork of the latest science to build upon. And Herbert Spencer must not merely be read; he must be learned." (Letter from Henry Arthur Jones to Emery Walker dated February 19, 1876. Quoted in Doris Arthur Jones, The Life and Letters of Henry Arthur Jones, Victor Gollancz Ltd, London, 1930. P. 39)

"Much of Spencer's way of thinking and many of his ideas have become a part of the very atmosphere we breathe and cannot but accept, and much of his work must form a part of every future system of philosophy that shall attempt the unification of the sciences." (Anonymous, "Herbert Spencer" [obituary], Nature, Vol. 69, pp. 155-156, 1903. P. 156)

...and Oliver Wendell Holmes doubted that "any writer of English except Darwin has done so much to affect our whole way of thinking about the universe." 9


"En la historia del pensamiento de la segunda mitad del siglo pasado constituye un rasgo característico para la catalogación de cada autor su posición respecto de la doctrina de Spencer." (Leopold Von Wiese, Sociología, translated by Rafael Luengo Tapia, Colección Labor, Sección VIII, No. 323, Editorial Labor, S.A., Barcelona, 1932. P. 81)

"You cannot open a competent book in any of three or four departments of thought, but you find the most fruitful discussions turning about the hypotheses of Spencer. I take it that this is one of the greatest possible services of a great man--to produce definitely directed effort, even though his private views go down in the result." (James Mark Baldwin, "Mr. Spencer's Psychology," The American Naturalist, Vol. 31, pp. 553-557, 1897. P. 555)
"About H. Spencer's philosophy, I am so far in agreement with you that on me, as on you, the early readings of his books made an impression that has never left me; though he has latterly fallen out of fashion; and perhaps his close compact reasoning may seem arid to a later generation."


"... I do not think that any one, except a deeply read man, can appreciate the immensity of Spencer's converse with all that man has done in the spread of knowledge, and of its influence in the development of every phase of his advancement from the savage to the highest civilisation." (Letter from Joseph D. Hooker to Inglis Palgrave dated December 23, 1903. Quoted in Leonard Huxley, Life and Letters of Sir Joseph Dalton Hooker, 2 Vols., D. Appleton & Company, New York, 1918. Vol. 2, p. 454)

"No philosopher of modern times, not Kant himself, has exercised in his lifetime so wide a dominion. Only here and there, among men of a very different stamp, in men like Byron or Rousseau or Tolstoi, do we see that strange power of captivating the imagination of an age, of speaking with a voice that goes out into all lands." (D'Arcy Wentworth Thompson, On Aristotle as a Biologist: With a Proemion on Herbert Spencer, The Herbert Spencer Lecture for 1913, 31pp., The Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1913. P. 3)

I spoke with Linda Guttworth, the granddaughter of Joseph Bruder, at the New York Academy of Sciences in October(?), 1969. She is a student of Mervyn Meggitt's, and had told Meggitt that her grandfather had read Spencer, and would occasionally read her passages from Spencer when she was about 10 years old. Mrs. Guttworth said that Joseph Bruder, A. A. Brill (translator of Freud), and Bela Schick (1877-1967) (inventor of the Schick test), were all M.D.'s of central European origin who were interested in social science and who had read Herbert Spencer. Mrs. Guttworth suggested I get in touch with Katherine Schick, widow of Bela Schick, whose address is Park Avenue and 85th Street in New York.
"The better known works of Herbert Spencer also stirred me up. When Herbert Spencer died I wrote for the Saturday Evening Post an account of his life and works, one of the few things I ever asked George Lorimer, the magazine's editor, to print. Herbert Spencer, along with Whitman, Emerson and Dickens, became at the turn of the century one of my spiritual inspirations."


"By the time of his death his ideas, in a modified form no doubt, had become so largely assimilated into our thought and our forms of speech that we had half forgotten their originator." (James Sully, My Life and Friends, T. F. Unwin, Ltd. London, 1918. P. 294)

"We are standing now on heights which his struggles and his labors won for us," wrote Durant, and "we seem to be above him because he has raised us on his shoulders." 179

"The theories of Darwin and Spencer are doubtless not demonstrated; they are to some extent hypothetical, just as all the theories of physical science are to some extent hypothetical, and open to doubt. Judging from the immense numbers of diverse facts which they harmonise and explain, I venture to look upon the theories of evolution and natural selection in their main features as two of the most probable hypotheses ever proposed. I question whether any scientific works which have appeared since the Principia of Newton are comparable in importance with those of Darwin and Spencer, revolutionising as they do all our views of the origin of bodily, mental, moral, and social phenomena." (W. Stanley Jevons, The Principles of Science, 2nd ed. Macmillan and Co., Limited, London, 1900. P. 762)


"Of course, in a general way I quite understand and agree with that Spencer has done but little service to science. But I believe that he has done great service to thinking, and all the mathematicians in the world would not convince me to the contrary, even though they should all deliver their judgment with the magnificent authority of a..." (Letter from George J. Romanes to Charles Darwin, dated February 6, 1880. Mrs. E. Romanes, The Life and Letters of George John Romanes, Longmans, Green, and Co., London, 1896. P. 96) (the unidentified person might be named in this letter as published in Darwin's Life and Letters, where I believe it is included also.)
"There are many of his younger contemporaries—men who were eager students at the time when his earlier works appeared—who owe to his "Essays," to his "Social Statics," and to his "Principles of Psychology" some of the most permanent and fruitful elements of their intellectual equipment. They may not be professed adherents of the Synthetic Philosophy as a whole, they may never even have studied it, but they are just as much Spencerians as other men are Kantians or Aristotelians; that is, they find in the leading ideas of the master the speculative inspiration which determines and directs the march of their own philosophic thought."


"The whole rising generation of naturalists around 1876, when Osborn entered Princeton dropped the Bible and eagerly read Herbert Spencer, whose philosophy and biology became a new gospel; the successive editions and translations of his works were second only to those of Darwin. Among American students Spencer was still supreme as late as 1891 when I came to Columbia. As for his influence among laymen, I well remember Judge Carter, of Fort Bridger, Wyoming, and his shrine of Spencer's complete writings, encased with a photograph of the great closet philosopher. Now Spencer has become merely an historic figure in the history of natural philosophy; he is no longer a living force." (Evolution and Religion in Education. Henry Fairfield Osborn. Charles Scribner's Sons. New York, 1926. P. 72.)

"No other mind in our generation has attempted to grapple so seriously with so many great subjects as Mr. Spencer has done; no other one thinker has so impressed himself upon all serious investigators in each of the great branches of scientific knowledge. Very few professional biologists are more frequently quoted than Mr. Spencer in works on biology; few, if any, professional psychologists are so frequently quoted in works on psychology; few, if any, professional writers on ethics are so frequently quoted in discussions of morals. This one fact is a significant index of Mr. Spencer's range and power. Even if it be true that the expert in each of the sciences mentioned disagrees with Mr. Spencer's conclusions on vital points, it is an astonishing achievement for any one man to have so impressed himself upon the best thought in so many fields of mental activity that all whose life work is concerned with these subjects find it necessary to define their relations to one such comprehensive thinker." (Franklin H. Giddings, Review of Spencer's Principles of Sociology, Vol. 3. Science, Vol. 5, n.s., pp. 732-733, 1897. Pp. 732-733)
"The appeal of Spencer to the generation born after the Civil War was extraordinary. Ardent young minds, for whom the candles of theology were burnt out and who were seeking new light to their feet, were drawn to him irresistibly. Young rebels who had thrown off the guidance of their elders and were bent on discovering fresh paths through the tangle of dead faiths—-independent souls like Hamlin Garland and Jack London and Theodore Dreiser who were to become leaders of the realistic revolt against the genteel tradition in life and letters and faith—went to school to him to prepare themselves for the great work of freeing the American mind from the old theological inhibitions. Young men in colleges no longer read Butler's Analogy, as their fathers had done before the war, but turned with zest to Spencer's Data of Ethics to discover a more scientific theory of conduct. Everywhere the influence of the great Victorian penetrated, and wherever that influence spread the old theological prepossessions disintegrated. It is probably no exaggeration to say that Spencer laid out the broad highway over which American thought traveled in the later years of the century." (Vernon L. Parrington, Main Currents in American Thought, Vol. 3: The Beginnings of Critical Realism in America: 1860-1920, Harcourt, Brace, & Co., Inc., New York, 1930. Pp. 197-198)

"Instinctively the new writers of the latter half of the 19th century began a search for older allies. There were a few of these to be found in America, but not enough of them to serve as the basis of a new literary movement. For most of their support the rebels had to look eastward across the Atlantic. They were especially attracted by the English evolutionary scientists and pamphleteers. Most of the young writers read the works of this whole English group, beginning with Darwin, whose observations were too rigorously set forth to please their slipshod literary tastes. They could not find much to use in Darwin's books, except his picture of natural selection operating through the struggle for life; most of their Darwinism was acquired at second hand. Huxley they seem to have read with less veneration but more interest, chiefly because of his arguments against the Bible as revealed truth and because of his long war with the Protestant clergy. Young writers, feeling that the churches were part of a vast conspiracy to keep them silent, believed that Huxley was fighting their battle. It was Herbert Spencer, however, who deeply affected their thinking. Spencer's American popularity during the last half of the nineteenth century is something without parallel in the history of philosophic writing." (Malcom Cowley, "Naturalism in American Literature," in Evolutionary Thought in America, edited by Stow Persons, pp. 300-333. Yale University Press, New Haven, 1950. P. 302)

"There remains room for a full biographical study of Spencer which places him and his work in their time and draws on a wide reading of the literature about him as well as his relationships, e.g., with Lewes, George Eliot, his American promoters, and the wide current of nineteenth-century naturalism. He was as pervasive in the decades in which he flourished as a Malthus or a Chambers was in his own." (Robert M. Young, Darwin's Metaphor, Nature's Place in Victorian Culture, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1985. P. 270n.)
"Among the many letters of congratulation and praise received by my father, none gave him keener pleasure than a letter from Herbert Spencer, probably in 1891, asking him to go and see him. The Times criticism of the play The Dancing Girl by Jones, first produced on the London stage in 1891, referred to the lines where Sybil Craig, in speaking of Herbert Spencer, says, "I've found out." Guisebury, "What?" Sybil, "That he teaches exactly the same thing as Dante. Dante says, 'In His will is thy peace,' Spencer says, 'You must bring yourself into perfect agreement with your environment or get crushed!'" Herbert Spencer was very pleased at this quotation from his teaching, and H. A. J. derived the keenest pleasure from the talk he had with the great man. He told me how, as a boy not out of his teens, he had commenced reading all his works, and how deeply and lastingly he was indebted to their teaching for his intellectual development. My father said constantly, "Any clear thinking I've done I owe to Herbert Spencer." (Doris Arthur Jones, The Life and Letters of Henry Arthur Jones, Victor Gollancz Ltd, London, 1930. P. 114) (Jones wrote 87 plays between 1869 and 1922, of which 49 were performed.)

"The last time I saw Spencer was in his bedroom at Brighton, and amid the details of our conversation, every one of which is naturally fresh in my memory, there is one that I specially recall. Just back from America, I told him of the deep interest I found everywhere taken there in his work, and spoke of the immense range of his influence upon the world's thought. His reply was: "I am satisfied; I am satisfied." (William Henry Hudson, An Introduction to the Philosophy of Herbert Spencer, revised edition, Watts & Co., London, 1906. P. 24)

"... Paul More was, as far as he was aware, wholly converted to romanticism, while nevertheless deeply impressed by the philosophy of Herbert Spencer ...." (p. 63) "... the really characteristic qualities of their author ... which at the same time had made him a disciple of Herbert Spencer." (p. 66) (Robert Shafer, Paul Elmer More and American Criticism, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1935)

"The ideas of which Mr. Spencer is the greatest living exponent are to-day running like the weft through all the warp of modern thought, and out from their abundant suggestiveness have come the opinions of many who do not profess any especial "allegiance" to Mr. Spencer ...." (John Fiske, "Sociology and Hero-Worship," The Atlantic Monthly, Vol. 47, pp. 75-84, 1881. P. 77)

"I have just been reading two essays of Herbert Spencer's, one on the Nebular Hypothesis, the other on 'Illogical Geology,' which are masterly; subtle; convincing beyond anything of the kind I have ever read." (Letter from Anne Gilchrist to William Haines dated March 18, 1867. Quoted in Herbert Harlakenden Gilchrist, editor, Anne Gilchrist, Her Life and Writings, T. Fisher Unwin, London, 1887. P. 166)
Leonard Courtney wrote in his Journal of an audience granted by King Edward to about 25 distinguished foreigners: "As we trooped out Professor Stein, head of the Berne Bureau, was telling me what an ardent disciple he was of Herbert Spencer, and how his daughter had translated the Autobiography." (G. P. Gooch, The Life of Lord Leonard Courtney, Macmillan, London, 1920. P. 550)

"This first visit to the theatre [In London in 1871, when he was 18 years old] made a tremendous impression. H. Arthur Jones said, "I left off writing a novel I was engaged upon, and gave most of my leisure to seeing plays and reading Herbert Spencer." (Doris Arthur Jones, The Life and Letters of Henry Arthur Jones, Victor Gollancz Ltd, London, 1930. P. 34)

"Before the days of Spencer the world of scientific thought was mostly without form and void.... / Guided by the pole star of Evolution, Spencer sailed out alone on the ocean of Speculation and discovered a new empire of Law ...." (George Jacob Holyoake, Bygones Worth Remembering, 2 Vols., T. Fisher Unwin, London, 1905. Vol. 2, pp. 34-35)


An anonymous reviewer of Spencer's Autobiography wrote: "... an intellectual system ... that has entered into the very fibre of the age ...." (Anonymous, "Review of Herbert Spencer's An Autobiography, The Athenaeum, No. 3993, pp. 583-584, May 7, 1904. P. 583)
"Since the 1880's, the temptation to dismiss Spencer because of his advocacy of this erroneous mechanism [the inheritance of acquired characteristics] has overwhelmed most biologists, psychologists, and historians." (Robert M. Young, "The Development of Herbert Spencer's Concept of Evolution," Actes du XIe Congrès International d'Histoire des Sciences, Warsaw, 1967, Vol. 2, pp. 273-278. P. 276)

"Mr Spencer's doctrine of evolution in all its numerous ramifications is absolutely dependent upon a belief in the hereditary transmission of acquired characteristics." (Unsigned, "The Exploded Quack," Blackwood's Magazine, Vol. 201, pp. 717-727, 1917. P. 724)

Early in his thinking Spencer thought he had found in the (supposed) inheritance of acquired characteristics a mechanism sufficient to account for evolution. Thus having what he deemed an adequate explanation, he felt no need to cast about for one. Had he felt such a need, this might have led him to the principle of natural selection.

Spencer engaged in a "protracted controversy" (Goldenweiser) with August Weismann over the theory of the inheritance of acquired characteristics.

"Spencer's views pose a revealing contrast to Darwin's. He firmly believed that the inheritance of acquired characteristics was far more important in the highest stages of evolution than natural selection. He related this point to his grand scheme of universal evolution and its application to man and society; his scheme in fact depended on the validity of use-inheritance. His essay on Darwin's retreat was marvelously catty, and he developed the point further in a series of essays which began with one entitled "The Inadequacy of Natural Selection." Spencer pointed out the difficulties involved in making the analogy from artificial to natural selection and reproduced the usual objections based on the uselessness of incipient structures and on swamping, but he had a more basic motive for opposing natural selection in the evolution of man, and it is for this reason that he returned again and again to the issue: 'I have, indeed, been led to suspend for a short time my proper work, only by consciousness of the transcendent importance of the question at issue. As I have before contended, a right answer to the question whether acquired characters are or are not inherited, underlies right beliefs, not only in Biology and Psychology, but also in Education, Ethics, and Politics.'" (Robert M. Young, Darwin's Metaphor, Nature's Place in Victorian Culture, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1985. P. 118)
INHERITANCE OF ACQUIRED CHARACTERERS

January 26, p. 124;

In the pages of The Athenaeum in 1884 (March 1, pp. 282-283; March 8, pp. 312-313; March 15, pp. 348-349; March 22, pp. 378-380; March 29, pp. 411-412) George J. Romanes, an anonymous reviewer, Samuel Butler and E. Ray Lankester engaged in a prolonged debate over priority, and the acknowledgement of priority, regarding the theory advocated by Butler that mental traits developed during life and proved to be adaptive, could be passed on to offspring, and thus become established in the process of organic evolution. Credit had been variously claimed for Darwin, Charles Kingsley, Prof. Hering, etc. Then (April 5, p. 446) Spencer put an end to the discussion by quoting nine passages from the 1855 edition of his Principles of Psychology proposing this mechanism well before the others had.

"I still hold that inheritance of functionally-produced modifications is the chief factor throughout the higher stages of organic evolution, bodily as well as mental (see 'Principles of Biology,' § 166), while I recognize that the truth that throughout the lower stages survival of the fittest is the chief factor, and in the lowest almost exclusive factor." (Herbert Spencer, "Mental Evolution in Animals," Letter to The Athenaeum, No. 2945, p. 446, 1884. P. 446)

"... the inheritance of acquired characters, which it is now the fashion in the biological world to deny, ..." (Herbert Spencer, "The Inadequacy of Natural Selection," The Contemporary Review, Vol. 63, pp. 153-166, 1893. P. 454)


"Though The Origin of Species proved to me that the transmission of acquired characters cannot be the sole factor in organic evolution, as I had assumed in Social Statics and in The Principles of Psychology, published in pre-Darwinian days, yet I have never wavered in the belief that it is a factor and an all-important factor." ("Weismannism Once More." The Contemporary Review. October, 1894. P. 195)

Spencer speaks of a "nomadic instinct" (Vol. II, p. 271). Believing as he did in the inheritance of acquired characteristics, it was difficult for him to decide when an attitude or a manner of life had ceased to be purely cultural and had passed into the genetic makeup of a people.
Spencer's belief in the inheritance of acquired characteristics did not leave his social theory unmodified. He believed, for example, that a mode of life, or a terrain which favored a diffuse form of government would, over many generations, foster feelings of independence on the people, these attitudes would become part of the biological nature of the population. He wrote: "... the specialties of character which ... led certain kinds of men in early stages to ... resist, even under stress of war, the rise of single political heads, are innate ..." (Vol. II, p. 368).

But only in very rare instances does he attribute any cultural form to biology. Most of the time he derives them from the exigencies of social life.

Spencer's reliance on the factor of the inheritance of acquired characteristics was not so separate from natural selection as Spencer himself supposed. After all, the inheritance of acquired characteristics is one of the sources of variation. In addition to "fortuitous" variations of unknown origin, there are those variations in members of a species which are due to physical adaptation of the organism to its environment functionally produced during the life of the animal involved. The theory of the inheritance of acquired characteristics states that such variations (or modifications) can be transmitted to the next generation, and thus become the raw material for evolution. But these variations become established and extended throughout a population only by the agency of natural selection. —RLC

"Mind, I have no a priori objection to the transmission of functional modifications whatever. In fact, as I told you, I should rather like it to be true. But I argued against the assumption (with Darwin as I do with / you) of the operation of a factor which, if you will forgive me for saying so, seems as far off support by trustworthy evidence now as ever it was." (Letter from Thomas Henry Huxley to Herbert Spencer dated June 4, 1886. Quoted in Leonard Huxley, Life and Letters of Thomas Henry Huxley, 2 Vols., Macmillan and Co., Limited, London, 1900. Vol. 2, pp. 133-134)


A. J. Balfour said that Spencer had applied the theory of the inheritance of acquired characteristics "so persistently in every department of his theory of man, that were it to be upset, it is scarcely too much to say that his Ethics, his Psychology, and his Anthropology would all tumble to the ground with it." (A. J. Balfour, address as Lord Rector of Glasgow University, November, 1891, quoted in David Duncan, Life and Letters of Herbert Spencer, 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1908. Vol. 2, p. 46)
... according to Mr. Spencer ..., the transmission of an improvement of natural capacity, mental as well as bodily, by exercise and training is not only a reality but a chief determining factor in the evolution of the race. It is by this agency that each generation transmits (on the average) a slight increment of brain-power to its successor, and that the continuous exercise of intelligence, of moral feeling, and so forth, through a succession of generations leads to a perceptible improvement of these powers."


(Alfred Russel Wallace, "Are Individually Acquired Characters Inherited?", Fortnightly Review, Vol. 59, pp. 490-498, 655-668, 1893. A good rebuttal of Spencer's contention that it is necessary to rely heavily on the inheritance of acquired characteristics in order to explain organic evolution.)

"I had a note from Spencer the other day asking information about Garden plants—he is still floundering on at acquired habits, &c. He makes no progress. In my apprehension, if it were a truth Nature would not be so d__d sensitive about it." (Letter from Joseph D. Hooker to T. H. Huxley dated April 16, 1893. Quoted in Leonard Huxley, Life and Letters of Sir Joseph Dalton Hooker, 2 Vols., D. Appleton & Company, New York, 1918. Vol. 2, p. 348)

"If it is true that such characters are transmitted, then the foundation of the theory is secure; but the transmission of acquired characters is by no means proved. Herbert Spencer has preferred to occupy himself in building a magnificent edifice upon this foundation, rather than employ his acute intellect in testing its firmness and security in every possible way." (Edward Bagnall Poulton, "Theories of Evolution," an address delivered to the Boston Society of Natural History on February 7, 1894, & printed in the Proceedings of the Society, Vol. 26, p. 327; in Essays on Evolution 1889-1907, pp. 95-119, The Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1908. P. 99)

"It [Spencer's argument] is wholly fallacious in assuming that this "factor" [the inheritance of acquired characteristics] and "natural selection" are at all exclusive of, or even separate from, each other. The factor thus assumed to be new is simply one of the subordinate cases of heredity. But heredity is the central idea of natural selection. Therefore natural selection includes and covers all the causes which can possibly operate through inheritance. There is thus no difficulty whatever in referring it to the same one factor [natural selection] whose solitary dominion Mr. Spencer has plucked up courage to dispute." (The Duke of Argyll [George Douglas Campbell], Organic Evolution Cross-Examined, John Murray, London, 1898. Pp. 11-12)
"Erasmus Darwin in England, however, has the priority, in that he first brought forward the principles which Lamarck more effectively supported. But to Herbert Spencer belongs the chief credit, because he has taken that part of the earlier theory which acceptable to modern biological thought, and upon this basis has formed his great theory of evolution. Lamarck believed in an innate tendency toward perfection in animals. Now, that is a view which very few zoologists at the present time, if any, would dare to sustain. In fact, an evolution due to an innate principle of perfection is not very far removed from special creation, a doctrine which opposes any theory of evolution. Herbert Spencer, therefore, rejecting all those elements of Lamarck, which the scientific world could not possibly accept, has taken that which was likely to commend itself to science, and upon it has formed his great theory of evolution; so that the Lamarckian Theory, as presented to the world to-day, comes before it in Spencerian language, and in the closest relation to Spencerian thought. In saying this, however, I do not by any means intend to be understood as supporting Spencer's theories or views upon which he bases them." (Edward Bagnall Poulton, "Theories of Evolution," an address delivered to the Boston Society of Natural History on February 7, 1894, Th Print in the Proceedings of the Society, Vol. 26, p. 327; in Essays on Evolution 1889-1907, pp. 95-119, The Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1908. P. 98)

"Therefore it would really be more correct to designate the former hypothesis [the inheritance of acquired characteristics] by the name either of Erasmus Darwin, or, still better, of Herbert Spencer." (George John Romanes, Darwin and After Darwin. Vol. 1: The Darwinian Theory, third edition, The Open Court Publishing Company, Chicago, 1901. P. 255)

"... Herbert Spencer was perhaps the keenest and most convinced adherer of the affirmative position [of the inheritance of acquired characteristics] ..." (J. Arthur Thomson, Heredity, John Murray, London, 1908. P. 205)

"... Herbert Spencer was right when he said that no one can be an evolutionist who does not believe that new traits somewhere and somehow acquired can be transmitted, otherwise there could be no change whatever in any organism from generation to generation or from age to age; in a word there would be no evolution." (Luther Burbank, His Methods and Discoveries and Their Practical Application. Vol. 2, Luther Burbank Press, New York and London, 1914. P. 32)

"... his [Spencer's] whole philosophical system [sic] depended on the truth of the doctrine [of the inheritance of acquired characteristics]." (Emanuel Rädl, The History of Biological Theories, translated from the German by E. J. Hatfield, Oxford University Press, London, 1930. P. 249)
The instability of the homogeneous, which Spencer referred to as one of the motive principles of evolution in general, and which he invoked, for instance, in seeking to account for the differentiation of society into nobles and freemen, seems to me to be a false principle altogether. After all, it took a million years of culture history before this particular social differentiation was established. What has characterized the homogeneous is its stability. (RLC)

"... our existing industrial system is a product of existing human nature, and can be improved only as fast as human nature improves." (Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1891. P. 254)

"... the impracticability of better forms [of industrial organization] results from the imperfections of existing human nature, moral and intellectual." (Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1891. P. 250)

"... if changed modes of life change the characters of citizens, their changed characters presently cause responsive changes in their institutions." (Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1891. P. 412)

"... before there arise in human nature and human institutions, changes having that / permanence which makes them an acquired inheritance for the human race, there must go innumerable recurrences of the thoughts, and feelings, and actions, conducive to such changes. The process cannot be abridged; and must be gone through with due patience." (Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1891. Pp. 402–403)

"With a given phase of human character there must, to maintain equilibrium, go an adapted class of institutions, and a set of thoughts and sentiments in tolerable harmony with those institutions." (Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1891. P. 395)
"A fresh influence brought into play on a society, not only affects its members directly in their acts, but also indirectly in their characters. Continuing to work on their characters generation after generation, and altering by inheritance the feelings which they bring into social life at large, this influence alters the intensities and bearings of all other influences throughout the society." (Herbert Spencer, *The Study of Sociology*, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1891. P. 106)

"... the increasing action and reaction of institutions and character, each slowly modifying the other through successive generations." (Herbert Spencer, *The Study of Sociology*, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1891. P. 337)
INTELLECTUAL CHARACTER

"... his patient, powerful, and comprehensive intellect ...."

"... the greatest thinker our planet has ever known ...."

"... in my opinion Herbert Spencer possessed the finest brain and the most marvellous intellect ever yet vouchsafed to human being." (Grant Allen, "Personal Reminiscences of Herbert Spencer," The Forum, Vol. 35, pp. 610-628, 1904. P. 610)

"... his life was signalised by absolute consecration to the pursuit of truth, by magnanimous disinterestedness as to rewards ...." (J. Arthur Thomson--Herbert Spencer. J. M. Dent & Co. London, 1906. p. ix)

It might perhaps be said of Spencer that he was too ready to measure the theoretical limits of human knowledge by the actual limits of his own. This comes out in the last section of Ch. 6A, "The Dynamic Element in Life," in The Principles of Biology.

"No man ever held more tenaciously than he to a judgment because it was his; it is the "defect of his quality" of invincible resolution." (J. M. Roberston, Explorations, Watts & Co., London, n.d. (1923 ca.). P. 133)

"There is no doubt that Spencer is the profoundest thinker of all these men [Lewes, Darwin, Huxley, Tyndall, etc.] but Darwin impresses me with his strength more than any man I have ever seen." (Letter from John Fiske to Abby Morgan Brooks, November 13, 1873. Quoted in Ethel F. Fiske [sic], The Letters of John Fiske, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1940. P. 271)

"His [Spencer's] mind seems to us eminently a constructive one, scarcely rivalled in its power of linking together vast regions of phenomena by some deep-reaching principle, but less apt at recognising the limitations and counteractions of a principle in any given instance." (James Sully, "Mr Spencer's Essays," The Examiner, July 4, 1874. Pp. 710-711. P. 710)

"Everything he [Spencer] read was grist for his mill. (He did not really read books; he mined them.)" (Robert A. Nisbet, Social Change and History, Oxford University Press, New York, 1969. P. 200)
"I have given up literary criticism, and hand on my pen to younger men. Two, perhaps three, contemporary English writers are worthy to attempt it. Elizabeth Barrett Browning ...; Herbert Spencer, who is not a good writer, but who is the deepest thinker in Europe; / and then George Eliot ...." (Letter from Hippolyte Taine to Charles Ritter dated July 19, 1877. Quoted in Life and Letters of H. Taine, 3 Vols., abridged and translated from the French by E. Sparvel-Bayly, Archibald Constable & Co Ltd, London, 1908. Vol. 3, pp. 184-185)


"In these days of increasingly straitened specialism, it is well that we should feel the influence of a thinker whose powers of generalisation have seldom been equalled and perhaps never surpassed." (C. Lloyd Morgan, "Mr Herbert Spencer's Biology," Natural Science, Vol. 13, pp. 377-383, 1898. P. 377)

"Of historical and literary knowledge, such as one usually gets from books, Spencer / had a great deal, and of an accurate and well-digested sort; he had some incomprehensible way of absorbing it through the pores of the skin,--at least, he never seemed to read books." (John Fiske, "Reminiscences of Huxley," pp. 199-226, in Essays Historical and Literary, 2 Vols., The Macmillan Company, New York, 1902. Vol. 2, pp. 205-206)

Spencer had " ... a mind which proved itself to be one of the most powerful and original that the world has ever known ...." (F. J. C. Hearnshaw, "Herbert Spencer and the Individualists," in The Social & Political Ideas of Some Representative Thinkers of the Victorian Age, ed. by F. J. C. Hearnshaw, pp. 53-83, George G. Harrap & Co. Ltd., London, 1933. P. 57)

"As we have referred to the religious convictions of intellectual giants like Clerk Maxwell and Lord Kelvin, so we would in fairness illustrate a different position by reference to Herbert Spencer, who also belonged to the kingdom of genius. Disagree with his views as one may, one cannot doubt either the magnitude of his intellect or his passionate sincerity." (J. Arthur Thomson, Introduction to Science, Henry Holt and Company, New York, 1911. P. 217)
"I cannot help feeling some regret that Mr. Spencer has not adhered more closely to the resolution above expressed [In a letter to Edward L. Youmans dated April 10, 1866], not to waste time and strength in controversies. His rejoinders are always delightful to read, but they must often have consumed hours which had been better devoted to the great work." (John Fiske, Edward Livingston Youmans, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. P. 209n.)

"If an abstract logical concept could come to life, its life would be like Spencer's,—the same definiteness of exclusion and inclusion, the same bloodlessness of temperament, the same narrowness of intent and vastness of extent, the same power of applying itself to numberless instances." (William James, Memories and Studies, Longmans, Green, and Co., New York, 1911. P. 141)


"Nature, in making him, had concentrated all her energies, so to speak, on intellect. And she succeeded wonderfully. He was pure intellect, and little more: the apotheosis of reason in a human organism." (Grant Allen, "Personal Reminiscences of Herbert Spencer," The Forum, Vol. 35, pp. 610-628, 1904. P. 611)

"He [Herbert Spencer] possessed the rare ability to grasp the whole field of knowledge and to co-ordinate its elements into a unified whole. Probably only Aristotle, among all the world-renowned intellectuals, was his peer as a thinker." (Newell LeRoy Sims, The Problem of Social Change, Thomas Y. Crowell Company, New York, 1939. P. 82)

Speaking of sight-seeing: "... not looking at things through the spectacles of authority, I often find but little to admire where the world admires, or professes to admire, a great deal." (Letter from Herbert Spencer to Edward L. Youmans dated May 3, 1868. Quoted in John Fiske, Edward Livingston Youmans, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. P. 254)

"The annals of British philosophy can hardly present a similar instance of laborious perseverance in a sphere where no profit and very scant honour is to be won, under external difficulties so great, and, for the whole of his [Spencer's] early life, in the face of discouragement and neglect so oppressive." (Frederic Harrison, Realities and Ideals, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1908. P. 390)

"... his [Spencer's] power of separating the essential from the accidental, as well as his success in grasping the main features of a subject divested of frivolous and subordinate details." (p. 775) "... he possesses a thinking faculty of rare comprehensiveness as well as acuteness ...." (pp. 775-776) (Anonymous, Review of Illustrations of Progress by Herbert Spencer, The Atlantic Monthly, Vol. 13, pp. 775-777, 1864)

"When, further, we have realized the supreme originality and abnormal capacity of the mind of Herbert Spencer..." (J. M. Robertson, Explorations, Watts & Co., London, n.d. (ca. 1923). P. 120)

"Always I was more originative than receptive. Occupation with other people's thoughts was so much less interesting than occupation with my own." (Auto., I, 146; xxi

"He [Spencer] likes to walk and to talk and to teach, and will sit down in the wet anywhere, and at any time, to give an explanation. He is a good teacher, but it is late—that last of 1878—late to be still taking lessons." (Letter from Edward L. Youmans to his sister, Eliza A. Youmans, dated December 31, 1878. Quoted in John Fiske, Edward Livingston Youmans, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. P. 355)

"He has none of the Romantic's love of the unique, the individual, the inexpressible; for him the unrelated fact is valueless, even irritating." (J. W. Burrow, "Herbert Spencer: The Philosopher of Evolution." History Today, Vol. 8, pp. 676-683, 1958. P. 681.)

"Again, all must feel that it is not merely to a man that homage is being done; it is rather to a great mind .... It is this brain-power, conceived to a large extent as impersonal, that we would recognize and honor. Mr. Spencer's personality is, as it were, swallowed up in his intellectuality." (Remarks prepared by Lester F. Ward for the Spencer Farewell Dinner, but unspoken for lack of time—the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher, who preceded Ward on the program, spoke longer than expected. Quoted in Edward L. Youmans, editor, Herbert Spencer on the Americans and The Americans on Herbert Spencer, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1883. Pp. 76-77)
"Another new acquaintance was Mr. Mayall, an English microscopist; he gave me accounts of his visit to the Louvre with Herbert Spencer, who, after looking steadily at the "Immaculate Conception" of Murillo, said, "I cannot like a painted figure that has no visible means of support."" (Autobiography of Andrew Dickson White, 2 Vols., The Century Co., New York, 1914. Vol. 2, p. 417)

"In Spencer's power of getting at broad general truths we find a sufficient answer to the somewhat captious objection that in matters of detail he often errs. Every specialist, I suspect, can find mistakes in Herbert Spencer's detailed references to special subjects. But his mistakes are never such as to affect the truth of his general views." (Richard A. Proctor, "Herbert Spencer as a Thinker," The Open Court, Vol. 1, pp. 145-147, 1887-88. P. 145)

"Not until setting down as above the successive stages of thought, was I myself aware how naturally each stage had prepared the way for the next, and how each additional conclusion increased the mental proclivity towards further conclusions lying in the same direction. It now seems that there was an almost inevitable transition to that coherent body of beliefs which soon took place." (Auto. II, 13)

"There are some minds to which the marvellous and the unaccountable strongly appeal, and which even resent any attempt to bring the genesis of them within comprehension. There are other minds which, partly by nature and partly by culture, have been led to dislike a quiescent acceptance of the unintelligible; and which push their explorations until causation has been carried to its confines. To this last order of minds mine, from the beginning, belonged." (Auto, I, 177)

"... he always seemed to me to be like those great chess players, whose far-sighted combinations of movement and position amaze and perplex the ordinary professors of the game, and to be of all thinkers, ancient or modern, the one whose power of analysing, decomposing, and combining the complex web of Matter, Motion, and Force, is the most incontestable and assured ...." (John Beattie Crozier, "Mr. Herbert Spencer and the Danger of Specialism," The Fortnightly Review, Vol. 75, n.s., pp. 105-120, 1904. P. 106)

"La verdad es, que Spencer evadía y desdeñaba toda investigación profunda. Quien mida el valor de las obras espirituales según su riqueza en ideas profundas e intuiciones de una verdad inefable, podrá juzgar trivial al filósofo de Derby. Siempre se mantiene en la superficie. Pero ¿qué relaciones más grandiosas descubre en esta misma superficie? ¿qué nexos de lo cósmico con los procesos vitales, con la vida espiritual y social?" (Leopold Von Wiese, Sociología, Colección Labor, Sección VIII, No. 323, Editorial Labor, Barcelona, 1932. Pp. 76-77)
"When we have studied his works very closely, we find ourselves impressed, not only by his superior science, by the immense variety of his precise and positive information, now almost indispensable to the philosopher, but especially by the firmness of his thought, by his self-mastery, by his solidity of method, and his lucidity of exposition. His mind is drilled and disciplined by scientific research; he does better than descant upon method, he practices it." (Th. Ribot, *English Psychology*, Translated from the French, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1897. [Original French edition ca.1871/ Pp. 124-125)

(He could buttress them with supporting evidence.)

Spencer had extraordinary powers of generalization and synthesis. With regard to this characteristic of Spencer's Galton wrote: "The power of Spencer's mind that I most admired, was that of widely-founded generalisations. Whenever doubt was hinted as to the sufficiency of his grounds for making them, he was always ready to pour out a string of examples that seemed to have been, if not in his theatre of consciousness when he spoke, at all events in an ante-chamber of it, whence they could be summoned at will." (In Duncan, p. 502)

As Lester F. Ward pointed out (in words not quite compact enough to quote) Spencer's preeminence as a philosopher lay in the fact that he combined and extraordinary knowledge of facts, with unexcelled, even unequalled, powers of synthesizing and generalizing these facts. Ward noted that this combination is very rare in philosophy; the best analytical minds or synthetic minds generally are not well acquainted with facts, while the minds who take pains to acquire vast information, seldom can integrate and generalize it.

"Being ... an impatient reader, even of things which in large measure interest me and meet with a general acceptance, it has always been out of the question for me to go on reading a book the fundamental principles of which I entirely dissent from." (Auto. I, 253)

"His [Spencer's] mastery of all branches of human knowledge has been justly styled "encyclopedic." His causality has never been equaled. To him were thus secured the two essential conditions for accomplishing the permanent object of philosophy—the synthesis of science. Without the comprehensive survey which his laborious investigations have secured for him, his great combining powers would have been profitless; without those powers, no museum of facts, however well learned, would have yielded the broad principles of a cosmical philosophy." (Lester F. Ward, *Dynamic Sociology*, 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. Vol. 1, p. 142)
"If we compare Herbert Spencer, in any department of science, with some chief master in that department, we find him at once less and greater: less in knowledge of details and in mastery of facts and methods; greater in that he sees outside and beyond the mere details of that special subject, and recognizes the relation of its region of inquiry to the much wider domain over which his own philosophy extends." (Richard A. Proctor, "Herbert Spencer as a Thinker," The Open Court, Vol. 1, pp. 145-147, 1887-88. P. 145)

"In considering the philosophy of Herbert Spencer, I scarcely know whether I am more moved by his strength and power or by his grace and versatility, until I reflect that these latter qualities are but tokens of the former. He could not pass with so firm and free a tread over so wide a range of thought were it not for the energy of mind which has enabled him to take all thought for his domain." (Richard A. Proctor, "Herbert Spencer as a Thinker," The Open Court, Vol. 1, pp. 145-147, 1887-88. P. 145)

"Nevertheless, it is doubtful if anyone could have reached better logical conclusions by the use of Spencer's methods, and the healthy skepticism which one may entertain regarding his conclusions should not prevent one from having the highest respect for the constructive logic and the brilliant fertility of imagination displayed in Spencer's history of society." (Harry Elmer Barnes, "Some Typical Contributions of English Sociology to Political Theory," The American Journal of Sociology, Vol. 27, pp. 289-324, 1921. P. 307)

In 1881 the British Association for the Advancement of Science met in Escrick. Spencer attended. At a party during the meetings Liddell apparently overheard this: "Hostess to Herbert Spencer: 'I shall always believe that flowers have consciousness.' Herbert Spencer: 'If you are determined to adhere to the proposition that it is possible to dissociate the existence of consciousness from the physiological processes of nervous organisation, I must differ from you entirely.'" (A. G. C. Liddell, Notes from the Life of an Ordinary Mortal. John Murray, London, 1911. P. 194)

"In later days Morley never tired of talking about the afternoon dinner parties at Blackheath (the home of John Stuart Mill). Once, he told me, Mill invited Herbert Spencer to expound the fundamental ideas of his philosophy. When the dinner was over the exposition took place. It lasted twenty minutes. The host was very much pleased and remarked to Morley on Spencer's powers of expression. Morley agreed; but Fawcett (an economist), an intensely practical person, was horribly bored." (F. W. Hirst, Early Life & Letters of John Morley, 2 Vols., Macmillan and Co., Limited, London, 1927. Vol. 1, p. 53)
"One thing, probably, he lost by his refusal to undergo a university training—the correction which university intercourse might conceivably have supplied to the one-sidedness which in him was the concomitant of abnormal force of purpose. He was too apt, like most energetic minds, to be the sworn partisan of his hypotheses, bringing to bear on them a much less searching criticism than he gave to those of other men. Could he have had this corrected without suffering that loss of power which so often seems to follow on a university life, the gain to him and to us all would have been great." (J. M. Robertson, Explorations, Watts & Co., London, n.d. (ca. 1923). P. 115)

"It is marvelous that a single mind should have been able to make so many happy hits in so rapid and, in a good sense, superficial survey of all these fields—psychology, biology, and sociology. But it was, I think, rather that he had a stupendously great idea than that he had a stupendously great mind. He was armed with the thought which all the natural sciences are tending to prove true; but the same sciences are showing that almost all the ways in which he took this idea to work were not true. This means that Mr. Spencer's personal tendencies were in the direction of his gifts, toward a deductive, hypothetical, inexact way of treating scientific details." (James Mark Baldwin, "Mr. Spencer's Psychology," The American Naturalist, Vol. 31, pp. 553-557, 1897. P. 556)

"He did not live and write to please the crowd; he lived and wrote what he believed to be right and true. He had no cowardly fear of majorities. He knew how to "stand up straight before God." He not only accomplished a work "unexampled in the history of human thought," but he also led a moral life. First and foremost in his marvellous personality was his marvellous mind—probably the greatest the world has ever seen. Sitting by his side and watching the magic of his intellect, was to see difficult problems illumined as with x-rays. His presence produced the impression, not so much of dignity, as of serenity born of his vast knowledge (not of the consciousness of it, but of the knowledge itself.) In whatever department of thought, every worker, whether he knows it or not, is agreeing or disagreeing with Herbert Spencer." (E. T. C. Werner, Autumn Leaves, An Autobiography, Kelly & Walsh, Limited, Shanghai, 1928. Pp. 635-636)

"Among Philosophers, as among scientific men, there are original and independent minds, of an order above those who explain, comment upon, and develop truths already discovered or foreseen, and make them known to all. These original minds are, so to speak, creators, who are felt, on approaching them, to be like men of another race, in power, depth, and unity of thought. Whether their discoveries remain permanent acquisitions, or whether they only give a new aspect to insoluble problems, they are recognised in the sovereign fashion which is due to them; they cannot touch any question without setting their mark upon it. Mr. Herbert Spencer appears to us to be a man of this order." (Th. Ribot, English Psychology. Translated from the French, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1897. (Original French edition ca. 1871) P. 124)
"Spencer's theories are often founded on his own personal experience, which is by no means a rich one. He generalises from himself, and his inferences are impaired by the limits of his data. He has recently injured a very noble theme by drawing too much upon this personal source. His Data of Ethics, which he intends to be the crowning work of his life, is wanting in that loftier inspiration which a richer and healthier life-experience would have conferred upon it. He emphasises habits and practices which our lower natures are only too ready to emphasize to themselves, and skims lightly over the motive power of man's higher nature. There is, of course, much in the book that is admirable, but from the cause referred to it falls short of being a great book. This, of course, is between ourselves, as I do not wish to quarrel with old Spencer."


"I think, considering all he has done, this inability to read more than an hour at a time or work for more than three hours a day is quite unique in literary history. He has an odd way of making his own knowledge and habits the measure of all sound education. For example, he assured my wife that it was a perfect waste of time learning languages; for his own part, he is happy to say he never could be brought to learn any except a smattering of French. He thinks people should read less and think more; that much reading is usually a mistake." (W. E. H. Lecky, quoted in A Memoir of the Right Hon. William Edward Hartpole Lecky, by His Wife /Elizabeth Lecky/, Longmans, Green, and Co., New York, 1909. P. 121)

"During twenty years of intercourse, I can hardly remember hearing him speak of an individual except for some practical purpose, or else to illustrate some general principle. His talk was of generalities. He generalized incessantly; almost everything he said was a generalization.... I often used to wonder, when I uttered some most commonplace statement, what universal principle or philosophic remark it would draw forth from Spencer, and I was seldom disappointed. George Elliot once made a good repartee to him on one such occasion. The talk had turned on fly-fishing; and she asked Spencer, who was a devoted, though not I believe a very successful, fly-fisher, what sort of fly he preferred to fish with. "Oh," said the philosopher, "I lay little stress on the particular kind of fly; I make my own; and all I aim at is to give what the fish expects--the vague representation of an insect fluttering about over the surface of the water." "I see," said George Elliot; "you're so fond of generalizing that you fish with a generalization." (Grant Allen, "Personal Reminiscences of Herbert Spencer," The Forum, Vol. 35, pp. 610-628, 1904. P. 617)
"Always I was more originative than receptive.... Anything like passive receptivity is foreign to my nature; and there results an unusually small tendency to be affected by others' thoughts. It seems as though the fabric of my conclusions had in all cases to be developed from within—refused to be built, and insisted upon growing. Material which could be taken in and organized, or re-organized, so as to form part of a coherent structure in course of elaboration, there was always a readiness to receive. But ideas and sentiments of alien kinds, or unorganizable kinds, were, if not rejected, yet accepted with indifference and soon dropped away."

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Van Wyck Brooks regards the rejection of Spencer's Education by Ticknor & Fields when offered them in 1860 by Youmans as "one of the first signs of the passing of Boston as the intellectual centre of the country. As a result of this first refusal, all these works of science, which dominated the mind of the coming epoch, were published by the Appletons of New York," New England: Indian Summer (New York, 1940), 110." (Charles M. Haar, "E. L. Youmans: A Chapter in the Diffusion of Science in America." Journal of the History of Ideas, Vol. 9, pp. 193-213, 1948. P. 209)

The declining of this series (the International Scientific Series) by Ticknor and Fields, to whom, in 1860, Youmans offered Spencer's Education, was one of the first indications of the passing of Boston as the intellectual centre of the country. As a result of this first refusal, all these works of science, which dominated the mind of the coming epoch, were published by the Appletons of New York." (Van Wyck Brooks, New England: Indian Summer, E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc., New York, 1965. P. 114n.)
"In all these cases of nervous disorders ... there are, negatively, degrees of loss of the most voluntary processes with, positively, conservation of the next most voluntary or next more automatic; otherwise put, there are degrees of loss of the latest acquirements with conservation of the earlier, especially of the inherited acquirements. Speaking of the physical side, there are degrees of loss of function of the least organized nervous arrangements with conservation of function of the more organized. There is in each reduction to a more automatic condition; in each there is dissolution, using this term as Spencer does, as the opposite of evolution." (Here I must acknowledge my great indebtedness to Spencer. The facts stated in the text seem to me to be illustrations from actual cases of disease, of conclusions he has arrived at deductively in his "Psychology." It is not affirmed that we have the exact opposite of evolution from the apparently brutal doings of disease; the proper opposite is seen in healthy senescence, as Spencer has shown. But from diseases there is, in general, the corresponding opposite of evolution.)" (John Hughlings Jackson, "Hughlings Jackson on Aphasia and Kindred Affectations of Speech," Brain: A Journal of Neurology, Vol. 38, pp. 1-190, 1915. Pp. 111, 111n.)


"I would not leave the impression that Spencer's theories had a large and immediate impact on [Hughlings] Jackson's analyses as early as 1864. They did not. In fact, Jackson had quoted Spencer only in regard to a single point, the distinction between intellectual and emotional expression, and this was intended to be just as much a physiological distinction as a psychological one. Rather, Jackson's first citations of Spencer are important because they mark the beginnings of what eventually became a very pervasive influence." (Samuel H. Greenblatt, "Hughlings Jackson's First Encounter With the Work of Paul Broca: The Physiological and Philosophical Background." Bulletin of the History of Medicine, Vol. 44, pp. 555-570, 1970. P. 568)

"Here, for the first time in this article I use the term Dissolution, I most gratefully acknowledge my vast debt to Herbert Spencer. What I have to say of the constitution of the nervous system appears to me to be little more than illustrating his doctrine on nervous evolution by what I may metaphorically speak of as the experiments of disease. I should make more definite acknowledgements were it not that I do not wish to mislead the reader, if, by any misunderstandings of his doctrines on my part, I impute to Mr. Spencer particular opinions he might not indorse. Anyone interested in diseases of the nervous system should carefully study Spencer's Psychology." (Selected Writings of John Hughlings Jackson, edited by James Taylor, 2 Vols., Basic Books, New York, 1958. Vol. 1, p. 147n.)
"These references to the associationist philosopher, Herbert Spencer (1820-1903) [about the contrast between intellect and emotion in speech from "The Origin and Function of Music"], are the earliest that I have been able to find in any of the Jacksonian material now available. There are other passages in Jackson's article which show, for the first time, that he was beginning to use Spencer's terminology. He also began to demonstrate an awareness of the aims and problems of psychology as a special science. These facts make it quite likely that Jackson had read at least part of Spencer's major psychological work, The Principles of Psychology. Thus, it is established that by late 1864 Jackson had started to assimilate Spencer's positivistic, evolutionary philosophy. In applying that philosophy to the solution of clinical problems, Jackson combines it with clinico-anatomical and the physiological traditions that he had already absorbed from Laycock, Hutchinson, and Brown-Séquard. To some extent, therefore, these three traditions had their entrance through Jackson into the modern study of the nervous systems and its diseases." (Samuel H. Greenblatt, "The Major Influences on the Early Life and Work of John Hughlings Jackson," Bulletin of the History of Medicine, Vol. 39, pp. 346-376, 1965. P. 374)

"Anyone who has read Herbert Spencer's works will find that I have borrowed largely from them. There is nothing in this article which I can imagine to be of any value which has not been inspired by him. I should, however, be sorry if any crudities of mine were imputed to Mr. Spencer. I strongly urge all neurologists to study his works, and also Fiske's very valuable book, Cosmic Philosophy." (Selected Writings of John Hughlings Jackson, edited by James Taylor, 2 Vols., Basic Books, New York, 1958. Vol. 1, p. 366n.)

"A detailed study of this concept makes it clear that, while it came to have characteristics of its own, it was derived from J. Hughlings Jackson's notion of dissolution, which, in turn, was a direct descendant of Herbert Spencer's idea of the same name." (Stanley W. Jackson, M.D., Department of Psychiatry, Yale University, "The History of Freud's Concepts of Regression," Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association, Vol. 17, pp. 743-784, 1969. P. 745)

"Before I go further I have certain obligations to acknowledge. I am under very heavy obligations to Herbert Spencer. I shall acknowledge these obligations in detail in later chapters. It will, however, be apparent in almost every part of the latter half of the present chapter that I am greatly indebted to him. Let me at once give a quotation from his Psychology with regard to evolution of nervous centres, a subject on which I have much to say: ....." (Selected Writings of John Hughlings Jackson, edited by James Taylor, 2 Vols., Basic Books, New York, 1958. Vol. 1, p. 167)
"For in disease the most voluntary or most special movements, faculties, etc., suffer first and most, that is in an order the exact opposite of evolution. Therefore I call this the principle of Dissolution—dissolution as the opposite of evolution. I have used as synonymous with dissolution, the expression "Reduction to a more Automatic Condition." The phenomena of dissolution, as seen in cases of "Diseases of the Mind," seem to me to illustrate in a very striking way Laycock's doctrines on the Reflex Function of the Brain and Herbert Spencer's doctrines on Evolution of the Nervous System. Insanity is dissolution, beginning in the very highest of all nervous centres, that is in the anatomical substrata of consciousness. In insanity there is always defect of consciousness. There is defective object-consciousness often along with increase of subject-consciousness." (Selected Writings of John Hughlings Jackson, edited by James Taylor, 2 Vols., Basic Books, New York, 1958. Vol. 1, p. 38, 38n.)

Again and again in his writings, John Hughlings Jackson quotes passages from Spencer's writings, especially Principles of Psychology and Principles of Biology, as shedding light on questions of neurology, and as providing him with insights and leads for the pursuit of his own studies and analyses on the subject. --RLC (See Selected Writings of John Hughlings Jackson, edited by James Taylor, 2 Vols., Basic Books, New York, 1958. Esp. Vol. 1)

"I should say that all that may appear to be of importance in this chapter [on the anatomy of the nervous system] is little more than a reflection of certain of Herbert Spencer's psychological teachings, or an application of them to cases of nervous disease, were it not for the fear that I might be guilty of the offence of distorting his doctrines or misapplying them." (Selected Writings of John Hughlings Jackson, edited by James Taylor, 2 Vols., Basic Books, New York, 1958. Vol. 1, p. 238n.)

"... Spencer's evolutionary theory was accepted wholeheartedly by Hughlings Jackson, whose influence was fundamental in the development of evolutionary neurology and neurophysiology." (Robert M. Young, Darwin's Metaphor, Nature's Place in Victorian Culture, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1985, P. 223)
"What an odd "revolutionary spirit" this was again, which embraced Spencer the great social reactionary, as well as Darwin, the pure scientist; but all manifestations of the "modern spirit" were apparently equally distasteful to the younger Henry James."

"I am writing this in the beautiful great library [of the Athenaeum]. On the other side of the room sits Herbert Spencer, asleep in a chair (he always is, whenever I come here) and a little way off is the portly Archbishop of York with his nose in a little book. It is 9:30 P.M. and I have been dining here." (Letter from Henry James to his father dated February 13, 1877. Quoted in Leon Edel, *Henry James, 1870-1881, The Conquest of London*, J. B. Lippincott Company, Philadelphia, 1962. P. 283)

"I received a few days since your article on H. Spencer, but I have not yet had the time to read it." (Vol. 1, p. 60) "I met Herbert Spencer the other Sunday at George Eliot's, with whom I had at last bent my steps. G. H. Lewes introduced me to him as an American; and it seemed to me that at this fact, coupled with my name, his attention was aroused and he was on the point of asking me if I were related to you. But something instantly happened to separate me from him, and soon afterwards he went away." (Letter from Henry James to William James dated May 1, 1878. Quoted in *The Letters of Henry James*, selected and edited by Percy Lubbock, 2 Vols., Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1920. Vol. 1, p. 61)
"In the first year (1877-78) of his instruction in psychology, the students read Taine "On Intelligence"; in the second year (1878-79) Spencer's "First Principles"; in the third year (1880-81) Taine's "Mental and Moral Science," and in the fourth year again Taine "On Intelligence." (p. 300) "Professor James likewise added from 1879 to 1881 and from 1883 to 1885 a systematic course in evolution based upon the works of Herbert Spencer." (p. 300) (Benjamin Rand, "Philosophical Instruction in Harvard University from 1636 to 1906," The Harvard Graduates' Magazine, Vol. 37, pp. 296-311, 1928-29)

"Professor James' book is entertaining and full of good things; but his attitude toward Spencer makes me think of a dream my father once had. He dreamed he met a dog. The dog annoyed him, so he struck him with a stick. Then the dog doubled in size and my father struck him again with the same result. So the thing went on till the universe was pretty much all dog. When my father awoke, he was, or rather had been, half-way down the dog's throat." (Selected Letters of Edwin Arlington Robinson, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1940. Letter from E. A. Robinson to John Hays Gardiner dated November 2, 1898. P. 15)

"I read this book [Spencer's First Principles] as a youth when it was still appearing in numbers, and was carried away with enthusiasm by the intellectual perspectives which it seemed to open. When a /maturer companion, Mr. Charles S. Peirce, attacked it in my presence, I felt spiritually wounded, as by the defacement of a sacred image or picture, though I could not verbally defend it against his criticisms." (William James, Memories and Studies, Longmans, Green, and Co., New York, 1911. Pp. 127-128)

"The pragmatic philosophy of which I hope to begin talking in my next lecture preserves as cordial a relation with facts, and, unlike Spencer's philosophy, it neither begins nor ends by turning positive religious constructions out of doors—it treats them cordially as well." (William James, "The Present Dilemma in Philosophy," in Pragmatism and Four Essays from The Meaning of Truth, pp. 15-37, Meridian Books, The World Publishing Company, Cleveland, 1967. P.37)


"... few recent formulas have done more real service of a rough sort in psychology than the Spencerian one that the essence of mental life and of bodily life are one, namely, 'the adjustment of inner to outer relations.'" (William James, *The Principles of Psychology*, 2 Vols., Henry Holt and Company, New York, 1890. Vol. 1, p. 6)


"Thousands of readers who are not technical students know him [Spencer] in the original; and to such readers he has given (what they care about far more than either method or theoretic temper) a simple, sublime, and novel system of the world, in which things fall into easy perspective relations, whose explanatory formula applies to every conceivable phenomenon ...." (William James, "Herbert Spencer," *The Critic*, Vol. 44, pp. 21-24, 1904. P. 21)


"The case of Herbert Spencer's system is much to the point here. Rationalists feel his fearful array of insufficiencies. His dry schoolmaster temperament, the hurdy-gurdy monotony of him, his preference for cheap makeshifts in argument, his lack of education even in mechanical principles, and in general the vagueness of all his fundamental ideas, his whole system wooden, as if knocked together out of cracked hemlock boards--and yet half of England wants to bury him in Westminster Abbey." (William James, *Pragmatism and Four Essays from The Meaning of Truth*, Meridian Books, The World Publishing Company, Cleveland, 1955. P. 37)

The "... practical outcome [of Spencer's philosophy] is the somewhat vague optimism which is so important a tendency in modern life." (William James, "Herbert Spencer," *The Critic*, Vol. 44, pp. 21-24, 1904. P. 21)

"... that "Spencerian of evolutionist school" toward which Dr. /William/ James seems to cherish such intense antipathy." (John Fiske, "Sociology and Hero-Worship," *The Atlantic Monthly*, Vol. 47, pp. 75-84, 1881. P. 77)
"To the present critic, the ethical and political part of Mr. Spencer's writings seem the most impressive and likely to endure. ... the antique spirit of English individualism is a factor in human life less changeable than the face of the sciences, and such expressions of it as Spencer has given will probably long deserve to be read." (William James, "Herbert Spencer," The Critic, Vol. 44, pp. 21-24, 1904. P. 23)


"But Spencer taught me that, roughly speaking, what is, is the best possible at the moment, and can be made better only by Evolution, which can be promoted by gradual and experimental succession, but not by blind destruction. Social questions are very complicated, and can be wisely settled only by the slow methods of trial and error." (Henry Holt, Garrulities of an Octogenarian Editor, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1923. P. 53)

"Another [critic, unidentified] has likened him [Herbert Spencer] to a kind of philosophic sawmill, delivering, year in and out, with unvarying rectilinear precision, paragraph after paragraph, chapter after chapter, and book after book, as similar one to another as if they were so many wooden planks." (William James, "Herbert Spencer," The Critic, Vol. 44, pp. 21-24, 1904. P. 22)

"Yet the fact remains that long before any of his contemporaries had seized its universal import, he grasped a great, light-giving truth—the truth of evolution; grasped it so that it became bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh; and with a pertinacity of which the history of successful thought gives few examples, had applied it to the whole of life, down to the minutest details of the most various sciences." (William James, "Herbert Spencer," The Critic, Vol. 44, pp. 21-24, 1904. P. 22)

"... what really dismays us about Spencer's philosophy is the disconsolateness of its ulterior practical results.... It is not a permanent warrant for our more ideal interests, not a fulfiller of our remotest hopes. The notion of God, on the other hand, however inferior it may be in clearness to those mathematical notions so current in mechanical philosophy, has at least this practical superiority over them, that it guarantees an ideal order that shall be permanently preserved." (William James, "Some Metaphysical Problems Pragmatically Considered," in Pragmatism and Four Essays from The Meaning of Truth, pp. 63-86, Meridian Books, The World Publishing Company, Cleveland, 1967. Pp. 76-77)
"... the author's [Spencer's] habit of periodically pointing out how well the phenomena illustrate his law of evolution seems quite perfunctory and formal when applied to social facts, so strained and unnatural is it to conceive of these as mechanical changes in which matter is integrated and motion dispersed." (William James, "Herbert Spencer," The Critic, Vol. 44, pp. 21-24, 1904. P. 23)


"... I am completely disgusted with the eminent philosopher [Spencer], who seems to me more and more to be as absolutely worthless in all fundamental matters of thought, as he is admirable, clever and ingenious in secondary matters. His mind is a perfect puzzle to me, but the total impression is of an intensely two and sixpenny, paper-collar affair ...." (Letter from William James to Thomas W. Ward dated Cambridge, December 30, 1876. Quoted in Ralph Barton Perry, The Thought and Character of William James, Little, Brown, and Company. Boston, 1935. Vol. 1, p. 374.)

"Beside him Wilhel'm Wundt, Spencer is an ignoramus as well as a charlatan. I admit that Spencer is occasionally more amusing than Wundt. His "Data of Ethics" seems to me incomparably his best book, because it is a more or less frank expression of the man's personal ideal of living—which has of course little to do with science, and which, in Spencer's case, is full of definiteness and vigor." (Letter from William James to Carl Stumpf dated February 6, 1887. Quoted in The Letters of William James, edited by his Son, Henry James, 2 Vols., The Atlantic Monthly Press, Boston, 1920. Vol. 1, p. 264)

"Who, since he [Spencer] wrote, is not vividly able to conceive of the world as a thing evolved from a primitive fire-mist, by progressive integrations and differentiations, and increases in heterogeneity and coherence of texture and organization? Who can fail to think of life, both bodily and mental, as a set of ever-changing ways of meeting the "environment"?" (William James, "Herbert Spencer," The Critic, Vol. 44, pp. 21-24, 1904. P. 21)

"I often take a nap beside Herbert Spencer at the Athenaeum, and feel as if I were robbing you of the privilege." (Letter from Henry James, Jr., to William James dated London, February 28, 1877. Quoted in Ralph Barton Perry, The Thought and Character of William James, 2 Vols. Little, Brown, and Company. Boston, 1935. Vol. 1, p. 375.)
"The late William James was, I think, unequalled among philosophers in sheer dexterous felicity of utterance of his thought; but he is perhaps also unparallelied, among professors, in untrustworthiness as a thinker." (J. M. Robertson, Modern Humanists Considered, Watts & Co., London, 1927. P. 173)

"Mr. Spencer's successors will probably not feel, as he now does, that the study of the habits of filthy savages is far better than that of the lives of illustrious Europeans ...." (Anonymous/William James, "Herbert Spencer's Data of Ethics," The Nation, Vol. 28, pp. 178-179, 1879. P. 178)

"... it appears that his William James' main concern was to redeem spontaneity and indeterminacy from the oppressive causal network of Spencerian social evolution." (Richard Hofstadter, Social Darwinism in American Thought, revised edition, The Beacon Press, Boston, 1955. P. 133)

William James, "Herbert Spencer's Definition of Mind As Correspondence," Journal of Speculative Philosophy, Vol. 12, pp. 1-18, 1878. (A critical discussion, the basis of the criticism being that the human mind is somehow more noble than is implied by Spencer's notion that it is the organ that adapts man for survival.)

"Layer after layer of human perfection separates me from the central Africans who pursued Stanley with cries of "meat, meat!" (William James, "The Importance of Individuals," The Open Court, Vol. 4, pp. 2437-2440, 1890-91. P. 2438)


"Edwin Arlington Robinson was almost as loyal to the synthetic philosophy. He said in a letter written in 1898 to one of his Harvard friends: 'Professor James' book is entertaining and full of good things; but his attitude toward Spencer makes me think of a dream my father once had. He dreamed he met a dog. The dog annoyed him, so he struck him with a stick. Then the dog doubled in size and my father struck him again with the same result. So the thing went on till the universe was pretty much all dog. When my father or rather had been half-way down the dog's throat.'" (Malcolm Cowley, "Naturalism in American Literature." In Evolutionary Thought in America, edited by Stow Persons, pp. 300-333. George Braziller, Inc. New York, 1956. [Yale University Press. New Haven, 1950]. P. 304.)
"When it comes to Spencer's style, I am afraid I cannot / be quite so vehement in his defense. Still it is sincere (you will not admit this) and it intends to be dignified, while James's is forever prostituting itself to contemporary slang and slipshod affectations, by which he hopes, I suppose, to strike the popular chord and conceal its arrogance. This is pretty ungenerous criticism, but I cannot think for a minute that the man is unconscious of what he is doing. If he is not, there is certainly a smallness in him that I would not suspect, and a spiritual vulgarity not wholly unrelated to that of the Reverend Talmage." (Edwin Arlington Robinson, Selected Letters of Edwin Arlington Robinson, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1940. Excerpt from E. A. Robinson to John Hays Gardiner dated November 2, 1898. Pp. 16-17.

"Whereas to all other evolutionary moralists the status belli has received a new consecration from the new ideas; whereas in Germany especially the "struggle for existence" has been made the baptismal formula for the most cynical assertions of brute egoism; with Mr. Spencer the same theories have bred an almost Quakerish humanitarianism and regard for peace. Frequently in these pages does his indignation at the ruling powers of Britain burst forth, for their policy of conquest over lower races. Might, in his eyes, would hardly seem to be right, even when evolution is carried on by its means." (Anonymous, "Herbert Spencer's Data of Ethics," The Nation, Vol. 28, pp. 178-179, 1879. P. 179)

"Later I have used it First Principles often as a text-book with students, and the total outcome of my dealings with it is an exceedingly unfavorable verdict. Apart from the great truth which it enforces, that everything has evolved somehow, and apart from the inevitable stimulating effect of any such universal picture, I regard its teachings as almost a museum of blundering reasoning." (William James, Memories and Studies, Longmans, Green, and Co., New York, 1911. P. 128)

"I read this book Spencer's First Principles as a youth when it was still appearing in numbers, and was carried away with enthusiasm by the intellectual perspectives which it seemed to open. When a / maturer companion, Mr. Charles S. Peirce, attacked it in my presence, I felt spiritually wounded, as by the defacement of a sacred image or picture, though I could not verbally defend it against his criticisms." (William James, Memories and Studies, Longmans, Green, and Co., New York, 1911. Pp. 127-128)

Appropos of Kirkman's parody of it: "Translate the whole formula into Hottentot or Cherokee if you like; the truth for which it stands will not be made a whit less true." (William Henry Hudson, An Introduction to the Philosophy of Herbert Spencer, revised edition, Watts & Co., London, 1906. P. 53)

Many people came to believe that Kirkman's parody of Spencer's definition of evolution was devised by William James, who apparently did nothing to dispel the illusion. One such is Gilbert Highet (The Art of Teaching, Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1951. Pp. 233-234).

"Even before Fenollosa and Mendenhall were properly settled in Tokyo in 1872, their talents were pressed into service by their eager hosts. Along with E. S. Morse the two American professors were engaged immediately, before term opening, to speak every Sunday before the Lecture Association, a group of leading Japanese, primarily civil servants and mature students. For a time they were the only foreigners giving these public lectures, and their audience sat in close attention throughout the day as long as the lecturers would stay. Morse continued his teaching of Darwinian evolution; Mendenhall lectured on "Physical Science"; and Fenollosa expounded Herbert Spencer's scientific philosophy." (Lawrence W. Chisolm, Fenollosa: The Far East and American Culture, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1963, P. 38)

"Fenollosa began his lecturing at the University of Tokyo by expounding Herbert Spencer's systematic theories of social development. The young philosopher had been enthusiastic about Spencer at Harvard, and since Morse's lectures on evolutionary biology were so successful, Fenollosa concentrated on evolutionary sociology in the Sunday talks he gave with Morse before university classes convened. Spencer complemented Darwin and was well-suited to the members of the Lecture Association, many of them ranking civil servants who would have listened attentively all day if the Americans could have been persuaded. Fenollosa may have been asked specifically to expound Spencer, since the English philosopher seemed to explain Western progress—and everything else for that matter—in scientific and authoritative fashion. Spencer's reputation in Japan in 1878 was already considerable. A Japanese translation of his Social Statics had been published the year before, and many of those who could read English had sought in his other voluminous writings a key to Western learning. Spencer revealed the universe as a simple system, and his synthesis of all knowledge proved to be supremely useful—a staple argument and a frame for understanding complicated kinds of new information." (Lawrence W. Chisolm, Fenollosa: The Far East and American Culture, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1963, Pp. 40-41)

"One of Fenollosa's distinguished colleagues at the University of Tokyo, a professor of literature, Shoichi Toyama, had returned from the University of Michigan in 1876 thoroughly imbued with Spencer's system, which he presented to good effect. The combined advocates of Fenollosa and Toyama have been credited with making a lasting impression on Japanese thinking; certainly the moment was suited to Spencer." (Lawrence W. Chisolm, Fenollosa: The Far East and American Culture, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1963, P. 41)

"During the first three years his teaching at the University of Tokyo, ca. 1879-1881 centered on Spencer ...." (Lawrence W. Chisolm, Fenollosa: The Far East and American Culture, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1963, Pp. 41-42)
"Hegelian idealism did not have Spencer's practical appeal to Japanese intellectuals; Hegel was not scientific in Spencer's materialist sense." (Lawrence W. Chisolm, Fenollosa: The Far East and American Culture, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1963. P.42)

"Of course no actual prohibition against eating flesh, such as existed under the old regime, exists now. But the custom of abstaining from it remains pretty general; and though beef and pork were introduced at the time of the late revolution, along with Herbert Spencer's philosophy and French chassepots, recent statistics show that meat-eating is again on the wane." (Basil Hall Chamberlain, Things Japanese, 2nd edition, Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., Ltd., London, 1891. P.168)


“He [Herbert Spencer] was full of the death of the late Japanese Ambassador. It seems he helped that worthy to draw up the new Constitution. On the day when it came in force, the Ambassador was assassinated, in revenge for his having lifted a curtain with his stick, in a temple of the old religion—which curtain he had been warned to respect, as none but the Emperor could go beyond it." (T. Sturge Moore, ed., "Herbert Spencer and Oscar Wilde; Extracts from 'Works and Days,' The Diary of Michael Field," Entry by Edith Cooper for March 3, 1890. The Cornhill Magazine, Vol. 72, pp. 513-520, 1932. P.514)

"I once saw it stated, on the authority of a missionary, that the influence of the Spencerian philosophy was the chief obstacle to the spread of evangelical Christianity among the cultured classes of Japan." (William Henry Hudson, An Introduction to the Philosophy of Herbert Spencer, revised edition, Watts & Co., London, 1906. P.24n.)


"In the 1880's, however, its [The Japanese utilitarian philosophy of education] theoretical basis was derived from Herbert Spencer's Social Statics as well as from his Education, Intellectual, Moral and Physical, which placed emphasis on scientific knowledge as the chief aim of education, and from the works of Bain and Johnott." (Chitoshi Yanaga, Japan Since Perry, McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., New York, 1949. P.108)
"Herbert Spencer gained an even greater following than John Stuart Mill. Two scholars, a Japanese and an American, were responsible for the widespread popularity of Spencerianism in Japan. In 1876 Toyama Masakazu returned from the United States as a convert to Spencerianism after having spent several years at the University of Michigan, where he did both undergraduate and graduate work. Upon assuming his chair at Tōkyō University, he began his lectures dealing with Spencer's ideas on biology, psychology, and sociology. Ernest Fenollosa, professor of philosophy at Tōkyō University, expounded religion in terms of Spencer's sociology. So popular did Spencer become that his views and advice were sought eagerly even by the government on various and sundry problems. The most notable example perhaps was in the matter of advocating intermarriage, which was being seriously considered by the government as a means of securing recognition from the West. Spencer advised strongly against any sort of planned miscegenation by the state for the improvement of the race." (Chitoshi Yanaga, Japan Since Perry, McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., New York, 1949. Pp. 76-77)

"The year 1883 was appropriately enough the starting point in the development of Japanese sociology. That year represented the fruition of the efforts at importing and assimilating sociological ideas and methods from the West. This was marked by the publication of the translation of Herbert Spencer's Principles of Sociology and the appearance of the first Japanese book in the field. Sociology by Dr. Ariga Nagao was an ambitious attempt to establish a systematic sociology, using evidences obtained from Japanese, Chinese, Korean, and Asiatic experiences and tracing social evolution. Of the projected six volumes, he finished three, Social Evolution (1883), Religious Evolution (1883), and the Evolution of the Family System (1884), all of which were based on the organismic theory of society." (Chitoshi Yanaga, Japan Since Perry, McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., New York, 1949. P. 86)

"The advocacy of intermarriage with Occidentals as a sure means of improving the racial stock of the Japanese, begun in 1883 by Takahashi Yoshio, did not easily die out. It was seriously considered by the leading statesmen of the period, including such notables as Itō and Inoue. The question had become a subject of such heated discussion and agitation among scholars and politicians that Herbert Spencer's advice was sought in 1892. In his reply, Spencer was emphatic in stating that intermarriage should be positively forbidden on biological grounds. He argued that miscegenation inevitably produced bad results in the long run. Any thought of encouraging intermarriage seems to have been abandoned after 1892 although it was not banned for individuals. A letter from Herbert Spencer to Baron Kaneko Kentarō was published in the London Times of January 18, 1904." (Chitoshi Yanaga, Japan Since Perry, McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., New York, 1949. Pp. 97, 97n.)
"The decade of the 1880’s was a period of gratifying progress for the missionaries in Japan since the enthusiasm for Western ideas and institutions was at its peak. Christianity, however, had to compete against the rising popularity of English empiricism and the utilitarianism of Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill, the ideas of Spencer, Buckle, and Guizot, not to mention Darwinism."


"The Japanese loves to pack his ideas, and dovetail them with one another, with the same precision with which he makes two dozen lacquer boxes fit into one, or constructs a house to hold exactly eight hundred and twenty floor-mats, each of just the same size, without an inch to spare. What enchanted the Japanese was Herbert Spencer’s solemn way of assuming that the heavens and the earth, and all that in them is, all space, all time, all life, and all humanity could be measured and reckoned up to a millimetre or a half-centime by his particular philosophical abacus." (E. T. Raymond, Portraits of the Nineties, T. Fisher Unwin, Ltd., London, 1921. P. 112)

Rudyard Kipling thought, apparently, that Spencer and Comte "... deal with people's insides from the point of view of men who have no stomachs." By which he seems to have meant that they regarded men as being entirely rational, or at least dealt with them as such. (Rudyard Kipling, "The Conversion of Aurelian McGoggin," in Plain Tales from the Hills, pp. 101-106, Standard Book Company, London and New York, 1930. P. 101)

Rudyard Kipling has Hurree Babu say, after Kim asks him, "Will they kill thee?": "Oah, thatt [sic] is nothing. I am good enough Herbert Spencerian, I trust, to meet little thing like death, which is all in my fate, you know. But—but they may beat me." (P. 224) Later: "Under the striped umbrella Hurree Babu was straining ear and brain to follow the quick-poured French, and keeping both eyes on a kilta full of maps and documents—an extra large one with a double red oil-skin cover. He did not wish to steal anything. He only desired to know that to steal, and, incidentally, how to get away when he had stolen it. He thanked all the Gods of Hindustan, and Herbert Spencer, that there remained some valuables to steal." (P. 239) (Rudyard Kipling, Kim, Laurel Edition, Dell Publishing Company, New York, 1959)
Many people came to believe that Kirkman's parody of Spencer's definition of evolution was devised by William James, who apparently did nothing to dispel the illusion. One such is Gilbert Highet (The Art of Teaching, Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1951. Pp. 233-234).


Appropos of Kirkman's parody of it: "Translate the whole formula into Hottentot or Cherokee if you like; the truth for which it stands will not be made a whit less true." (William Henry Hudson, An Introduction to the Philosophy of Herbert Spencer, revised edition, Watts & Co., London, 1906. P. 53)

"Regarded thus, civilization no longer appears to be a regular unfolding after a specific plan; but seems rather a development of man's latent capabilities under the action of favourable circumstances; ...." (Herbert Spencer, Social Statics, John Chapman, London, 1851. P. 415)
"When the company were about to disperse from the hall of the
crematorium on the occasion of Spencer's funeral, a Parsee student,
himself an Oxonian, arrested us for a moment in order to announce
that he proposed to offer a thousand pounds to this university for
the founding of a Spencer lectureship. If the offer was refused,
the University of London was to be approached. Oxford, however,
doubtless under the pressure of universal opinion, has decided to
celebrate in perpetuity the name of him whom it flouted during his
lifetime." (C. W. Salesby, Evolution The Master-Key, Harper &
Brothers, London and New York, 1906. P. 89n.)

"We have been receiving for some time past copies of a jour-
nal called The Indian Sociologist, an "organ of freedom, and of
political, social, and religious reform." It is edited by Pandit
Shyamejji Krishnavarma, M.A. (Oxon.), sometime lecturer at Oxford,
and is published in London. It is a journal fearlessly edited, and
the editor is imbued with the teaching of the late Herbert Spencer.
The journal is evidently intended to model Indian opinion in ac-
cordance with Spencer's teachings. The Pandit is an Indian scholar
"After having discussed the importance of mutual aid in various classes of animals, I was evidently bound to discuss the importance of the same factor in the evolution of Man. This was the more necessary as there are a number of evolutionists who may not refuse to admit the importance of mutual aid among animals, but who, like Herbert Spencer, will refuse to admit it for Man."

"When I was about twelve (ca. 1905 in Knoxville, Tenn.) I was taken to hear the Bishop (Gailor, an Episcopalian) during his annual visitation. His subject was Herbert Spencer, of whom I had never heard, but of whom the Bishop disapproved so eloquently that I sought Spencer's Synthetic Philosophy at the library the very next day. I don't think I ever got all the way through even the first volume, but I was so impressed by the introductory discourse on "The Knowable and the Unknowable" that on this basis alone I was for some years, say from twelve to sixteen, a devout Spencerian." (Joseph Wood Krutch, More Lives Than One, William Sloane Associates, New York, 1962. P. 22)
"The greatest name ever thrown into the scales for Individualism and against Socialism is that of Herbert Spencer. He has the reputation of having been the greatest Individualist of all times."


"The poverty of the incapable, the distresses that come upon the imprudent, the starvation of the idle, and those shouldering aside of the weak by the strong, which leave so many 'in shallows and in miseries,' are the decrees of a large, far-seeing benevolence." (Herbert Spencer, Social Statics, London, 1850. P. 323)

"As for Herbert Spencer, the world champion of individualism, his failure to make his synthetic philosophy the basis of a true social science is well known." (Harry Elmer Barnes, Foreword in Samuel Chugerman, Lester Ward, The American Aristotle, pp. 9-12, Duke University Press, Durham, N.C., 1939. P. 10)

"... the master formula of future progress must of necessity be "the struggle against the struggle for existence."" (Robertson attributes this phrase to Lange, author of History of Materialism.) (John M. Robertson, Modern Humanists, Swan Sonnenschein & Co., London, 1891. P. 235)

Harold J. Laski's "Citing Spencer for a Purpose," a review of Truxton Beale's edition of The Man vs. The State (The New Republic, Vol. 10, No. 122, pp. 142, 144, 146, March 3, 1917) is very critical of Spencer's political philosophy and of the "heavy artillery of American conservatism" (p. 142) who contributed prefatory remarks to each of the chapters of this edition.

"No tribe could maintain its unity for even a day if it were to practice Spencer's individualism, for every man has his own ideas as to how his needs should best be met." (Sir Arthur Keith, Evolution and Ethics. G. P. Putnam's Sons. New York, 1947. P. 39.)

"The intrusive idea that disturbed the tranquility, broke the unity, and destroyed the finality of Spencer's individualistic system was the idea of evolution." (F. J. C. Hearnshaw, Herbert Spencer and the Individualists, in The Social & Political Ideas of Some Representative Thinkers of the Victorian Age, ed. by F. J. C. Hearnshaw, pp. 53-83, George G. Harrap & Co. Ltd., London, 1933. P. 79)

Spencer's laissez faire is described as "... Calvinism conveniently bereft of conscience ...." (William Miller, A New History of the United States, George Braziller, Inc., New York, 1958. P. 260)
"The truth is, his political theories had never much real organic connection with his general system; they were legacies from the bourgeois political economy of the /eighteen/ thirties and forties." (Grant Allen, "Personal Reminiscences of Herbert Spencer," The Forum, Vol. 35, pp. 610-628, 1904. P. 627)

"The net result, therefore, of Spencer's wide studies was a fresh justification, based on the findings of Victorian science, of the master principles of eighteenth-century speculation: its individualism, its liberalism, its passion for justice, its love of liberty and distrust of every form of coercion." (Vernon L. Parrington, Main Currents in American Thought, Vol. 3: The Beginnings of Critical Realism in America: 1860-1920, Harcourt, Brace, & Co., Inc., New York, 1930. P. 200)

"It is true that Spencer remained to the last a bitter champion of individual freedom and noninterference by government, but he shifted the ground for his belief considerably from the time of Social Statics. Later, he dwelt more on the inefficiency of and oppression by bureaucracy than on the necessity of progress through evolution." (Abram Kardiner and Edward Preble, They Studied Man, The World Publishing Company, Cleveland, 1961. P. 54)

"... Spencer was completely saturated with, and possessed by, the characteristic traditions of this individualistic philosophy, simply, so to speak, by absorption, by respiration of the intellectual atmosphere ..." (John Dewey, "The Philosophical Work of Herbert Spencer." The Philosophical Review, Vol. 13, pp. 159-175, 1904. P. 165.)

"It is true that Spencer remained to the last a bitter champion of individual freedom and noninterference by government, but he shifted the ground for his belief considerably from the time of the Social Statics. Later, he dwelt more on the inefficiency of and oppression by bureaucracy than on the necessity of progress through evolution." (Abram Kardiner and Edward Preble, They Studied Man, The World Publishing Company, Cleveland, 1961. P. 54)

Those who believe that Spencer always manifested an uncompromising opposition to state functions will be surprised by the chapter "Political Organization in General."

"So Spencer became a sort of tutelary genius to rising big business in the United States and the accepted philosopher of the most influential class in the American community."

"In the sphere of social and political ideas he /Spencer/ will rank high, not as the founder of a science of a visionary 'sociology,' but as the dauntless champion in a collectivist and servile age of the claims of the individual and the cause of personal freedom." (F. J. C. Hearnshaw, "Herbert Spencer and the Individualists," in The Social & Political Ideas of Some Representative Thinkers of the Victorian Age, ed. by F. J. C. Hearnshaw, pp. 53-83, George G. Harrap & Co. Ltd., London, 1933. P. 82)

Speaking of his political views, Spencer wrote: "Thus it appears that at twenty I entertained, though in a crude, unqualified form, a belief which much of my energy in subsequent years was spent in justifying and elaborating." (Auto. I, 198)

"... in an age of which the political and the economic ideals were alike libertarian it was only too natural that Spencer should /become, with a Radical father and uncle, an advocate of laissez-faire." (J. M. Robertson, Explorations, Watts & Co., London, n.d. (ca. 1923). Pp. 123-124)

"... the influence of Herbert Spencer ... came near raising public shiftlessness to the dignity of a national philosophy. Everything would adjust itself—if only it was left alone." (H. G. Wells, in an article on "Planning" in the Daily Mail in 1912. Quoted in Wells, Experiment in Autobiography, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1934. P. 567)

"Now it is almost incredible that two systems so distinct and so conflicting as these /Spencer's evolutionary and organicism sociology on the one hand, and his individualism and laissez-faire on the other/ could coexist for a lifetime in a mind so strong, so clear, so courageous, and so unconventional as Spencer's. Yet so they did." (F. J. C. Hearnshaw, "Herbert Spencer and the Individualists," in The Social & Political Ideas of Some Representative Thinkers of the Victorian Age, ed. by F. J. C Hearnshaw, pp. 53-83, George G. Harrap & Co. Ltd., London, 1933. P. 73)
"... owing to preconceptions of his youth confirmed during his connection with the Economist, he was unduly frightened by the bugbear of collectivism, which is really nothing but social integration, and a necessary part of the very social evolution which he taught. For this must, as in both inorganic and organic nature, of differentiation and integration. His inability to perceive this made his system, so broad at its base, a frustum instead of a pyramid." (Lester F. Ward, "Herbert Spencer's Autobiography," Science, Vol. 19, pp. 873-879, 1904. P. 879)

"Reading Herbert Spencer confirmed me in my new gospel of private enterprise; Kelly had previously been a socialist, and I not only cursed the whole business of social reform by the State and the growth of trade unionism, but deplored that the post office was not a private commercial concern. The only association in the country which pleased me in this mood was one called the "Liberty and Property Defence League."" (Sir David Kelly, The Ruling Few, Hollis & Carter, London, 1952. P. 27)

"Seven of the nine members of the Court had been appointed by Republican predecessors, and although six of the judges were over seventy years of age Mr. Roosevelt had not yet had a single appointment at his disposal, and in Justices McReynolds, Van Devanter, Sutherland, and Butler there was a solid nucleus of the Court which appeared to think that the Fifth and Fourteenth Amendments had 'enacted Herbert Spencer's Social Statics.'" (Samuel Eliot Morison and Henry Steele Commager, The Growth of the American Republic, 2 Vols., Oxford University Press, New York, 1942. Vol. 2, P.523)

"Mr. Spencer has himself just published a very remarkable work, "The Man versus the State"; to which he hardly expects to make a convert except here and there, and about which an unfriendly critic might say that it might be entitled "Mr. Spencer against All England." I shall not certainly criticise him for that. But it is a signal instance of the isolated position assumed from time to time by philosophers." (Frederic Harrison, The Philosophy of Common Sense, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1907. P. 372)

In 1915 Truxton Beale, an American diplomat, arranged for a new edition of Spencer's The Man versus the State (Mitchell Kennerley, New York, 1915). In this edition, besides the four chapters in the original book (1884), five other essays of Spencer's dealing with questions of political philosophy were included. Beale asked distinguished public figures in the United States to write brief introductory statements to each of the nine essays included. Some of these men were Elihu Root, Henry Cabot Lodge, Elbert H. Gary, Nicholas Murray Butler, Harlan Fiske Stone, Charles W. Eliot, and William Howard Taft. All were generally in sympathy with Spencer's concern over the tendency of government to play an increasing role in the life of the society.
"Corporations, engaging the best lawyers, found it easy to convince courts that such labor laws were not a proper and reasonable exercise of the police power; and to point out conflicts with the Fourteenth Amendment, or other parts of the Federal Constitution. Where such a conflict could not be discovered, judges in the eighties began to postulate a theoretical liberty of contract, 'the right of a person to sell his labor upon such terms as he deems proper.'" (Justice Harlan in Adair v. U.S., 208 U.S. 161 (1908). This theory first appears in American law in 1886, and is first discussed in Herbert Spencer's Justice (1891).) (Samuel Eliot Morison and Henry Steele Commager, The Growth of the American Republic, 2 Vols., Oxford University Press, New York, 1942. Vol. 2, P. 170, 170n.)

"Railway companies may smash their passengers into mummy and the State may not interfere! [Railway travelling was much more dangerous in England than on the Continent. Fatal accidents were more than fifteen times as frequent as in Germany.] Pestilence may sweep our streets and the state may not compel the municipalities to put their own powers in operation to check it! We have heard of the Curiosities of Literature and some day this book will be numbered among them.' So did Eliza Cook's Journal dispose of the already antiquated individualism of Herbert Spencer's Social Statics in 1851." (G. M. Young, Portrait of an Age: Victorian England, Oxford University Press, London, 1977. Second edition. P. 49)

"Worked out most thoroughly by the Englishman Herbert Spencer, this philosophy, the philosophy of progress of American industrialists following the Civil War, won America as no philosophy had ever won a nation before. To a generation singularly engrossed in the competitive pursuit of industrial wealth it gave cosmic sanction to free competition. In an age of science, it "scientifically" justified ceaseless exploitation. Precisely attuned to the aspirations of American businessmen, it afforded them a guide to faith and thought perfectly in keeping with the pattern of their workaday lives." (Thomas C. Cochran and William Miller, The Age of Enterprise: A Social History of Industrial America, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1942. P. 119)

"Honored in the United States as no philosopher ever was in Greece, no artist in Renaissance Italy, no scientist anywhere in his own day, Spencer left an impression on America that was much more profound than his work. He supplied a rationale and a vocabulary that American businessmen were reluctant to abandon even when business practices made Spencerism obsolete. For this rather than for any contribution to knowledge, Spencer is important to us. From the Civil War to the New Deal, businessmen explained themselves to the "public" in his terms; and during the decade of the 1930's his thought, or textbook variations upon it, formed the basis for conservative attacks upon the reforms of Franklin Roosevelt." (Thomas C. Cochran and William Miller, The Age of Enterprise: A Social History of Industrial America, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1942. Pp. 119-120)
"... we meet continually with the paradox that, having spoken so convincingly of the progressive integration of systems into ever higher levels of organisation, he [Spencer] / stopped short at nineteenth-century England and found in its individualism nature's supreme achievement." (PP. 248-249) "There is thus a striking contradiction in his evolutionary thought. By what strange arguments was he able to convince himself that the liberal economic individualism of the mid-nineteenth century was the high state of integration to which all cosmic development had been tending?" (P. 249) (Joseph Needham, "Integrative Levels: A Revaluation of the Idea of Progress." (Herbert Spencer Lecture at Oxford University, 1937) In Time: The Refreshing River, pp. 233-272. George Allen & Unwin Ltd. London, 1943.)

"He [Herbert Spencer] was also an exponent of an extreme laissez-faire individualism, seeing the struggle between individuals jockeying for position as the driving force of social progress (Kennedy 1978; Peel 1971; Taylor 1992). His ideas were welcomed with enthusiasm by the robber barons who masterminded the development of American industry in the late nineteenth century. It is easy, then, to see why Hofstadter should take Spencer as the archetypical social Darwinist, responsible for transmitting this harsh philosophy of progress through struggle across the Atlantic." (Peter J. Bowler, Evolution; The History of an Idea. 3rd edition. University of California Press. Berkeley and Los Angeles, 2003. P. 300)

"The problem with Spencer is not that of showing that he conforms to the position being argued here. Rather, it is to get historians to see how central his work and influence were to the nineteenth-century debate, both among scientists and the broader public. His reputation has suffered most among the leaders of thought in the period because subsequent scientists (followed dutifully by historians) have anachronistically dismissed him for holding a "lamarckian" theory of the mechanisms of evolution. Two things should be recalled about his position. First, that it was a theory which, though embattled, was taken seriously throughout the nineteenth century and, indeed, was given increasing weight by Darwin (just as Spencer allowed an increasing role for natural selection). This point should lend perspective to the dismissal of Spencer as a serious figure. Second, he was unequivocal in pointing out that he attached great weight to the question of the mechanism of evolution precisely because of its ethical, educational, social, and political consequences. Throughout his mature life he was seeking a scientific basis for a doctrine of inevitable progress which would justify his belief in an extreme form of laissez-faire economic and social theory." (Robert M. Young, Darwin's Metaphor, Nature's Place in Victorian Culture, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1985. Pp. 197-198)
"... development of language, as of thought, is a progress in establishing discriminations—a making of existing words more precise and introducing others to mark further differences." (Herbert Spencer, Facts and Comments, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1902. P. 18)

"Everyone now knows that languages are not devised but evolved." (Herbert Spencer, Principles of Sociology, Vol. 2, Section 399)

"There is an interesting passage in Herbert Spencer's Autobiography (i. 528) in which he calculates the number of 'good' (i.e., presumably, easily distinguished) monosyllables that can be formed by the exhaustive use of good consonants and good vowel sounds for the use of a contemplated 'universal language' on a purely a priori basis .... It is not easy to see what Spencer means by his 5 / simple and 18 compound vowels and what simple and compound consonants he would admit in his scheme; he arrives at the number 108,264 good, possible monosyllables, but in later years suspected that the number of monosyllables would be considerably greater. This to some extent agrees with my own calculation, which is based on the fact that English as now spoken admits 21 simple initial consonants ... 45 initial consonant-groups ... 18 simple final consonants ... 100 final consonant-groups ... 21 vowels and diphthongs.... The result of my calculation is that the phonetic structure of the English language as actually spoken in our own times would admit the possibility of rather more than 158,000 monosyllables." (Otto Jespersen, "Monosyllabism in English," Proceedings of the British Academy, Vol. 14, pp. 341-368, 1928. Pp. 346-347)

SIDNEY LANIER

"Sidney Lanier offers an example of this selective application of Spencerian evolutionary concepts to literature. In The English Novel (1883), ... Lanier interpreted Spencer's theory of evolution to mean the emergence of individualism and used it as his unifying theme in tracing the development of fiction. As Spencer saw the growth of individual personality as one aspect of increased heterogeneity, so Lanier saw the movement reflected in the treatment of personality in literature, from the total absence of distinct personality in Aeschus to the intense study of complex personalities in George Eliot. Yet Lanier, though he made use of this aspect of Spencer, was able to reject both biological evolution and the determinism implicit in the entire system." (Donald Pizer, "Herbert Spencer and the Genesis of Hamlin Garland's Critical System," Tulane Studies in English, Vol. 7, pp. 153-168, 1957. P. 158)
"For Lanier this principle of opposition, of Form against Chaos, of Good against Evil, of Love against Selfishness, of Design against Accident, of Belief against Scepticism, is the fundamental principle of creation ... It comes in part too from Spencer, who [Lanier wrote] "has formulated the proposition that where opposing forces act, rhythm appears, and has traced the rhythmic motions of nature to the antagonistic forces there found, such as the two motions which carry the earth towards, and away from, the sun and so result in the periodicity of the earth's progress, and others."" (Aubrey Harrison Starke, Sidney Lanier, A Biographical and Critical Study, The University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, N.C., 1933. Pp. 372-373)


"After having discussed the importance of mutual aid in various classes of animals, I was evidently bound to discuss the importance of the same factor in the evolution of Man. This was the more necessary as there are a number of evolutionists who may not refuse to admit the importance of mutual aid among animals, but who, like Herbert Spencer, will refuse to admit it for Man."


The arguments of the English philosopher Sir William Hamilton, said Sidney Lanier, "... seemed to preclude the possibility of any relation from man to God, of the cognitive sort; but Mr. Herbert Spencer [In the first section of First Principles, undoubtedly] has relieved the blankness of this situation by asserting the possibility of a partial relation still. We cannot think God, it is true; but we can think towards Him." [This is an example of the manner in which some persons readily, even eagerly, seized upon the concept of the Unknowable in an effort to find in the writings of a scientist something with which to bolster their theology.] (Sidney Lanier, "From Bacon to Beethoven" [first written in 1876; first published in Lippincott's Magazine in May, 1887], in Paul Franklin Baum, ed., The Centennial Edition of the Works of Sidney Lanier, Vol. 2, The Science of English Verse, and Essays on Music, pp. 274-290, The Johns Hopkins Press, Baltimore, 1945. P. 286)
"I have read again Spencer's First Principles in order to review him—and really I couldn't help liking the old fellow. I hated his ideas but I appreciated their force more than ever before. I gave him to a student to read with results that impressed me and concluded that a critical edition of him would be very valuable." (Letter from Harold J. Laski to Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr., dated May 15, 1917. Quoted in Holmes-Laski Letters, The Correspondence of Mr. Justice Holmes and Harold J. Laski, 1916-1935, 2 Vols., edited by Mark DeWolfe Howe, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1953. Vol. 1, p. 86)

"... I think I remember hearing at one time that H. Spencer had a great vogue at Oxford. Bradley naturally wouldn't attribute any importance to him. Many first-rate Frenchmen have cited him with respect as I have noted from time to time—I think Faguet does in his volume I had the other day. All this simply to insist that de facto he has been an important influence." (Letter from Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr., to Harold J. Laski dated September 21, 1916. Quoted in Holmes-Laski Letters, The Correspondence of Mr. Justice Holmes and Harold J. Laski, 1916-1935, 2 Vols., edited by Mark DeWolfe Howe, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1953. Vol. 1, p. 24)

"... to many people it might seem natural that physics should have as its subject the elements capable of entering into the relations and giving them a real content, and filling them up as it were. This was Spencer's idea in his classification of the sciences. However this idea cannot be considered a happy one. We register the elements of reality directly, immediately, just as they are and as they cannot help being." (V. I. Lenin, Collected Works, Volume 38, Philosophical Notebooks, Translated by Clemens Dutt, Edited by Stewart Smith, Lawrence and Wishart, London, 1961(?). P. 430)
"I owe him [Herbert Spencer] a debt of gratitude. My acquaintance with him was the brightest ray in a very dreary, wasted period of my life. I had given up all ambition whatever, lived from hand to mouth, and thought [one] evil of each day sufficient. The stimulus of his intellect, especially during our long walks, roused my energy once more and revived my dormant love of science. His intense theorising tendency was contagious, and it was only the stimulus of a theory which could then have induced me to work."

Spencer's definition of life, according to Ward, "... constitutes the truest definition of life that we now possess." (Lester F. Ward, Dynamic Sociology, 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. Vol. 1, p. 170)

In the last revision of his Principles of Biology Spencer wrote: "We are obliged to confess that Life in its essence cannot be conceived in physico-chemical terms." (D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1914. Vol. 1, p. 120) (Quoted from Will Durant, The Story of Philosophy; I have been unable to find this quotation in the place cited in the latest edition of Principles of Biology I have looked at.)

"The required principle of activity, which we found cannot be represented as an independent vital principle, we now find cannot be represented as a principle inherent in living matter. If, by assuming its inherence, we think the facts are accounted for, we do but cheat ourselves with pseud-ideas." (Herbert Spencer, The Principles of Biology, 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1914. Vol. 1, p. 120)

After rejecting vitalism, but finding physico-chemical explanations inadequate, Spencer concludes: "In brief, then, we are obliged to confess that Life in its essence cannot be conceived in physico-chemical terms. The required principle of activity, which we found cannot be represented as an independent vital principle, we now find cannot be represented as a principle inherent in living matter. If, by assuming its inherence, we think the facts are accounted for, we do but cheat ourselves with pseud-ideas." (p. 120) "We find it impossible to think of Life as imported into the unit of protoplasm from without; and yet we find it impossible to conceive it as emerging from the cooperation of the components." (p.122) (Herbert Spencer, "The Dynamic Element in Life," Chapter VIA inserted into Vol. 1 of the 1898 revised edition of The Principles of Biology, 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1904)

"Then [in "The Dynamical Element in Life"], after arguing that life can not be conceived either as a vital principle, a vis vitae, or in physico-chemical terms, he adopts as the only possible alternative that it is another inexplicable manifestation of the unknown and ultimate reality,—a conclusion that is not only dubious philosophically, but questionable from the scientific standpoint as well." (Frank C. Becker, "The Final Edition of Spencer's 'First Principles: Part I'," The Journal of Philosophy, Vol. 3, pp. 287-291, 1906. P. 289)
"It is now possible to see that Herbert Spencer's conception of life as 'the continuous adjustment of internal relations to external relations' /Principles of Biology, revised edition, 1909, p. 1237/, though doubtless far from satisfactory as a characterization of life itself, is really a true statement of the phenomena of organization. Vague though it may be, it is confirmed by the results of experimental morphology, of physiology, and of the science of metabolism." (Lawrence J. Henderson, The Order of Nature. Harvard University Press. Cambridge, 1917. P. 89.)

"... Mr. Herbert Spencer's masterly elucidation of the chief phenomena of Life has placed philosophy and science under many obligations ...." (Henry Drummond, Natural Law in the Spiritual World, James Pott & Co., Publishers, New York, 1887. P. 145)
"I was so glad to see you again. If I in early life had had such a friend, I might have done something with myself; but I have always been among conventional or unlearned people, I have never been in the higher circles of thought and knowledge." (Letter from Mrs. Elizabeth Lynn Linton to Herbert Spencer written "a few years later" than 1881. Quoted in George Somes Layard, Mrs. Lynn Linton, Her Life, Letters, and Opinions, Methuen & Co., London, 1901. P. 204)
"The principal weakness of Indian Nationalism seems to be that it is not very Indian and not very national. It is all about Herbert Spencer and Heaven knows what. What is the good of the Indian national spirit if it cannot protect its people from Herbert Spencer? I am not fond of the philosophy of Buddhism; but it has real ideas of its own. One of the papers published by Indian nationalists in England, I understand, is called the Indian Sociologist [edited by Shyamaji Krishnavarma]. What are the young men of India doing that they allow such an animal as a sociologist to pollute their ancient villages and poison their kindly homes?" (p. 387) "If there is such a thing as India, it has a right to be Indian. But Herbert Spencer is not Indian; "Sociology" is not Indian; all this pedantic clatter about culture and science is not Indian. I often wish it were not English either." (p. 387) (G. K. Chesterton, "Our Note Book," weekly column in The Illustrated London News, Vol. 135, No. 3674, p. 387, September 18, 1909)

"Among the many letters of congratulation and praise received by my father, none gave him keener pleasure than a letter from Herbert Spencer [probably in 1891] asking him to go and see him. The Times criticism of the play The Dancing Girl by Jones, first produced on the London stage in 1891, referred to the lines where Sybil Craig, in speaking of Herbert Spencer, says, "I've found out." Guisebury, "What?" Sybil, "That he teaches exactly the same thing as Dante. Dante says, 'In His will is thy peace,' Spencer says, 'You must bring yourself into perfect agreement with your environment or get crushed!"' Herbert Spencer was very pleased at this quotation from his teaching, and H. A. J. derived the keenest pleasure from the talk he had with the great man. He told him how, as a boy not out of his teens, he had commenced reading all his works, and how deeply and lastingly he was indebted to their teaching for his intellectual development. My father said constantly, "Any clear thinking I've done I owe to Herbert Spencer."" (Doris Arthur Jones, The Life and Letters of Henry Arthur Jones, Victor Gollancz Ltd, London, 1930. P. 114) (Jones wrote 87 plays between 1869 and 1922, of which 49 were performed.)


"But there are two reasons, among many, why the name of Mr. HERBERT SPENCER must not be omitted from such a summary as ours: firstly, because no Englishman of his age has made so deep an intellectual impression on foreign thought, or is so widely known throughout Europe; and secondly, because of the stimulating effect which his theories have exercised over almost every native author of the last twenty years." (Edmund Gosse, A Short History of Modern English Literature, William Heinemann, London, 1898. P. 377)
"He [her husband] it was who gave me Wallace's "Darwin and Darwinism," and "The Origin of Species," and made known to me Huxley, Herbert Spencer, Romanes, Haeckel, Westermarck, and the various popular exponents of the great evolutionary movement. But it is idle to prolong the list, and hopeless to convey to a younger generation the first overwhelming sense of cosmic vastness which such "magic casements" let into our little geocentric universe." (Edith Wharton, A Backward Glance, D. Appleton-Century Company, New York, 1934. P. 94)

"... and simultaneously there appeared in 1888 or shortly thereafter from parts unknown a series of cheap reprints of scientific papers, including some of Herbert Spencer. I read them all, sometimes with shivers of puzzlement and sometimes with delight, but always calling for more." (H. L. Mencken, Happy Days, 1880-1892, Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1940. Pp. 174-175)

"The last person to go to for a definition of literature is the half-educated scientist, just as the last person who can speak for or against science is the literary man who knows nothing about it. The typical half-educated scientist might be Herbert Spencer, who puts literature among the "miscellaneous activities which make up the leisure part of life, devoted to the gratification of the tastes and feelings." The condescension in those words is as revolting as their ignorance is awful. "We yield to none," says Spencer, "in the value we attach to aesthetic culture and its pleasures." Such a man can know nothing of literature, which is no more for leisure than botany is. If it is not necessary it is nothing." (Mark Van Doren, Liberal Education, Henry Holt and Company, New York, 1943. P. 159)

"The better known works of Herbert Spencer also stirred me up. When Herbert Spencer died I wrote for the Saturday Evening Post an account of his life and works, one of the few things I ever asked George Lorimer, the magazine's editor, to print. Herbert Spencer, along with Whitman, Emerson and Dickens, became at the turn of the century one of my spiritual inspirations." (The Autobiography of William Allen White, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1946. P. 326)

"When I was about twelve [ca. 1905 in Knoxville, Tenn.] I was taken to hear the Bishop [Gailor, an Episcopalian] ... during his annual visitation. His subject was Herbert Spencer, of whom I had never heard, but of whom the Bishop disapproved so eloquently that I sought Spencer's Synthetic Philosophy at the library the very next day. I don't think I ever got all the way through even the first volume, but I was so impressed by the introductory discourse on "The Knowable and the Unknowable" that on this basis alone I was for some years, say from twelve to sixteen, a devout Spencerian." (Joseph Wood Krutch, More Lives Than One, William Sloane Associates, New York, 1962. P. 22)
"During the 1860's in California, the poet Edward R. Sill found himself in a cultural wasteland, and wrote: 'One's only companions are Shakespeare, Shelley and Mill and Browning and Spencer and the others.' (Quoted in San Francisco's Literary Frontier by Franklin Walker, Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1939. P. 235)

An anonymous writer in The Nation had said, off-handedly, that while Herbert Spencer was accepted by the general public, he was scoffed at by the experts in the various fields in which he wrote. John Fiske replied to this that "... it is not the 'experts' who do the scoffing at Mr. Spencer, but almost without exception the literary dilettanti who have never received the special scientific training without which Mr. Spencer's works cannot possibly be understood or appreciated." (John Fiske, "Herbert Spencer and the Experts," The Nation, Vol. 8, p. 434, June 3, 1869. P. 434)

"This first visit to the theatre [in London in 1871], when he was 18 years old, made a tremendous impression. H. [Henry] A. [Arthur] J. [Jones] said, 'I left off writing a novel I was engaged upon, and gave most of my leisure to seeing plays and reading Herbert Spencer.' (Doris Arthur Jones, The Life and Letters of Henry Arthur Jones, Victor Gollancz Ltd, London, 1930. P. 34)

"I expect to go to England [from Paris] in about a month. I wish you could send me some letters of introduction. I should like especially to know Herbert Spencer. --I am such an intense admirer of his writings that it would be a great delight to me to converse with him ...." (Letter from Steele Mackaye to William R. Alger dated November 1, 1872. Quoted in Epoch; The Life of Steele Mackaye, Genius of the Theatre, A Memoir by His Son Percy Mackaye, 2 Vols., Boni & Liveright, New York, 1927. Vol. 1, p. 183)

At a party at Madame Mohl's in Paris there were a number of persons present, including Anne Thackeray and Ernest Renan: "He [Renan] said that nobody ever persecuted to prove a thing that was provable, such as a problem of Euclid, but only to prove a thing that was unprovable such as religion or dogma, and then they all began to praise Herbert Spencer like mad." (Letter from Anne Thackeray Ritchie [Thackeray's daughter] to Leslie Stephen, undated [1875]. Quoted in Hester Thackeray Ritchie, Thackeray and His Daughter, Harper & Brothers, New York, 1924. P. 178)

"I was so glad to see you again. If I in early life had had such a friend, I might have done something with myself; but I have always been among conventional or unlearned people, I have never been in the higher circles of thought and knowledge." (Letter from Mrs. Elizabeth Lynn Linton to Herbert Spencer written "a few years later" than 1881. Quoted in George Somes Layard, Mrs. Lynn Linton, Her Life, Letters, and Opinions, Methuen & Co., London, 1901. P. 204)
"But this new religion of the mystical Whitman, in harmony with post-transcendental thought, was deeply impregnated with the spirit of science. He was in the very fullness of his powers when the conception of evolution came to him and he greeted it gladly, weaving it into all his thinking and discovering in it a confirmation of his idealistic philosophy. It was the evolution of Herbert Spencer, it must be remembered, that Whitman accepted—teleological, buoyantly optimistic, dominated by the conception of progress, shot through with the spirit of the Enlightenment; and such an evolution was a confirmation and not a denial of his transcendental premises." (Vernon L. Parrington, Main Currents in American Thought, Vol. 3: The Beginnings of Critical Realism in America: 1860-1920, Harcourt, Brace & Co., Inc., New York, 1930. P. 80)

In a chapter entitled "The Evolution of the German Novel," Boyesen wrote: "Evolution, according to one of the several definitions presented by Herbert Spencer, is a development from the homogeneous to the heterogeneous, and if the novel is to keep pace with life, it must necessarily be subject to the same development; it must, in its highest form, convey an impression of the whole complex machinery of the modern state and society, and, by implication at least, make clear the influences and surroundings which fashioned the hero's character and thus determined his career." (Hjalmar Hjorth Boyesen, Essays on German Literature, third edition, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1893. P. 232) (Boyesen was Professor of Germanic Languages and Literatures at Columbia University)

"Instinctively the new writers of the latter half of the 19th century began a search for older allies. There were a few of these to be found in America, but not enough of them to serve as the basis of a new literary movement. For most of their support the rebels had to look eastward across the Atlantic. They were especially attracted by the English evolutionary scientists and pamphleteers. Most of the young writers read the works of this whole English group, beginning with Darwin, whose observations were too rigorously set forth to please their slipshod literary tastes. They could not find much to use in Darwin's books, except his picture of natural selection operating through the struggle for life; most of their Darwinism was acquired at second hand. Huxley they seem to have read with less veneration but more interest, chiefly because of his arguments against the Bible as revealed truth and because of his long war with the Protestant clergy. Young writers, feeling that the churches were part of a vast conspiracy to keep them silent, believed that Huxley was fighting their battle. It was Herbert Spencer, however, who deeply affected their thinking. Spencer's American popularity during the last half of the nineteenth century is something without parallel in the history of philosophic writing." (Malcolm Cowley, "Naturalism in American Literature," in Evolutionary Thought in America, edited by Stow Persons, pp. 300-333. Yale University Press, New Haven, 1950. P. 302)
"Bergson belongs to my "youth" (tailor shop days). How much he influenced me is imponderable. The great influences were Nietzsche, Spengler, yes, Emerson, Herbert Spencer (†), Thoreau, Whitman--and Elie Faure." (Letter from Henry Miller to Lawrence Durrell dated March 14, 1949. Quoted in Lawrence Durrell and Henry Miller a Private Correspondence, edited by George Wickes, E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc., New York, 1963. P. 261)

"Eye the bye, see if they have any of Herbert Spencer's books in the Mechanics' Institute Library. He is perhaps our greatest living philosopher." (Letter from George Gissing to Algernon Gissing dated January 19, 1879. Quoted in Letters of George Gissing to Members of His Family, Collected and arranged by Algernon and Ellen Gissing, Constable and Company, Ltd., London, 1927. P. 40)

"... limited truths discernable in the various phases of literature may, nay, in order to be understood even as limited truths, must be grouped round certain central facts of comparative permanent influence. Such facts are climate, soil, animal and plant life of different countries; such also is the principle of evolution from communal to individual life which we shall hereafter explain at length. The former may be called the statical influences to which literature has been everywhere exposed; the latter may be called the dynamical principle of literature's progress and decay." [Spencer not mentioned specifically, but this formulation seems to reflect him.] (Hutcheson Macaulay Posnett, Comparative Literature, Kegan Paul, Trench & Co., London, 1886. P. 20)

"Is there nobody else to talk to?"
"Not about the things we talk of. There's a lot of things that you're not interested in, that ----"
"What things?"
Mrs. Morel was so intense that Paul [her son] began to pant.
"Why--painting--and books. You don't care about Herbert Spencer."
"No," was the sad reply. "And you won't at my age."

"When [Kate] Chopin returned to St. Louis after her husband's death [in 1883], her family doctor, Frederick Kolbenheyer, became one of her closest friends. A radical intellectual and, according to Per Seyersted [Chopin's biographer], a "determined agnostic," he persuaded her to read Darwin, Huxley, and Spencer; to abandon in all but name the faith of her Catholic girlhood; and to begin writing fiction in earnest." (Sandra M. Gilbert, Introduction to The Awakening and Selected Stories, by Kate Chopin, pp.7-33. Penguin Books. New York, 1986. P. 11)
"To tie a prominent statesman to her train and to lead him about like a tame bear, is for a young and vivacious woman a more certain amusement than to tie herself to him and to be dragged about like an Indian squaw. This fact was Madeleine Lee's [the heroine of Henry Adams novel] first great political discovery in Washington, and it was worth to her all the German philosophy she had ever read, with even a complete edition of Herbert Spencer's works into the bargain." (Henry Adams, *Democracy*. Meridian Classic. New American Library. New York, 1983. [Originally published anonymous in 1880] P. 53)

"Van Wyck Brooks regards the rejection of Spencer's *Education* by Ticknor & Fields when offered them in 1860 by Youmans as "one of the first signs of the passing of Boston as the intellectual centre of the country. As a result of this first refusal, all these works of science, which dominated the mind of the coming epoch, were published by the Appletons of New York," *New England: Indian Summer* (New York, 1940), 110." (Charles M. Haar, "E. L. Youmans: A Chapter in the Diffusion of Science in America." *Journal of the History of Ideas*, Vol. 9, pp. 193-213, 1948. P. 209)


"The decline of this series [the International Scientific Series] by Ticknor and Fields, to whom, in 1860, Youmans offered Spencer's *Education*, was one of the first indications of the passing of Boston as the intellectual centre of the country. As a result of this first refusal, all these works of science, which dominated the mind of the coming epoch, were published by the Appletons of New York." (Van Wyck Brooks, *New England: Indian Summer*, E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc., New York, 1965. P. 114n.)
"After talking of Herbert Spencer for an entire evening with a very literary transcendental commission-merchant, she could not see that her time had been better employed than when in former days she had passed it in flirting with a very agreeable young stockbroker ...." (Henry Adams, *Democracy, An American Novel*. A Meridian Classic, New York, 19_. P. 13. [The character described is Mrs. Lightfoot Lee, perhaps the heroine of the novel])


"To give up Spencer," said Jack London's autobiographical hero, "would be equivalent to a navigator throwing the compass and chronometer overboard." Later, when he heard a California judge disparaging Spencer, the hero burst into a rage. "To hear that great and noble man's name upon your lips," he shouted, "is like finding a dewdrop in a cesspool." (Malcolm Cowley, "Naturalism in American Literature," in Evolutionary Thought in America, ed. by Stow Persons, pp. 300-373, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1950. P. 304)

Jack London affords an example of someone who was both a Socialist and a Spencerian. What he absorbed from Spencer was his determinism and evolutionism as expressed in First Principles, and not anything that Spencer had to say about individualism and laissez-faire. European socialists somehow found this difficult to do. They read his political philosophy and recoiled from it, and left his science largely unread. An exception may be Enrico Ferri.

"But it was not until he [Jack London] struck Herbert Spencer's First Principles that he found his long-sought method of correlating the varied trends of thought he had assimilated into a working philosophy. His meeting with the mind of Herbert Spencer was perhaps the greatest single adventure in a life fraught with adventures. One night, after long study-bouts with William James and Francis Bacon, and after writing a sonnet as a nightcap, he crawled into bed with a copy of First Principles. Morning found him still reading. He continued reading all the next day, abandoning the bed for the floor when his body tired." (p. 98) "Jack was more thrilled by this discovery than he had been at the discovery of gold on Henderson Creek, for he knew that Spencer's monism could never turn out to be mica. Herbert Spencer made him drunk with comprehension." (p. 98) (Irving Stone, Sailor on Horseback, the Story of Jack London, The Bodley Head, London, 1948. P. 98)
"The essence of science is its objectivity, its thoroughness, its contempt of authority. Spencer exhibited these qualities, not in the limited domain of the specialist, but in the whole field of human knowledge and action. Whatever subject he treats, he never truckles to established canons. He is not less of an independent scientist, opposed to dogma, in indignantly denying homage to Homer and Raphael, the fetishes of the critical guild, than in demanding the evidence for special creation." (Robert H. Lowie, "Tolstoi or Spencer?" The Liberal Review, Vol. 1, pp. 515-520, 1904. P. 517)

"A Columbia student is speaking of himself who from a boy had accepted Darwinism as a godma, who had steeped himself as an undergraduate in Herbert Spencer's First Principles and hailed Ernst Haeckel's Die Welträtsel as a definitive solution of all cosmic enigmas, was profoundly disturbed when browsing in the departmental libraries of Schermerhorn Hall or talking to age-mates who majored in zoology. Bewildering judgments turned up in the new books and journals. Haeckel, it seemed, was an irresponsible hotspur, if not a forger of evidence. For William James, Herbert Spencer was a "vague writer," and in Pearson's opinion the British philosopher cut a sorry figure when using the terms of physics. Darwin himself, esteemed for his monographs, was not always taken seriously as a theorist. In the building where our student spent most of his time Thomas Hunt Morgan, a prophet of the new dispensation, held forth on the weakness of the Darwinian philosophy." (Robert H. Lowie, "Reminiscences of Anthropological Currents in America Half a Century Ago," American Anthropologist, Vol. 58, pp. 995-1016, 1956. P. 1005)

"... I find a letter from Mr. Herbert Spencer enquiring where, in his books, may be found information on the following point: "The gods are conceived by many uncivilized peoples as very stupid and easily deceived by sham sacrifices. I have remembrance somewhere of a case in which it was said by the people that their god So-and-So was stupid, or something of that kind; and that for this reason they deluded him." Mr. Spencer says that, not finding it in Tylor, he concludes it must be in Sir John's writings." (Horace G. Hutchinson, editor, The Life of Sir John Lubbock, Lord Avebury, 2 Vols., Macmillan and Co., Limited, 1914. Vol. 2, pp. 45-46)


"It is perfectly possible, I think, as Mr. Herbert Spencer has shown in a recent admirable volume [The Man versus The State], to revive even in our day the fiscal tyranny which once left even European populations in doubt whether it was worth while preserving life by thrift and toil." (Sir Henry Sumner Maine, Popular Government, John Murray, London, 1885. P. 49)

"I quite think, with Grote, that the master-error of Buckle was his absurd underrating of the accidents of history; and Herbert Spencer represents the same tendency in an even more exaggerated form. Sir Henry Maine once said to me that he knew no modern reputation which had declined so much in so short a time as Buckle's, and that he believed that the reputation of everyone who, like Herbert Spencer, treated society mainly as an organisation must suffer a similar collapse." (W. E. H. Lecky, quoted in A Memoir of the Right Hon. William Edward Hartpole Lecky, by His Wife /Elizabeth Lecky/, Longmans, Green, and Co., New York, 1909. P. 122)

MARRIAGE & THE FAMILY

p. 35. Did Spencer believe that kinship terms were used by preliterate peoples to designate what they conceived to be biological relationships? Or, did S. see clearly that these terms designate social, rather than biological, relationships (from scientific point of view)? — L. A. White


Spencer did not see monogamy as necessarily the best form of marriage, in some Victorian sense, toward which all societies were striving. He says: "In competition with polygyny and monogamy, polyandry may, in some cases, have had the advantage for reasons cited above (having several "fathers", the children of a polyandrous household would be better off): polygynic and monogamic families dying out because the offspring of them were relatively ill-fed" (Vol. I, p. 681, 1st ed.)

It is true that Spencer considered monogamy to be the highest form of marriage, but not because it was the system prevalent in Victorian England, but for structural and functional reasons which he took pains to set forth in considerable detail (Vol. I, pp. 700-704, 1st ed.)
Thus it appears that Herbert Spencer, like Karl Marx suffered in that their scientific propositions about society have been ignored or resisted because of the fact that, combined with these, were political doctrines strongly defending certain courses of action, while attacking others.

"He [Karl Marx] made much the same impression on me when Harris called on him in the early 1880's that Herbert Spencer made twenty years later; but Spencer was contemptuously angry under contradiction [i.e., when Harris contradicted him], whereas Karl Marx was inattentively courteous. But both had shut themselves off from hearing anything against their pet theory, one sided though it was. And just as Herbert Spencer was worth listening to on everything but "the field I've made my own", so was Karl Marx." (Frank Harris, His Life and Adventures: An Autobiography, The Richards Press, London, 1952. P. 177)

There is no evidence that Spencer was aware of any of the writings of Karl Marx, or even, to judge from Spencer's Autobiography, of Marx' existence. His aversion to socialism probably kept him from reading any socialist literature, since, as he says himself, he had no patience to read anything theoretical with whose basis he was out of sympathy. (But Marx' name is cited once in Principles of Sociology).

"Open almost any book dealing with the problems of our time and you will find .... Darwin and Marx repeatedly coupled as the great pair whose conceptions revolutionized the modern world .... Darwin as the scientist and Marx as the sociologist." (Jacques Barzun, Darwin, Marx, Wagner; Critique of a Heritage. Doubleday & Company, Inc. Garden City, N.Y., 1958. P. 1.)

Yet Spencer was much more of a scientist than Darwin in that he dealt with many more fields of science and was much more concerned with the philosophy of science and scientific method. And Spencer was much more of a sociologist than Marx in encompassing more human societies, in many more aspects, and societies over a much longer period of development.
"... With Marx (with Engels's help) was the Darwin of the social sciences, or nobody was." (Marvin Harris, The Rise of Anthropological Theory, Thomas Y. Crowell Company, New York, 1968. P. 218)

"Governments are not in themselves powerful, but are the instrumentality of a power." (Vol. II, p. 318). This sounds very Marxian.

"Later on the bourgeois sociologists, as for example Spencer, made use of the doctrine of the social organism to draw the most conservative conclusions." (G. Plekhanov (N. Beltov), The Development of the Monist View of History, Foreign Languages Publishing House, Moscow, 1956. P. 82)

Anathema as socialism was to Spencer, he foresaw, with Engels, a "withering away of the state" under a fully industrial type of society in which: "Nearly all public organizations save that for administering justice, necessarily disappear." (Vol. II, p. 612).

"In my opinion, Engels was correct when he attributed to Marx the "discovery of the law of evolution in human history." (Compare Thorstein Veblen's view that Marx' philosophy was, in some important ways, pre-evolutionary.) (Marvin Harris, The Rise of Anthropological Theory, Thomas Y. Crowell Company, New York, 1968. P. 219)

"Here is a spencerism into whose empiricism Darwin inculcated the idea of "evolution" as a special vaccine, taught in the moral sphere evolution proceeds from "sensations" to "ideas." (Leon Trotsky, "Their Morals and Ours" (1938), in The Basic Writings of Trotsky, edited by Irving Howe, pp. 370-399, Vintage Books, Random House, New York, 1965. P. 376)

"Spencerism has done nothing but to collate a vast amount of scientific evidence, from all branches of human knowledge, in support of these two abstract thoughts of Leibnitz /sic/ and Hegel: "The present is the child of the past, but it is the parent of the future," and "Nothing is; everything is becoming." (Enrico Ferri, Socialism and Modern Science (Darwin--Spencer--Marx), Translated by Robt. Rives La Monte, International Library Publishing Co., New York, 1900. (Original French edition, 1895) (P. 94)

"Now the Marxists, like the anarchists, are out to abolish the State. Marx agreed to a surprising extent with the extreme nineteenth-century liberals, and with philosophers like Herbert Spencer, when he characterized the State as a "parasitic excrescence" to be "amputated."" (J. B. S. Haldane, The Marxist Philosophy and the Sciences, Central Book Depot, Allahabad, India, 1946. P. 171)
"When Marx sent Spencer the second German edition of the first
volume of Das Kapital, Spencer replied with a brief note in the third
person. After remarking that he was "obliged to Dr. Karl Marx" for
the gift, he went on: (26) Transcribed from a photocopy of the ori-
ginal provided by the Marx-Engels-Lenin Institute, Moscow. This let-
ter, catalogued as CPA IML (Moskau) f. I, op. 5, N 3325, is quoted
by permission of the Institute and of the International Instituut
voor Sociale Geschiedenis, Amsterdam.) ... When, presently, Mr.
Spencer comes to deal with politico-economic questions, as included
in Sociology at large, Dr. / Marx's volume will have an interest for
him, but he fears that his ignorance of German will prevent him from
gaining any adequate idea of its contents." (Nineteenth-Century
Thought: The Discovery of Change, edited by Richard L. Schoenwald,

One thing that may be of interest to you is that Plekhanov had
more than a passing interest in Spencer. In Unaddressed Letters,
Foreign Languages Publ. House, Moscow, 1957, he devotes several
pages to Spencer's theory of play, along with the criticisms of
Groos and Bucher. In "The Development of the Monist View of History,"
vol. 1, Selected Philosophical Works, Moscow, n.d., or by itself,
Lawrence and Wishart, London, 1947, he defends Spencer as having
strong affinities with Hegel, attacking the views of the Narodnik,
Nikolai Mikhailovsky. But in sum, he regards Spencer's "organic"
philosophy of society as being essentially conservative—another
ideological weapon for bourgeois intellectuals to use to
defend the social status quo. (Letter from John Moore, dated Novem-
ber 28, 1967)

"The strong utopian ingredient in Marx's vision of progress is
illustrated in the distinctive motto of ultimate communism: "from
each according to his abilities, to each according to his needs." However,
the ultimate stages of Spencer's industrial society do not
lack for similar manifestations of spontaneous altruism. As Marxism
predicted the end of exploitation in the communist millennium, Spen-
cerism predicted a future society in which the desires of each in-
dividual would be in adaptive equilibrium with the desires of all
others and with the means of satisfying them." (Marvin Harris, The
Rise of Anthropological Theory, Thomas Y. Crowell Company, New York,
1968. P. 222)

"To the question, whence arose the need for special bodies of
armed men, placed above society and alienating themselves from it
(police and standing army), the West-European and Russian philis-
tines are inclined to answer with a few phrases borrowed from Spen-
cer or Mikhailovsky, by referring to the growing complexity of so-
cial life, the differentiation of functions, and so forth. Such a
reference seems "scientific," and effectively dulls the senses of
the man in the street by obscuring the most important and basic
fact, namely, the cleavage of society into irreconcilably antagon-
istic classes." (V. I. Lenin, The State and Revolution, Foreign
Languages Publishing House, Moscow, n.d. P. 17)
"... Engels, who explicitly associated his view about the mathematical capacities of various races with Spencer's belief that the sense of mathematical proof is acquired and transmitted through heredity: "Spencer is right in as much as what thus appears to us to be the self-evidence of these axioms is inherited." (F. Engels, Dialectics of Nature, Foreign Language Publishing House, Moscow, 1954, p. 340) (Marvin Harris, The Rise of Anthropological Theory, Thomas Y. Crowell Company, New York, 1968, P. 239)

Those who have always thought of Spencer as the arch apostle of individualism and the rights of private property may be surprised to learn that Spencer foresaw "a stage still more advanced than the one in which slavery had been done away with in which it may be that private ownership of land will disappear" (Vol. II, p. 553). Spencer is very undogmatic and his vision and perspective are not easily clouded by personal predilections.

"Note that there is a curious similarity between Spencer's ultimate industrial phase and the nebulous stateless and classless utopia which Marx had promised would follow the proletarian victory. Both Marx and Spencer continued to expect the triumph of the individual over society as in the dream of Rousseau. For both Spencer and Marx, the withering away of the state was a withering away not only of the political apparatus but of the entire supra-individual, sociocultural nexus of restraint." (Marvin Harris, The Rise of Anthropological Theory, Thomas Y. Crowell Company, New York, 1968, P. 468)

Marxian criticism of Spencer's survival of the fittest: "The very idea of the survival of the strong through a victory won over the weak, must, consequently, be regarded as an unconscious and inexact reminiscence of experiences encountered in the capitalist society, and inapplicable, therefore, to the social phenomena belonging to economic equality." (Achille Loria, The Economic Foundations of Society, translated by Lindley M. Keasbey, George Allen & Unwin Ltd., London, 1902, Pp. 66-67)

"Until these last few years a vain effort was made to consign, by a conspiracy of silence, the masterly work of Marx to oblivion, but now his name is coming to rank with those of Charles Darwin and Herbert Spencer as the three Titans of the scientific revolution which begot the intellectual renaissance and gave fresh potency to the civilizing thought of the latter half of the nineteenth century." (Enrico Ferri, Socialism and Modern Science, (Darwin--Spencer--Marx), Translated by Robt. Rives La Monte, International Library Publishing Co., New York, 1900. (Original French edition, 1892) (F. 159)
"This situation bore upon my attitude toward the church. I could not abide the men who controlled it; and as I had thrown out the Bible as revelation, and the miracles as nonsense, my religious position was definite at an early time. [Ca. 1890; Masters was born in 1869.] Very soon I made friends with a man named Homer Roberts, a schoolteacher, and a student of Huxley and Spencer ...." (pp. 80-81). "So I was going along feeding my hungry mind. I read Huxley and Spencer with Homer Roberts, particularly First Principles, and the Data of Ethics." (p. 85). (Edgar Lee Masters, Across Spoon River; An Autobiography, Octagon Books, New York, 1969)

"She [Rachel Yarros, a Russian Jewess, who was a medical doctor, whom Masters met in Chicago] was deeply read in Spencer's philosophy, and as I had gone rather well into him at Lewistown we had Spencer for a subject to talk about in the evenings, and about the doctrine of equal liberty and philosophical anarchy." (p. 183). (Edgar Lee Masters, Across Spoon River; An Autobiography, Octagon Books, New York, 1969)


Wrote Charles Horton Cooley: "The best known representative of this way of thinking is Herbert Spencer, whose whole philosophy assumes the primacy of material facts, and aims to show how mental and social facts grow out of them." (Quoted by Albion W. Small in "Fifty Years of Sociology in the United States," The American Journal of Sociology, Vol. 21, pp. 721-864, 1916. P. 812)

"Spencer has avowed in his Autobiography (ii, 75) what might be surmised by critical readers, that he wrote the First Part of First Principles in order to guard against the charge of "materialism." This motive led him to misrepresent "atheism," which he quite untruly described as a profession to explain the universe, and there was a touch of retribution in the general disregard of his disavowal of materialism, at which he expresses surprise." (J. M. Robertson, A History of Freethought in the Nineteenth Century, Watts & Co., London, 1929. P. 214)

"Indeed, the English thinker Herbert Spencer attempted a kind of summa of nineteenth-century evolutionary, scientific materialism, and was for several generations a kind of culture-hero for "advanced" people generally." (Crane Brinton, The Shaping of the Modern Mind, Mentor Book. The New American Library. New York, 1953. P. 158)

"Spencer tried to subject the whole evolution movement to the mechanical conception of causation; and he failed most signally. He interpreted all development in terms of successive transformations of energy. Thus life and mind alike were eviscerated of all their richer meaning." (James Mark Baldwin, Darwin and the Humanities, Review Publishing Co., Baltimore, 1909. Pp. 86-87)
"... in one and all of which he finds what he finds in the bodily life, namely, "the adjustment of internal to external relations." This is an exposition of psychical phenomena which will find little favour except with those who advocate materialism." (Anonymous (George H. Lewes), "Herbert Spencer's Principles of Psychology," The Saturday Review of Politics, Literature, Science, and Art, Vol. 1, pp. 352-353, 1856. Pp. 352-353)

"So long as it does not concern itself with the nature of ultimate reality, which it deems to be unknowable, it is Spencer's philosophic system is quite sound, because it deals with phenomena and not with noumena, and with these in a most systematic and comprehensive way. It is only when reality is dismissed as unattainable that it becomes a fabric in mid-air." (John Butler Burke, "Herbert Spencer and the Master Key," The Contemporary Review, Vol. 89, pp. 783-794, 1906. P. 785)

"However, with all the author's disclaimers, the general effect left on the reader's mind is that throughout the universe there is an unceasing change of matter and motion, that evolution is always such a change, that it begins with phenomena in the sense of physical facts, gradually issues in life and consciousness, and ends with phenomena in the sense of subjective affections of consciousness." (Thomas Case, "Metaphysics," The Encyclopaedia Britannica, 11th edition, Vol. 18, pp. 224-253, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1911. P. 227)

"Lastly, when a theory of the world supposes a noumenal power, a resistant and persistent force, which results in an evolution, defined as an integration of matter and a dissipation of motion, which having resulted in inorganic nature and organic nature, further results without break in consciousness, reason, society and morals, then such a theory will be construed as materialistically as that of Haeckel by the reader, whatever the intention of the author." (Thomas Case, "Metaphysics," The Encyclopaedia Britannica, 11th edition, Vol. 18, pp. 224-253, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1911. P. 227)

"The truth is that his theory of evolution can be carried through the whole process without a break only by giving the synthetic philosophy a materialistic interpretation, and by adhering consistently to Spencer's own materialistic definition of evolution; otherwise there will be a break at least between life and mind. If everything knowable is an example of evolution, and evolution is by definition a transformation of matter and motion, then everything knowable is an example of a transformation of matter and motion." (Thomas Case, "Metaphysics," The Encyclopaedia Britannica, 11th edition, Vol. 18, pp. 224-253, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1911. Pp. 227-228)
"... I saw that it would be needful to preface the exposition of First Principles by some chapters setting forth my beliefs on ultimate questions, metaphysical and theological; since, otherwise, I should be charged with propounding a purely materialistic interpretation of things. Hence resulted the first division — "The Unknowable." My expectation was that having duly recognized this repudiation of materialism ..." (Auto. II, 75)

"As to the charge of materialism it has been thrown at me continually for the last thirty years and when one man has been answered another man somewhere else presently throws it again." (Letter from Herbert Spencer to John Fiske dated May 20, 1891. Henry E. Huntington Library, Cat. No. HM 13750. Unpublished)

Spencer said of force or energy: "... there is as much warrant for calling it spiritual as for calling it material." (Herbert Spencer, "Professor Ward on "Naturalism and Agnosticism,"" The Popular Science Monthly, Vol. 56, pp. 349-357, 1900. P. 350)

"It would be unfair to class the coarse materialism of Büchner with the thoughtful realism of Spencer." (Friedrich Max Müller, "Lectures on Mr. Darwin's Philosophy of Language," Fraser's Magazine, n.s., Vol. 7, pp. 525-541, 1873. P. 525)

"Though Mr. Spencer objects to the characterization, I can only describe this philosophy as materialistic, since it accounts for the world and all it contains, including the human ego, by the interactions of matter and motion, without reference to any such thing as intelligence, purpose or will, except as derived from them." (Henry George, A Perplexed Philosopher, Robert Schalkenbach Foundation, New York, 1965. P. 115)

"It is on this vital point of the existence or non-existence of spirit as a prime motor that the real issue raised by theories of evolution comes. Such evolutionism as is represented by the men of whom I have spoken (Alfred Russel Wallace, St. George Mivart, and Joseph Le Conte), sees in evolution only a mode in which the creative spirit works. Such evolutionism as is formulated in the Spencerian philosophy eliminates spirit from its hypothesis, and takes into account only matter and motion." (Henry George, A Perplexed Philosopher, Robert Schalkenbach Foundation, New York, 1965. P. 122)

"In this elimination of any spiritual element lies, it seems to me, the essential characteristic of the Spencerian philosophy. ... the peculiarity of its teachings as to evolution arises from its ignoring of the spiritual element, from its assumption that, matter and motion given, their interactions will account for all that we see, feel or know." (Henry George, A Perplexed Philosopher, Robert Schalkenbach Foundation, New York, 1965. P. 119)
"John Fiske does not truly represent Spencerianism, but has grafted his own ideas on it. So too, I think, with Professor Le Conte—or rather that he holds what I should call the external of evolution, with which I do not quarrel; for though I do not see the weight of the evidence with which it is asserted, it seems to most reasonable. What I do quarrel with is the essential materialism of the Spencerian ideas; and this seems to me to inhere in them in spite of all Spencer's denials." (Letter from Henry George to Edward R. Taylor dated April 18, 1892. Quoted in Henry George, Jr., The Life of Henry George, Robert Schalkenbach Foundation, New York, 1960. P. 570)

"To an abstract objection an abstract rejoinder suffices; and so far as one's opposition to materialism springs from one's disdain of matter as something 'crass,' Mr. Spencer cuts the ground from under one. Matter is indeed infinitely and incredibly refined. To any one who has ever looked on the face of a dead child or parent the mere fact that matter could have taken for a time that precious form, ought to make matter sacred ever after. It makes no difference what the principle of life may be, material or immaterial, matter at any rate co-operates, lends itself to all life's purposes. That beloved incarnation was among matter's possibilities." (William James, "Some Metaphysical Problems Pragmatically Considered," in Pragmatism and Four Essays from The Meaning of Truth, pp. 63-86, Meridian Books, The World Publishing Company, Cleveland, 1955. P. 71)

"I remember a worthy spiritualist professor who always referred to materialism as the 'mud-philosophy,' and deemed it thereby refuted. To such spiritualism as this there is an easy answer, and Mr. Spencer makes it effectively. In some well-written pages at the end of the first volume of his Psychology he shows us that a 'matter' so infinitely subtle, and performing motions as inconceivably quick and fine as those which modern science postulates in her explanations, has no trace of grossness left. He shows that the conception of spirit, as we mortals hitherto have framed it, is itself too gross to cover the exquisite tenuity of nature's facts. Both terms, he says, are but symbols, pointing to that one unknowable reality in which their oppositions cease." (William James, "Some Metaphysical Problems Pragmatically Considered," in Pragmatism and Four Essays from The Meaning of Truth, pp. 63-86, Meridian Books, The World Publishing Company, Cleveland, 1967. Pp. 70-71)

"He [Durkheim] expresses the fear that his attempt to study social phenomena objectively will be "judged crude and will possibly be termed 'materialistic.'" Yet he assures the reader that "we would more justly claim the contrary designation."" (In The Rules of Sociological Method, 1938, pp. xxxvii-xxxix.) (Marvin Harris, The Rise of Anthropological Theory, Thomas Y. Crowell Company, New York, 1968. P. 473)

"If a new moral world is built upon materialism, Herbert Spencer will have been one of the chief builders." (Goldwin Smith, Reminiscences, edited by Arnold Haultain, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1910. P. 139)
"About the only kind of formal instruction he [Raphael Pumpelly, Jr.] at the age of 12, in 1893 had submitted to had been a course in the "Inventional Geometry" by the father of Herbert Spencer, which Raphael now often says was the foundation of his education. "This is a primer that every child should be blessed with before the ordinary teacher, or school, has a chance to show how unnecessary it is to do any thinking. The primer consists of some 300 or more questions and no answers. The child, having easily answered the first question, can with a little thought answer the second, and so on to the end. Provided with ruler and divider, the child, in answering these questions, constructs all the problems in plane and solid geometry, and gets a training in logical thinking and in visualizing. I introduced the primer to the head of the Bainbridge Academy in Georgia, and the next year he told me that it had been the delight of the whole school. Only one or two children had failed to answer every question." (Raphael Pumpelly, My Reminiscences, 2 Vols., Henry Holt and Company, New York, 1918. Vol. 2, pp. 681,681n.)

"In no point of any importance did he [unidentified] make it clear to me that Spencer was wrong, and the only result of our conversation was to show me that in my opinion it was only my ignorance of mathematics that prevented me from seeing that Mr. Spencer is merely a 'word philosopher.' Upon which opinion I reflected, and still reflect, that the mathematicians must be a singularly happy race, seeing that they alone of men are competent to think about the facts of the cosmos." (Letter from George J. Romanes to Charles Darwin, dated February 6, 1880. Mrs. E. Romanes, The Life and Letters of George John Romanes, Longmans, Green, and Co., London, 1896, P. 95) [the unidentified person might be found in Darwin's Life and Letters, which I believe includes this letter too]

"I might add that there is nothing in the world which pleases even famous men (and men who have used disparaging language about mathematics) quite so much as to discover, or rediscover, a genuine mathematical theorem. Herbert Spencer republished in his autobiography a theorem about circles which he proved when he was twenty [publish then, proved when he was about 17] (not knowing that it had been proved over two thousand years before by Plato)." (G. H. Hardy, "A Mathematician's Apology," in The World of Mathematics, edited by James R. Newman, Vol. 4, pp. 2027-2038, Simon and Schuster, New York, 1956. P. 2028)

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"True, he [Prof. Tait] has given us some mathematics, by which he considers the reconciliation to be effected; and, possibly, some readers, awed by his equations, and forgetting that in symbolic operations, carried on no matter how rigorously, the worth of what comes out depends wholly on what is put in, will suppose that Prof. Tait must be right." (Herbert Spencer, Various Fragments, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1898. P. 88)

At the age of 16 or 17 Spencer discovered a property of a circle which had never been previously discovered; this was in the field of Descriptive Geometry. The theorem and its demonstration were published in The Civil Engineer and Architect's Journal in 1840.

MAX MULLER

From the Journal of Lord Amberley: "Sunday, March 23 [1873]. This afternoon we had an interesting meeting at our house, 30, Weymouth Street. Max Müller at Oxford had expressed himself as anxious to make H. Spencer's acquaintance, & I had invited him to come to us for the purpose when he was in London for some lectures he was giving. To-day the meeting occurred. Herbert Spencer, J. S. Mill ... Max Müller ... [and others] were present by invitation.... It was very pleasant." (Quoted in Bertrand and Patricia Russell, The Amberley Papers, The Letters and Diaries of Bertrand Russell's Parents, 2 Vols., W. W. Norton & Company Inc., New York, 1937. Vol. 2, p. 538)

Regarding an essay of Grant Allen's on the ghost theory of the origin of religion Spencer wrote: "Not that you will convince Max Müller and Co. Men in their position are beyond the reach of reason." (Letter from Herbert Spencer to Grant Allen dated November 26, 1892. Quoted in Grant Allen, A Memoir by Edward Clodd, Grant Richards, London, 1900. P. 144)

"To my mind Mansel's Bampton Lectures and the reception they met with were a sign of the times. They seemed to me far more irreligious than Herbert Spencer. Frederick Maurice saw the tendency of that school of thought which erects an insurmountable barrier between the finite mind and the infinite, but he could not make himself understood. Mansel and Herbert Spencer seem to me at the present moment to rule at Oxford in the two opposite camps, and I do not wonder that they produce in each much the same results." (Letter from Friedrich Max Müller to Canon Farrar, dated January 6, 1873. Quoted in The Life and Letters of the Right Honourable Friedrich Max Müller, edited by his wife [Georgina Grenfell Müller], 2 Vols., Longmans, Green, and Co., London, 1902. Vol. 1, p. 447)

The Victorian Age seems to have felt a hankering after the simplification of thought offered by the mechanistic monism which Herbert Spencer and John Fiske contrived to apply to all history and to all phenomena of life. (Gustav Fechner, Religion of a Scientist, edited and translated by Walter Lowrie, Pantheon Books, New York, 1946. P. 61)

And it is an astonishing and humiliating fact, that he has utterly ignored the earnest efforts and large achievements made by the greatest thinkers of the world since the time of Anaxagoras towards lifting the plane of philosophical conceptions above the dead level of mere mechanism. (William C. Morey, "Herbert Spencer in the Light of History," Baptist Quarterly Review, Vol. 5, pp. 279-309, 1883. P. 306)

It is not the mere employment of mechanical principles to explain the character of physical phenomena which constitutes the distinguishing feature of his method; it is the exclusion of every other principle from the entire domain of a universal science. (William C. Morey, "Herbert Spencer in the Light of History," Baptist Quarterly Review, Vol. 5, pp. 279-309, 1883. P. 306)

But did Spencer fully realize how big a hole this knocks in the bottom of the purely mechanical interpretation of nature he had for so long championed? (C. Lloyd Morgan, Spencer's Philosophy of Science, The Herbert Spencer Lecture for 1913, The Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1913. P. 33)

... Spencer's total influence upon sociology, ... operated for a time to concentrate attention upon the mechanical and vital elements in social combinations, and to obscure the psychic elements which are in excess of the physical. While the Spencerian influence was uppermost, the tendency was to regard social progress as a sort of mechanically determined redistribution of energy which thought could neither accelerate nor retard. (Albion W. Small, General Sociology, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1905. P. 82)
"According to the modern standpoint, the living cell is a complex chemico-physical system which is regarded as a dynamical system of equilibrium, a conception suggested by Herbert Spencer and which has acquired a constantly increasing importance in the light of modern development in physical chemistry." (George Klebs, "The Influence of Environment on the Form of Plants," in A. C. Seward, editor, Darwin and Modern Science, pp. 223-246, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1909. P. 227) (Klebs was Professor of Botany at the University of Heidelberg.)

"... nothing that men could do could alter or hasten anything. Society, in Spencer's version, was simply a gigantic organism endowed with an unalterable amount of energy, and this energy would inexorably redistribute itself according to laws lodged in itself. Men were simply points of the emergence of this energy. They were victims of illusions if they supposed they were generators of new energies not already striving for expression in the different repositories of nature's force." (Albion W. Small, The Meaning of Social Science, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1910. P. 82)

William McDougall was opposed to mechanism, materialism, and "a rigid determinism" in psychology. (He stressed the role of "genius.") He spoke admonishingly to beginners in the field of what such an approach would lead to: "... the sturdy figure of T. H. Huxley, struggling vainly in his old age [apparently in "Evolution and Ethics"] to lay the spectre he had so confidently helped to create; there also he may despy the forlorn figure of Herbert Spencer, once acclaimed the king of mechanists, but now remembered as the author of a "chromo-philosophy" of scandalous vagueness." (William McDougall, Outline of Psychology, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1924. P. 29)

"Most of the writers who have passed judgment of Mr. Spencer's sociological doctrines have failed to inform themselves upon the underlying principles from which his conclusions have been drawn. They have sought his sociological system in those of his books that bear sociological titles, while, in fact, the basal theorems of his sociological thought are scattered throughout the second half of the volume called "First Principles."" (pp. 8-9) Then, after pointing out that Spencer there talks of the statics, dynamics, and equilibration of social forces, Giddings says: "All this, obviously, is a physical explanation of social forms and metamorphoses, and Spencerian sociology in general ... is to a large extent a physical philosophy of society, notwithstanding its liberal use of biological and psychological data." (p. 9) (Franklin H. Giddings, The Principles of Sociology, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1896)
"The difficult but necessary work of sociology is to endeavour to discover what this organization of things which will create economic responsibility, and ensure to each the integral enjoyment of the produce of his labour." (p. 497) should be, and to prepare its advent." (p. 497) (Emile de Lavelye, "The State versus The Man: A Criticism of Mr. Herbert Spencer," The Contemporary Review, Vol. 47, pp. 485-508, 1885)

"Every other science rests upon a body of uniform laws which have been discovered by investigation, and which, as soon and as fast as discovered, can be put to immediate use in furthering the interests of life and ameliorating the condition of mankind. The science of sociology as taught by Spencer is a complete exception in this respect." (Lester F. Ward, "Herbert Spencer's Sociology," The Independent, Vol. 56, pp. 730-734, 1904. Pp. 730-731)

"To every science there corresponds an art. If there is a social science there must be a social art." (Lester F. Ward, "Herbert Spencer's Sociology," The Independent, Vol. 56, pp. 730-734, 1904. P. 731)

"The Principles of sociology, great as are its intrinsic merits, does not represent a science like other sciences, upon which man can lay hold and use as an instrument for his own advancement. Every other science rests upon a body of uniform laws which have been discovered by investigation, and which, as soon and as fast as discovered, can be put to immediate use in furthering the interests of life and ameliorating the condition of mankind. The science of sociology as taught by Spencer is a complete exception in this respect. Its laws are not pointed out, and there is not only no intimation that if there are social laws they may be utilized to human advantage, but there is a distinct implication, repeatedly expressed, that no such use can be made of them." (Lester F. Ward, "Herbert Spencer's Sociology," in Glimpses of the Cosmos, Vol. 6, pp. 171-177. G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1918. P. 172)

"... as man has been able to make practical use of every other science, it must follow that when social laws are really known and a social science is established he will be able to make a practical use of it. This in Spencer's Principles of sociology is at least impliedly denied, and in his other works it is expressly and vehemently denied." (Lester F. Ward, "Herbert Spencer's Sociology," in Glimpses of the Cosmos, Vol. 6, pp. 171-177. G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1918. P. 173)

"When Ward wrote Dynamic Sociology (1883), however, the sociological fashion set by Spencer was to treat social forces as through they were mills of the gods which men could at most learn to describe, but which they might not presume to organize and control. (Albion W. Small, General Sociology, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1905. P. 84)"
"Spencer's Sociology ends precisely where Sociology proper should begin. De Greef, a Belgian sociologist, has very justly asserted that Mr. Spencer not only fails to show that there is a place for Sociology, but his own reasoning proves more than anything else that there is no social science superior to Biology. It is true that Mr. Spencer's interpretation of social facts reduces the scope of Sociology to description of what is and has been, with an outline, in his statical or ethical theory, of what will be when a perfect society has been evolved. There is no room in his system for the theory and application of active, in addition to passive Social Dynamics. Such Sociology can have no more direct influence upon human progress than a census of the waves of the ocean could have upon the speed of ships." (Albion W. Small and George E. Vincent, An Introduction to the Study of Society, American Book Company, New York, 1894. P. 46)

"In spite of his recent protestations, Herbert Spencer makes of Sociology, at most, only a descriptive science of conditions upon which human ideals can have hardly more influence than they can upon climate. The sciences of pure fact are the foundation of all the arts, but they are not themselves the arts. Unless Mathematics and Physics and Chemistry and Biology taught us what to avoid and what to attempt, they would avail no more toward increase of human welfare than the rules of the game of chess or the genealogies of the British Peerage." (Albion W. Small and George E. Vincent, An Introduction to the Study of Society, American Book Company, New York, 1894. P. 66)

"Sociology is, accordingly, not the abortive affair which Herbert Spencer has made it appear. Sociology is, first, we must repeat, the synthesis of all that has been learned about society, as it has been, and as it is, in its structure and in its essence. Sociology is, second, the science of social ideals; it is a qualitative and approximate account of the society which ought to be."


"Not only her [Beatrice Webb's] political opinions, but her notion of what 'social science' should be—the accumulation of data needed to implement a social policy—diverged widely from Spencer's, and long dominated the British sociological tradition."

"During the progressive stages of militancy, the welfare of the aggregate takes precedence of the welfare of the individual, because his life depends on preservation of the aggregate from destruction by enemies; and hence, under the militant régime, the individual, regarded as existing for the benefit of the State, has his personal welfare consulted only so far as consists with maintaining the power of the State. But as the necessity for self-preservation of the society in conflict with other societies, decreases, and industrialism increases, the subordination of individual welfare to corporate welfare, becomes less and less; and finally, when the aggregate has no longer external dangers to meet, the organization proper to complete industrialism which it requires, conduces to individual welfare in the greatest degree." (Herbert Spencer, *The Principles of Sociology*, Vol. 1, first edition, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1878. P. 618

Spencer's militant type vs. industrial type societies were polar types, like Morgan's societas and civitas and Tönnies' gemeinschaft and gesellschaft, and Maine's status and contract.

In describing the militant type of society and the industrial type (polar types) Spencer made it clear that his sympathies were with the latter. Here he becomes normative, and his individualism and laissez faire attitude show through.

"I am glad that you like the two chapters on The Militant Type and The Industrial Type. They are, in fact, the culminating chapters of the part, and, indeed, of the whole work *Principles of Sociology*, in point of importance." (Letter from Herbert Spencer to Edward L. Youmans dated September 21, 1881. Quoted in John Fiske, Edward Livingston Youmans, n. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. P. 374)


"Little did he dream that modern industry with its ideologists and its ramifications through the international relations of the States, would become one of the most potent causes of the most devastating war in history, nor that centralized state control, rising to a culminating point, under the exigencies of the war situation, would prove a source of unprecedented industrial activity and efficiency." (Alexander A. Goldenweiser, "Spencerian Philosophy in 1920," *The Freeman*, Vol. 1, pp. 228-230, May 19, 1920. P. 229)
"Who can read Herbert Spencer's imperishable description and analysis of militarism and industrialism, viewed respectively as contrasting social types, without perceiving that any account of German social efficiency that could be written within limits of truth would coincide point by point with Spencer's account of the militaristic, regimented state?" (Franklin H. Giddings, "The Crisis in Social Evolution," in Problems of Readjustment after the War, [no ed.], pp. 73-97, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1915. P. 88)

"Are not modern "Industrialism" and "Militarism," it might be asked, two opposite forms of hypertrophy in the body politic, rather than two successive normal developments of it? If so, do we not need a political physician to bring them down, one as much as the other?" (Anonymous, Review of Herbert Spencer's The Principles of Sociology, Vol. 3, The Athenaeum, Vol. 108, pp. 865-866, December 19, 1896. P. 866)

"... we are in a course of rebarbarisation, and ... there is no prospect but that of military despotisms, which we are rapidly approaching." (Letter from Herbert Spencer to Grant Allen, dated July 19, 1898. Quoted in Edward Clodd, Grant Allen, A Memoir, Grant Richards, London, 1900. P. 199)

"Thus, by 1900, the Spencerian evolutionary concept of slow but steady cosmic progress was being replaced by new trends in social theory and by the optimistic philosophy of pragmatism." (Sidney B. Fay, "The Idea of Progress," American Historical Review, Vol. 52, pp. 231-246, 1947. P. 238)

"It had always been envisiaged that sociology should have technical uses, as a means to help man realize their ends, and there was a vast gulf between the major evolutionary theorists, who were more concerned with the latter, and the ideas of such people as Charles Booth or the members of the National Association for the Promotion of Social Science, engaged in painstaking factual investigations with purposes of social amelioration. Nothing is more indicative of the antipathy of these two uses of social science than the fact that Herbert Spencer, the prophet of laissez-faire, and Karl Marx, the apostle of revolution, should share a contempt for these ameliorationists. The tragedy of British sociology was that serious social theory, and the ameliorative impulse, remained distinct. In America they came to be united, but only as Spencer's dominance through figures like Sumner was weakened." (J. D. Y. Peel, "Spencer and the Neo-Evolutionists," Sociology, Vol. 3, pp. 173-191, 1969. P. 186)
"Marx's incitement to total identification with the proletarian as the revolutionary vanguard of history, and Spencer's (early) belief in the absolute unstoppability of radical, industrial, pacifist forces, working their changes, were equally opposed to that spirit which saw social science as an aid to find means for a tinkering, interventionist, ameliorative approach to politics, which found its expression in the writings of such people as Francis Place or Beatrice Webb. Here the end is not portrayed as necessary, but simply as desirable, though contingent." (J. D. Y. Peel, "Spencer and the Neo-Evolutionists," Sociology, Vol. 3, pp. 173-191, 1969. P. 184)

"Sociology is reproached, even by those who admit its legitimacy, with being impractical and fruitless. The prevailing methods of treating it, including those employed by its highest advocates [i.e., Spencer] to a great extent justify this charge. There are dead sciences as well as dead languages. The real object of science is to benefit man. A science which fails to do this, however agreeable its study, is lifeless. Sociology, which of all sciences should benefit man most, is in danger of falling into the class of polite amusements, or dead sciences. It is the object of this work to point out a method by which the breath of life may be breathed into its nostrils." (Lester F. Ward, Preface to 2nd ed. of Dynamic Sociology, 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1926. Vol. 1, p. xxvii)
"The relation of father and son in the tale *The Ordeal of Richard Feverel* was suggested to George Meredith's mind by Herbert Spencer's famous educational article in the British Quarterly Review for April 1858." (Mary Sturge Gretton, *The Writings & Life of George Meredith*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1926. P. 29)

"It has been suggested that the publication in 1858 of Herbert Spencer's famous essay on the place of natural reactions in education acted as a stimulus to Meredith's satirization of Sir Austin Feverel's despotic parental system. (If this was so, I must confess that it is a bit of enlightenment which I could have done without.)" (Siegfried Sassoon, *Meredith*, The Viking Press, New York, 1948. P. 25)

"... it is the sociological evolutionist point of view from which he regarded his subject and which made him a teacher and reformer of human society.... Meredith is rightly recognised as the "poet of evolution"." (p. 199) "His poetic fancy makes the dry theories of Comte, Mill and Spencer glow with animation." (p. 215) "Evolution was the basis of the whole of Spencer's philosophy, and it is woven in the texture of Meredith's novels. The author's ideas are built upon it, and he makes it a part of his realism. He not only presents a social, but also a spiritual and a moral evolution. The newly acquired perception that mankind is not yet perfect, but is capable of improvement, was the source of his optimism. He does not look with horror at our primitive origin, but he sees above all the possibility to advance and grow." (p. 290) (Guy B. Petter, *George Meredith and His German Critics*, H. F. & G. Witherby Ltd., London, 1939)

"Many a time I have heard Spencer conclude some discussion by saying, "Thus you see it is ever so; there is no physical problem whatever which does not soon land us in a metaphysical problem that we can neither solve nor elude."" (John Fiske, "Evolution and the Present Age," pp. 251-284, in Essays Historical and Literary, 2 Vols. The Macmillan Company, New York, 1902. Vol. 2, p. 283)
"I dare say you are not aware that in the last edition of the "Logic" I added a chapter in reply to Mr. Spencer, in which may be seen what I have to say against his own doctrine, but, if I remember right, I scarcely, if at all, touched upon his remarks on myself." (Letter from John Stuart Mill to Dr. W. G. Ward dated November 28, 1859. Quoted in The Letters of John Stuart Mill, edited by Hugh S. R. Elliot, 2 Vols., Longmans, Green and Co, London, 1910. Vol. 1, p. 228)

"I will read again Spencer's "Psychology." I remember thinking his account of Extension very good; and I shall be glad not only to profit by it, but to have an opportunity of quoting from him something with which I agree. I sometimes regret (considering that he is, and deems himself, unsuccessful) that when I have had occasion to speak of him in print it has almost always been to criticise him. He is a considerable thinker, though anything but a safe one--and is on the whole an ally, in spite of his Universal Postulate. His speculations on mathematical axioms I do not now remember, but when I read them I did not attach any importance to them. His notion that we cannot think the annihilation or diminution of force I remember well--and I thought it out-Whewelled WhewWell. The conservation of force has hardly yet got to be believed, and already its negation is declared inconceivable. But this is Spencer all over; he throws himself with a certain deliberate impetuosity into the last new theory that chimes with his general way of thinking, and treats it as proved as soon as he is able to found a connected exposition of phenomena upon it. This is the way with his doctrine of "Heredity," which, however, will very likely prove true." (Letter from John Stuart Mill to Alexander Bain dated November 22, 1863. Quoted in The Letters of John Stuart Mill, edited by Hugh S. R. Elliot, 2 Vols., Longmans, Green and Co, London, 1910. Vol. 1, p. 310)

"I have not seen very much of Spencer, but what I have seen adds to the favourable side of the impression his writings make on me. I am not inclined, from anything I know, to consider him as on the whole disposed to magnify his differences from others whose philosophical opinions are allied to his own. He did so in the case of Comte, who he knew very imperfectly. But in his controversies with me it is rather I who have magnified the differences, and he who has extenuated them. With regard to his reputation, no doubt it has not yet reached its height, but it is constantly growing. His is the rising philosophical name at the present, and will probably stand very high ten years hence: ...." (Letter from John Stuart Mill to George Grote dated December 2, 1866. Quoted in The Letters of John Stuart Mill, edited by Hugh S. R. Elliot, 2 Vols., Longmans, Green and Co, London, 1910. Vol. 2, p. 72)

"Indeed, it is one of the surprising things in the case of Mr Buckle as of Mr Spencer, that being a man of kindred genius, of the same wide range of knowledge, and devoting himself to speculations of the same kind, he profited so little by M. Comte." (John Stuart Mill, Auguste Comte and Positivism, 3rd edition, Trübner & Co., London, 1882. P. 47n.)
"It is very desirable that there should be some one in the Senate of the University of London who would give you a more effective backing than you have at present. But there are others besides me who could do this. Bain being unattainable, have you ever thought of Herbert Spencer? He is as anticlergymanish as possible; he goes as far as the farthest of us in explaining psychological phenomena by association and the "experience hypothesis"; he has a considerable and growing reputation, much zeal and public spirit, and is not, I should think, more suspect on the subject of religion than I am. I think he would be of great use in the Senate on the subjects on which you most need to be supported, and a very valuable acquisition otherwise. I do not know whether the duty would be agreeable to him, but from the little I know of his tastes and habits I should expect that rather than the contrary." (Letter from John Stuart Mill to George Grote dated November 12, 1866. Quoted in The Letters of John Stuart Mill, edited by Hugh S. R. Elliot, 2 Vols., Longmans, Green and Co, London, 1910. Vol. 2, p. 71)

"The same doctrine the relativity of knowledge is very impressively taught by one of the acutest metaphysicians of recent times, Mr. Herbert Spencer ...." (John Stuart Mill, An Examination of Sir William Hamilton's Philosophy, 2 Vols. in One, Henry Holt and Company, New York, 1884. [Original edition, 1861] Vol. 1, p.23)

"Mr Spencer is one of the small number of persons who by the solidity and encyclopedical character of their knowledge, and their power of co-ordination and concatenation, may claim to be the peers of M. Comte, and entitled to a vote in the estimation of him." (John Stuart Mill, Auguste Comte and Positivism, 3rd edition, Trübner & Co., London, 1882. P. 41)

"While Spencer is the bolder reasoner, and perhaps the greater genius, Mill's high social position and practical turn of thought enabled him to exercise a greater influence." (Simon Stern, "Mill's Essays," The New York Social Science Review, Vol. 1, pp. 150-164, 1865. P. 161)

"In this respect Spencer's education his case was like that of Mr. Mill, but the plan pursued was very different. For, while young Mill's mind was forced out by a strong coercive discipline, that of Spencer was led out by awakening an interest in knowledge, and guiding and encouraging the spontaneous tendencies of his mind. .... Mr. Mill's early education was purely one of books, and in his autobiography he expresses regret that he never had the discipline of trying experiments in science, or even the advantage of seeing them. Young Spencer, on the other hand, went early into the practical work of science. He cultivated natural history, collected an herbarium, and experimented in physics and chemistry." (Edward L. Youmans, "Herbert Spencer and the Doctrine of Evolution," Appendix to M. E. Cazelles, Outline of the Evolution-Philosophy, Translated from the French by Rev. O. E. Frothingham, D. Appleton & Company, New York, 1875. P. 161)
"Herbert Spencer said to me to-day [May 8, 1881] at Pembroke Lodge, "Mill thought the object of living was to learn and work. I think the object of learning and working is to live."" (Sir Mount-stuart E. Grant Duff, Notes from a Diary 1873-1881, 2 Vols., John Murray, London, 1898. Vol. 2, p. 315)

"John Stuart Mill styled him [Herbert Spencer] "one of the acutest metaphysicians of recent times, one of the most vigorous as well as the boldest thinker that English speculation has yet produced."" (Henry George, A Perplexed Philosopher, Robert Schalkenbach Foundation, New York, 1965. P. xii)

"The large acceptance of Spencer's "system of nature" as a whole was prepared for and promoted by the great influence, previously attained and then expanding, of the essential "naturalism" of John Stuart Mill's 'System of Logic' (1843). Without any discussion of religious issues, that treatise from the first created among students a zeal not merely for the formalities of logic but for searching thought on all real issues. The constant reference to scientific results, as giving the working tests for reasoning, told strongly in favor of the scientific as against the theological habit." (J. M. Robertson, A History of Freethought in the Nineteenth Century, Watts & Co., London, 1929. P. 218)

"All originality had been crushed out of John Stuart Mill by the ponderous loads of erudition with which his infant intellect had been burdened." (F. J. C. Hearnshaw, "Herbert Spencer and the Individualists," in The Social & Political Ideas of Some Representative Thinkers of the Victorian Age, ed. by. F. J. C. Hearnshaw, pp. 53-83, George G. Harrap & Co. Ltd., London, 1933. P. 56)

"He [Spencer] is a considerable thinker, though anything but a safe one, and is on the whole an ally, in spite of his Universal Postulate.... But this is Spencer all over; he throws himself with a certain deliberate impetuosity into the last new theory that chimes with his general way of thinking, and treats it as proved as soon as he is able to found a connected exposition of phenomena upon it. This is the way with his doctrine of Heredity, which, however, will very likely prove true." (Letter from John Stuart Mill to Alexander Bain, quoted in Hugh S. R. Elliot, ed., The Letters of John Stuart Mill, 2 Vols., London, 1910. Vol. 1, p. 310)

In commenting on Prof. Means intimation that he had cribbed an illustration of a point from John Stuart Mill, Spencer wrote:

"Some thirty years ago I probably was /"cognisant of this passage" in Mill. I read Mr. Mill's Logic in 1851 or 1852, and save those parts which, in successive editions, have concerned the amicable controversy carried on between us respecting the test of truth, I have not read it since." (Herbert Spencer, "Replies to Criticisms on The Data of Ethics," Mind, Vol. 6, pp. 82-98, 1881. P. 90)

"Mill's mind was forced as in a hot-house; Spencer's was allowed to develop in the open air and with the least possible pressure from without." (William Henry Hudson, An Introduction to the Philosophy of Herbert Spencer, Chapman and Hall, London, 1897. P. 8)

"An Empirical Law (it will be remembered) is an uniformity, whether of succession of or coexistence, which holds true in all instances within our limits of observation ...." (p. 537) "The Empirical Laws of Society are of two kinds; some are uniformities of coexistence, some of succession." (p. 578) (John Stuart Mill, A System of Logic, Harper & Brothers, Publishers, New York, 1846)

"But before Spencer took the place, Mill, succeeding Carlyle, was the leading influence among men reading English." (Henry Holt, Garrulities of an Octogenarian Editor, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1923. P. 46)


"In consequence mainly of your last letter, I have been reading Spencer's "First Principles" over again. On the whole I like it less than the first time. He is so good that he ought to be better. His a priori system is more consistent than Hamilton's, but quite as fundamentally absurd; in fact, there is the same erroneous assumption as the bottom of both. And most of his general principles strike me as being little more than verbal or at most empirical generalisations, with no warrant for their being considered laws. As you truly say, his doctrine that the Persistence of Force is a datum of Consciousness is exactly Hamilton's strange theory of Causation. But how weak his proof of it." (Letter from John Stuart Mill to Alexander Bain dated March 18, 1864. Quoted in The Letters of John Stuart Mill, edited by Hugh S. R. Elliot, 2 Vols., Longmans, Green and Co, London, 1910. Vol. 2, p. 4)
"Bergson belongs to my "youth" (tailor shop days). How much he influenced me is imponderable. The great influences were Nietzsche, Spengler, yes, Emerson, Herbert Spencer (!), Thoreau, Whitman--and Elie Faure." (Letter from Henry Miller to Lawrence Durrell dated March 14, 1949. Quoted in Lawrence Durrell and Henry Miller a Private Correspondence, edited by George Wickes, E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc., New York, 1963. P. 261)
Cite distinction between militant and industrial type of society--which I failed to do in my Intro. Give this with other dichotomies: operative vs. regulative, and typology of political evolution.

"Mr. Spencer sees more clearly than any other thinker of eminence in the present generation that there is an irreconcilable antagonism between the growth of militancy and the march of human progress." (W. D. Morrison, Review of The Principles of Sociology, Vol. 3, by Herbert Spencer, Mind, Vol. 6, n.s., pp. 241-245, 1897. P. 245)

"He [Spencer] ignored what became clearer when the scale of industry was bigger and alliances were formed between business capital and the landed aristocracy--that power and status are coordinates of wealth and function, and that industrialism does not mean the abolition of power relationships." (J. D. Y. Peel, Herbert Spencer on Social Evolution, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1972. P. xxxv)

"Not everyone accepts Spencer's extreme formulation [of the distinction between military and industrial societies], but the liberal image remains strongly entrenched in the modern mind and most of us instinctively feel that his position reflects an important truth." (David C. Rapoport, "Military and Civil Societies: The Contemporary Significance of a Traditional Subject in Political Theory," Political Studies, Vol. 12, pp. 178-201, 1964. P. 195)

"Warfare has had its course of evolution, as have all other human activities. That human progress has been from militancy to industrialism is an error so great that it must necessarily vitiate any system of sociology or theory of culture of which it forms a part." (J. W. Powell, "From Barbarism to Civilization," The American Anthropologist, Vol. 1, pp. 97-123, 1888. P. 103)
"Thus we are brought to the conclusion that what we are conscious of as properties of matter, even down to its weight and resistance, are but subjective affections produced by objective agencies that are unknown and unknowable. All the sensations produced in us by environing things are but symbols of actions out of ourselves, the natures of which we cannot even conceive." (Herbert Spencer, The Principles of Psychology, Vol. 1, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1896. P. 206)

"While some objective existence, manifested under some conditions, remains as the final necessity of thought, there does not remain the implication that this existence and these conditions are more to us than the unknown correlates of our feelings and the relations among our feelings. The Realism we are committed to is one which simply asserts objective existence as separate from, and independent of, subjective existence. But it affirms neither that any one mode of this objective existence is in reality that which it seems, nor that the connexions among its modes are objectively what they seem. Thus it stands widely distinguished from Crude Realism; and to mark the distinction in may properly be called Transfigured Realism." (Herbert Spencer, The Principles of Psychology, Vol. 2, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1897. P. 494)

"... whilst there is a remarkable parallelism between the phenomena of Mind and the phenomena of the nervous system (a parallelism which Herbert Spencer has detailed with a wonderful insight and supported by a prodigious number of illustrations), yet it is always unsafe to assert, on this account, anything like a dependence of mind upon matter; much more to erect a theory that mind is made of matter, in any way." (Letter from Sidney Lanier to Clifford A. Lanier, dated July 21, 1873. Quoted in Charles R. Anderson and Aubrey H. Starse, eds., The Centennial Edition of the Works of Sidney Lanier, Vol. 8, Letters, 1869-1872, The Johns Hopkins Press, Baltimore, 1945. P. 364)

"How many worthy critics have been heard to object to the doctrine of evolution that you can not deduce mind from the primeval nebula unless the germs of mind were present already! But that is just what Mr. Spencer says himself. I have heard him say it more than once, and his books contain many passages of equivalent import. [E.g., Principles of Psychology, Vol. 2, pp. 145-162] He never misses an opportunity for attacking the doctrine that mind can be explained as evolved from matter. But, in spite of this, a great many people suppose that the gradual evolution of mind must mean its evolution out of matter, and are deaf to arguments of which they do not perceive the bearing. Hence Mr. Spencer is so commonly accredited with the doctrine which he so earnestly repudiates." (John Fiske, "The Doctrine of Evolution: Its Scope and Influence," The Popular Science Monthly, Vol. 39, pp. 577-599, 1891. P. 593)
"A system of monism like Mr. Spencer's, with its delusive simplicity, has an inexpressible fascination for those whose intellectual pride cannot brook the perpetual tyranny of pressing but unsolved problems." (Augustus Hopkins Strong, 'Philosophy and Religion, A. C. Armstrong and Son, New York, 1888. P. 55)

"Another lasting triumph, already referred to, is his Spencer's welding together in a grand unity all the phenomena of the universe. This makes him a monist, and monism is the highest expression of philosophy, ...." (Arthur M. Lewis, An Introduction to Sociology, Charles H. Kerr & Company, Chicago, 1913. P. 73)

"... he was a dualist who accepted the equal reality of, and the fundamental difference between, the self and the not-self." (F. J. C. Hearnshaw, "Herbert Spencer and the Individualists," in The Social & Political Ideas of Some Representative Thinkers of the Victorian Age, ed. by F. J. C. Hearnshaw, pp. 53-83, George G. Harrap & Co. Ltd., London, 1933. P. 70)

"Herbert Spencer, as we have noticed, used five "ultimate scientific ideas,"--space, time, matter, motion, force,--and adds consciousness as an awkward something else. He speculated that all of these may be manifestations of one reality, whose best name is force, energy, power; but how this one reality accounts for space and time and consciousness remains obscure. Spencer aspires to a monism, but he only achieves a pluralism with a faint hope of unity in the unknown!" (William Earnest Hocking, Types of Philosophy, Revised edition, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1939. P. 217)
"For the mid-Victorian thinker it was a foregone conclusion requiring only statement not proof that monogamy is the highest form of marriage ...." (Robert H. Lowie, *Primitive Society*, New York, 1920, P. 56)

"... the men who, under a polygamous regime are able to obtain and to support more wives than one, must be men superior to the average; and hence there must result an increased multiplication of the best, and a diminished multiplication of the worst." (Herbert Spencer, "The Use of Anthropomorphism," *The Leader*, Vol. 4, No. 189, pp. 1076-1077, November 5, 1853. P. 1076)

Spencer believed that monogamy dated back as far as any other marital arrangement (Vol. I, p. 698, 1st ed.). "Always the state of having two wives must be preceded by the state of having one. And the state of having one must in many cases continue because of the difficulty of getting two where the surplus of women is not great." (Vol. I, p. 699, 1st ed.)

"The monogamic form of the sexual relation is manifestly the ultimate form; and any changes to be anticipated must be in the direction of completion and extension of it." (Herbert Spencer, *The Principle of Sociology*, Vol. 1, 3rd ed., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1890. P. 752)
Yet coupled with the understanding that culture had to be looked at objectively, there was to be a retained in any personal ethical attitudes; that mixture of objective analysis and subjective evaluation is best represented in the following passage.

"Thus, then, contemplating social structures and actions from the evolution point of view, we may preserve that calmness which is needful for scientific interpretation of them, without losing our powers of feeling moral reprobation or approbation." (Principles, Vol. II, p. 242. N.Y., 1899)

Nowhere (?) does Spencer exhibit that Victorian bias of which he has been so often accused. Wrong: In speaking of wife-lending he refers to the "prevalence in rude societies of practices which are to us in the highest degree repugnant" (Vol. I, p. 634, 1st ed.). Spencer talks about societies practicing brother-sister marriages and other close consanguineal unions as practicing "the most degraded relations of the sexes" (Vol. I, p. 638, 1st ed.) But he seldom speaks thusly.

"Social phenomena have their laws like all other phenomena, and it is the sole business of science to elucidate and declare them. Science has no schemes to propose, no reforms to carry out. Whether society is bad or good, rude or cultivated, getting better or getting worse, developing or perishing, it is all the same: science simply takes note of the facts, and draws from them the general principles to which social changes conform ...." (Edward L. Youmans, "Editor's Table," The Popular Science Monthly, Vol. 2, pp. 240-243, December, 1872. P. 240)
"While inditing tragedies and a huge epic in the romantic vein (fortunately long ago burnt), I was plotting out a rationalistic philosophy which should accomplish what Darwin and Spencer had failed to finish (and this too went to the flames)." (Paul Elmer More, quoted in Arthur Hazard Dakin, Paul Elmer More, Princeton University Press, Princeton, N.J., 1960, p. 313)

"... Paul More was, as far as he was aware, wholly converted to romanticism, while nevertheless deeply impressed by the philosophy of Herbert Spencer ...." (p. 63) "... the really characteristic qualities of their author ... which at the same time had made him a disciple of Herbert Spencer." (p. 66) (Robert Shafer, Paul Elmer More and American Criticism, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1935)
It was undoubtedly partly Morgan's religious orientation that led him to be antagonistic to Herbert Spencer's work. Other traditionalists in America were opposed to Spencer on this ground, as is indicated by the letter of President Porter of Yale written at this time to William Graham Sumner, with whom Morgan seems never to have come in contact. (Bernhard J. Stern, Lewis Henry Morgan: Social Evolutionist, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1931. P. 27)

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"Morgan appears to have had similar sentiments to those of President Porter about Spencer's writings, although he also attacked him on other grounds, as well, in one of the clubs which he organized, called the Spencer Club, which met fortnightly to discuss Spencer's work. Morgan criticized Spencer in a letter to McIlvaine, to which the latter responded: "... Nor have I read Spencer, not having a doubt but that he has proved himself as great an ass in the discussion of ancient society as you say. As for reviewing him I am doing greater work and cannot come down."" (Bernhard J. Stern, Lewis Henry Morgan: Social Evolutionist, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1931. P. 28)

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"The words of Christ reveal to my mind a depth and comprehension of the nature of man and of what constitutes his true well being, to which Herbert Spencer, Darwin, Huxley, Tyndall and the rest of them cannot make the least pretension. In their several scientific specialties I sit at their feet." (Letter from J. H. McIlvaine to Lewis H. Morgan, dated ??? Quoted in Bernhard J. Stern, Lewis Henry Morgan: Social Evolutionist, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1931. P. 23)

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"Morgan also wrote to Darwin in disparagement of Spencer's work; ...." (P. 28) "Herbert Spencer, in acknowledging the receipt of Ancient Society, wrote: "I am much obliged by the copy of your work on Ancient Society. It would have been useful to me had I had it earlier, when I was treating of the social composition and of family arrangements. I doubt not hereafter that when I come to deal with political organization, I shall find much matter in it of value to me." Dated July 19, 1877." (P. 198) (Bernhard J. Stern, Lewis Henry Morgan: Social Evolutionist. University of Chicago Press. Chicago, 1931.)

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"But Mr. Spencer had no conception of gentile society and the fundamental distinction between it and political society, so clearly set forth by Morgan." (Lester F. Ward, "The Career of Herbert Spencer," The Popular Science Monthly, Vol. 74, pp. 5-18, 1909. P. 15)

"The Spencer Club was organized in Rochester in 1872 by a few men for the purpose of studying the works of Herbert Spencer. "Mr. Morgan was not at first interested in metaphysical studies, saying they were 'dry chips' to him. He later, however, read with care the works of Herbert Spencer, ...and joined the Club ..." "Sketch of the Life of Lewis H. Morgan with Personal Reminiscences," by Charles A. Dewey, M.D., in The Rochester Historical Society, Publication Fund Series, vol. II, p. 44." (Leslie A. White, Pioneers in American Anthropology, The Bandelier-Morgan Letters, 1873-1883, Vol. 2, The University of New Mexico Press, Albuquerque, 1940. P. 180n.)

"While in England in 1871 Morgan was to be introduced to Spencer by John F. McLennan, but the meeting apparently never took place. (Leslie A. White, ed., "Extracts from the European Travel Journal of Lewis H. Morgan," Rochester Historical Society Publications, Vol. 16, pp. 221-390, 1937. P. 368)

"The choice fruit of his long years of study and reflection, Ancient Society, depicted man's cultural development in distinct social strands through successive stages of from savagery through barbarism to civilization. In early drafts of the manuscript he occasionally used the word evolved in connection with basic social or technological ideas, yet in his final published text the term implanted was substituted, thus retaining the vitalistic view, holding a door open for divine action." (For a brief discussion of Morgan's use of the word "evolution" in Ancient Society and elsewhere, see Leslie A. White, "Morgan's Attitude toward Religion and Science," American Anthropologist, Vol. 46, pp. 218-230, 1944. Pp. 224-225 (Blake McKelvey, Rochester, The Flower City, 1855-1890, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1949. P. 319)

"Dissension within their ranks contributed to the weakness of Rochester's evolutionists during the mid-seventies. Close study of Spencer's writings, pressed eagerly by the Spencer Club, revealed implications not at first suspected, contributing, perhaps, to the suspension of its meetings. Morgan himself became so dubious of Spencer's works that he wrote to Darwin about them. Reference here to letter from Charles Darwin to Lewis H. Morgan, Kent, July 9, 1877, Morgan Letters, University of Rochester./ Darwin's reply recommended cautious analysis, rather than blind acceptance or rejection, and Morgan took an active part in the deliberations of the Spencer Club after its revival a few years later. The presence of Robert Mathews, Newton Mann, and a new clerical member, Myron Adams, assured lively sessions. The club turned in its last years from an analysis of Spencer to a study of Morgan's own work—a step which many serious students of anthropology had already taken." (Blake McKelvey, Rochester, The Flower City, 1855-1890, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1949. P. 318)
"When this work [McLennan's Primitive Marriage] appeared it was received with favor by ethnologists, because as a speculative treatise it touched a number of questions upon which they had long been working. A careful reading, however, disclosed deficiencies in definitions, unwarranted assumptions, crude speculations and erroneous conclusions. Mr. Herbert Spencer in his "Principles of Sociology" (Advance Sheets, Popular Science Monthly, Jan., 1877, p. 272), has pointed out a number of them. At the same time he rejects the larger part of Mr. McLennan's theories respecting "Female Infanticide," "Wife Stealing," and "Exogamy and Endogamy." What he leaves of this work, beyond its collocation of certain ethnological facts, it is difficult to find." (Lewis H. Morgan, Ancient Society, Charles H. Kerr & Co., Chicago, 1909. P. 518)

"I am much indebted to you for the present of your great work on Systems, etc., which lately reached me. Hitherto, I have had but time to glance through it and to be impressed with the value of its immense mass of materials collected and arranged with so much labour. I thank you for it in more than a mere formal way that is common in the acknowledgment of presentation copies; for it comes to me at a time when I am making elaborate preparations personally and by deputy for the scientific treatment of Sociology, and its contents promise to be of immediate service." (Letter from Herbert Spencer to Lewis H. Morgan, probably written in 1871. Quoted by Bernhard J. Stern in "Lewis Henry Morgan: American Ethnologist," Social Forces, Vol. 6, pp. 344-357, 1928. P. )

"Morgan's greatest work was still ahead, and while he would pause occasionally to discuss Darwin or Spencer with the younger men of the Spencer club, established in 1872, he refused to be distracted by public controversy from the more important task of developing his own theories of social evolution." (p. 194) "... and the dissension among the intellectuals of Rochester, N.Y., over issues of evolution and religion became more complex as Spencer's books raised new disputes even within the Spencer club, which soon suspended its meetings." (pp. 194-195) (Blake McKelvey, Rochester, The Flower City, 1855-1890, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1949)

"Mr. Morgan was not at first interested in metaphysical studies, saying they were "dry chips" to him. He later, however, read with care the works of Herbert Spencer, and as we have seen, joined the club named after that eminent and original philosopher, which had been started in 1872 by the late Dr. C. E. Rider and W. S. Sherman." (Charles Ayrault Dewey, M.D., "Sketch of the Life of Lewis H. Morgan with Personal Reminiscences." The Rochester Historical Society, Publication Fund Series, Vol. 2, pp. 34-48, 1923. P. 44.)

"Herbert Spencer's work, on the other hand, was much broader both in point of view and in its influence [than that of Tylor and Morgan]." (George W. Stocking, Jr., Race, Culture, and Evolution, The Free Press, New York, 1968, P. 117)

"I am to drive with him [John F. McLennan] tomorrow to meet Herbert Spencer, whom Darwin in his "Descent of Man" calls "our great philosopher," and possibly Sir John Lubbock. Of course I anticipate much pleasure from meeting these men, that is if McLennan can catch them." (Entry for July 5, 1871, in Extracts from the European Travel Journal of Lewis H. Morgan, ed. by Leslie A. White, Rochester Historical Society Publications, Vol. 16, pp. 221-389, 1937, P. 368)

"London, July 31, 1871. I have written to Dr. Henry this morning acknowledging a sight at my book, and thanking him cordially for giving it the individuality of a volume in the series (XVII) of the Smithsonian Contributions. I have asked him to send to his agent here, Mr. Nesley, five copies for distribution on my account as follows, one to Professor George M. Humphrey, Cambridge; one to George Waring, the Terrace, Oxford; one to Charles Darwin, Down, Beckingham, Kent; one to Herbert Spencer, London; and one to Prof. Huxley, Museum of Practical Geology, London. (VI:110-11)." (Lewis H. Morgan, Extracts from the European Travel Journal of Lewis H. Morgan, ed. by Leslie A. White, reprinted from Vol. 16 of the Rochester Historical Society Publications, Rochester, N.Y., 1937, P. 371.)

One difference between Morgan and Spencer was that Morgan was more interested in stages, while Spencer was more interested in process.
Regarding Grant Allen's interpretation of tree-worship in accordance with the ghost theory, Spencer wrote: "Not that you will convince Max Müller and Co. Men in their position are beyond the reach of reason." (Letter from Herbert Spencer to Grant Allen, dated November 26, 1892. Quoted in Edward Clodd, Grant Allen, A Memoir, Grant Richards, London, 1900. P. 144)

"Men, in Mr. Müller's opinion, had originally pure ideas about the gods, and expressed them in language which we should call figurative. The figures remained, when their meaning was lost; the names were then supposed to be gods, the nomina became numina, and out of the inextricable confusion of thought which followed, the belief in cannibalism, bestial, adulterous, and incestuous gods was evolved. That is Mr. Müller's hypothesis; with him the evolution, a result of a disease of language, has been from early comparative purity to later religious abominations. Opposed to him is what may be called the school of Mr. Herbert Spencer: the modern Euhemerism, which recognises an element of historical truth in myths, as if the characters had been real characters, and which, in most gods, beholds ancestral ghosts raised to a higher power." (Andrew Lang, Custom and Myth, Longmans, Green, and Co., London, 1884. Pp. 198-199)
In attempting to account for his failure to hit upon the principle of natural selection to explain organic evolution, Spencer says: "One reason was my espousal of the belief that the inheritance of functionally-produced modifications suffices to explain the facts. Recognizing this as a sufficient cause for many orders of changes in organisms, I concluded that it was a sufficient cause for all orders of changes. There are, it is true, various phenomena which did not seem reconcilable with this conclusion; but I lived in the faith that some way of accounting for them would eventually be found. Had I looked more carefully into the evidence, and observed how multitudinous these inexplicable facts are—had I not slurred over the difficulties, but deliberately contemplated them; I might perhaps have seen that here was the additional factor wanted." (Auto. I, §390).

"Mr. Spencer admits that the influence of natural selection is very great, but thinks that Darwin gives it a somewhat undue importance. Lamarck failed to grasp this principle, and attributed all organic modification to the inherited results of use and disuse—i.e., to direct equilibration. Darwin almost wholly neglects this, and relies chiefly upon the new and brilliant conception of natural selection. Spencer gives to each its proper weight, and, what is chiefly to his credit, assigns to both their exact place in the system of laws pertaining to vital phenomena." (Lester Frank Ward, Dynamic Sociology, 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1883. Vol. I, p. 181)

(According to Lester Ward, Lamarck has "quite distinct adumbrations of the law of natural selection" in the first volume of his Philosophie Zoologique, pp. 112-114, 259, and 265.)

Spencer turned out to be on the wrong side of several arguments: natural selection(?), telegony, inheritance of acquired characteristics.

"Partly by weeding out those of lowest development, and partly by subjecting those who remain to the never-ceasing discipline of experience, nature secures the growth of a race who shall both understand the conditions of existence, and be able to act up to them." (Herbert Spencer, *Social Statics*, John Chapman, London, 1851. P. 378)

"Why the whole effort of nature is to get rid of such—to clear the world of them, and make room for better. Nature demands that every being shall be self-sufficing. All that are not so, nature is perpetually withdrawing by death. Intelligence sufficient to avoid danger, power enough to fulfill every condition, ability to cope with the necessities of existence—these are qualifications invariably insisted on." (Herbert Spencer, *Social Statics*, John Chapman, London, 1851. P. 379)

"Beings thus imperfect are nature's failures, and are recalled by her laws when found to be such. Along with the rest they are put upon trial. If they are sufficiently complete to live, they do live, and it is well they should live. If they are not sufficiently complete to live, they die, and it is best they should die." (p. 380) "... only such as are robust enough to resist these—that is, only such as are tolerably well adapted to both the usual and incidental necessities of existence, remain." (p. 380) (Herbert Spencer, *Social Statics*, John Chapman, London, 1851.)

"For, necessarily, families and races to whom this increasing difficulty of getting a living which excess of fertility entails, does not stimulate to improvements in production—that is, to greater mental activity—are on the high road to extinction; and must ultimately be supplanted by those whom the pressure does so stimulate." (Herbert Spencer, "A Theory of Population, Deduced from the General Law of Animal Fertility," *The Westminster Review*, Vol. 57, pp. 468-501, 1852. Pp. 499-500)

"Nature secures each step in advance by a succession of trials, which are perpetually repeated, and cannot fail to be repeated, until success is achieved. All mankind in turn subject themselves more or less to the discipline described; they either may or may not advance under it; but, in the nature of things, only those who do advance under it eventually survive." (Herbert Spencer, "A Theory of Population, Deduced from the General Law of Animal Fertility," *The Westminster Review*, Vol. 57, pp. 468-501, 1852. P. 499)

"At that time, 1857, the date of publication of 'Progress: Its Law and Cause,' I ascribed all modifications to direct adaptation to changing conditions; and was unconscious that in the absence of that indirect adaptation effected by the natural selection of favourable variations, the explanation left the larger part of the facts unaccounted for." (Auto., I, 502).
"Up to that time, ... I held that the sole cause of organic evolution is the inheritance of functionally-produced modifications. The Origin of Species made it clear to me that I was wrong; and that the larger part of the facts cannot be due to any such cause." (Auto. II, 50)

Spencer sees natural selection as a great operating principle which has given rise to new structures and adaptations among animals, and also among societies. Competition for survival among animals is, among men, war. (Vol. I, p. 520, 2nd ed.).

"I have always regretted that Mr. Darwin chose this phrase [natural selection] to describe his hypothesis. The word 'selection' connotes a conscious process, and so involves a tacit personalisation of Nature. By tacitly personalising that aggregate of surrounding agencies which we call Nature, it introduces vaguely the idea that Nature may select as a human breeder selects--can select and increase a particular quality; which is true only under certain conditions. Further, it raises the thought of choice--suggests the notion that Nature may or may not operate in the alleged way." (Herbert Spencer, "Lord Salisbury on Evolution." The Nineteenth Century, Vol. 38, pp. 740-757, 1895. P. 748)


"Natural selection, or survival of the fittest, is almost exclusively operative throughout the vegetal world and throughout the lower animal world, characterised by relative passivity. But with the ascent to higher types of animals, its effects are in increasing degrees involved with those produced by inheritance of acquired characters; until, in animals of complex structures, inheritance of acquired characters becomes an important, if not the chief, cause of evolution." (Herbert Spencer, "The Inadequacy of Natural Selection," The Contemporary Review, Vol. 63, pp. 153-166, 439-456, 1893. P. 456)

"Still more remarkable [than Wells' and Matthew's adumbration of the theory of natural selection] is the fact that Mr. Herbert Spencer--notwithstanding his great powers of abstract thought and his devotion of those powers to the theory of evolution, when as yet this theory was scorned by science--still more remarkable, I say, is the fact that Mr. Herbert Spencer should have missed what now appears so obvious an idea." (George John Romanes, Darwin, and After Darwin. Vol. 1: The Darwinian Theory, third edition, The Open Court Publishing, Chicago, 1901. P. 257)
"He adopted, it is true, the theory of natural selection, as did every other evolutionist of his time (except Mr. Samuel Butler), but he adopted it merely as one among the factors of organic evolution, and, while valuing it highly, he never attributed to it the same almost exclusive importance as did Darwin himself—certainly not the same quite exclusive importance as has since been attached to it by the doctrinaire school of Neo-Darwinians, who employ it as the sole key which unlocks, in their opinion, all the problems of biology." (Grant Allen, "Spencer and Darwin," Appleton's Popular Science Monthly, Vol. 50, pp. 815-827, 1896-97. P. 823. [reprinted from Fortnightly Review])

"Once, indeed, no less than seven years before the publication of The Origin of Species, Mr. Spencer even trembled for a moment on the verge of the actual discovery of natural selection. This was in the essay on population in the Westminster Review in 1852. Here the passage is quoted. Now, this is the doctrine of natural selection, or, as Mr. Spencer himself afterward called it, survival of the fittest. Only, it is limited to the human race; and it is not recognized as an efficient cause of specific differentiation. As Mr. Spencer himself remarks, the passage "shows how near one may be to a great generalization without seeing it." Moreover, Mr. Spencer here overlooks the important factor of spontaneous variation, which forms the cornerstone of Darwin's discovery, and which was also clearly perceived by Mr. Wallace. In short, in Mr. Spencer's own words, the paragraph "contains merely a passing recognition of the selective process, and indicates no suspicion of the enormous range of its effects, or of the conditions under which a large part of its effects are produced."


"Spencer himself points out cogently the debt which the biology of the mid-nineteenth century owed to economics, as in the relation between the concept of economic competition and that of natural selection. Essentially, what Spencer was doing—spelled out much more fully in his Principles of Sociology—was to apply the basic principles of the economists to the society as a whole." (Talcott Parsons, Introduction to The Study of Sociology, by Herbert Spencer, pp. v-x, The University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor, 1961. P. vi)

"There was no serious effort on the part of [The classical] evolutionists, however, to demonstrate that particular social systems had evolved by the selection of institutions that better satisfied certain functional requisites." (Kenneth E. Bock, "Evolution, Function, and Change," American Sociological Review, Vol. 28, pp. 229-237, 1963. P. 230)
"Darwin, looking at this process of organic evolution from a practical point of view, saw it in the light of a selection by nature of those modifications which proved of economic advantage to the organism. He, therefore, called it "Natural Selection." Herbert Spencer, regarding it from the standpoint of the physicist, saw it to be only another manifestation of the universal tendency of all the forces of the universe to approach the statical condition. He, therefore, dropped it into its appropriate niche in his cosmical system, and named it "Indirect Equilibration." (Lester Frank Ward, Dynamic Sociology, 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1883. Vol. 1, p. 178)

"The great law of competition, of which natural selection is the most important subordinate law, finds here another extensive application, which Mr. Darwin had overlooked, but which did not escape the vigorous generalizing powers of Mr. Spencer. This he characterizes as "the truth that each species of organism tends ever to expand its sphere of existence—to intrude on other areas, other modes of life, other media; and, through these perpetually recurring attempts to thrust itself into every accessible habitat, spreads until it reaches limits that are, for the time, insurmountable." (Lester Frank Ward, Dynamic Sociology, 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1883. Vol. 1, p. 174)

"Spencer offered, now that the biological theory of evolution was being widely accepted, what many were searching for, a system which substituted natural law for divine law, and natural order, harmony, and progress for divine order, harmony, and progress." (Donald Pizer, "Herbert Spencer and the Genesis of Hamlin Garland's Critical System," Tulane Studies in English, Vol. 7, pp. 153-168, 1957. P. 154)

"Unfortunately, the historical forms of naturalism have often been distinguished by their readiness to compromise, or cautiously to set limits to the use of scientific method. Thus, the naturalism of Spencer was tempered by his agnosticism; and the same may be said of Huxley." (Roy Wood Sellars, V. J. McGill, and Marvin Farber, "Foreword" to Philosophy for the Future, pp. v-xii, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1949. P. ix)

"In its simplest shape Spencerian evolution is an assertion of the all-sufficiency of natural law, a denial of intervention from outside at any stage in the process by which the universe has become what it is." (The author, a theist with a D.D. degree from Glasgow, does not seem too happy with this concept.) (Robert Mackintosh, From Comte to Benjamin Kidd, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1899. P. 77)

"Stifled for a time in the United States because it had neither an organization nor a sufficient number of enthusiastic devotees to further it, naturalism was given new life through the development of evolutionary concepts. Less tied to any particular ideology than their opponents, the naturalists were inclined toward a freer interpretation of new knowledge. The result was that they came to look upon Darwin as the empirical basis for their thinking and upon Spencer as the philosopher who gave it systematic form." (Paul Russell Anderson and Max Harold Fisch, Philosophy in America, from the Puritans to James, D. Appleton-Century Company, New York, 1939. Pp. 327-328)
"It is not surprising that Garland turned to Spencer more than to any other writer on evolution. Now that the theory of biological evolution was being widely accepted, Spencer offered what many were searching for, a system that substituted natural law for divine law, and natural order, harmony, and progress for divine order, harmony, and progress. Spencer had derived from biological evolution a law of progress which he used to explain and systematize change and variation in every phase of life, and in the late nineteenth century such a method attracted profound interest." (Donald Pizer, Hamlin Garland's Early Work and Career, University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1960. Pp. 7-8)

"When the agnostic says that we cannot know anything about the reality beyond nature or experience, he implies that there is such a reality; and some, like Spencer, clearly accept this inference. To this extent they are not pure naturalists. They are only naturalists for all practical purposes; that is, since we can know nothing of supernature, we have nothing to do with it either in thought or conduct,--we can manage our lives as if it did not exist. At the same time, it is possible to maintain a sentiment of reverence toward the "Unknowable"; in this limited sense, the agnostic is often a profoundly religious man." (William Earnest Hocking, Types of Philosophy, Revised edition, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1939. P. 136)

"So far as this system [the philosophy of evolution] accepts the simple fact or process of development as applied to natural phenomena, it is true, and should be accepted. So far as it professes to determine the mode or law of development, it is still an hypothesis, and should be held sub judice. But so far as it presumes to afford an adequate, or assign a sufficient cause for the development and organization of the universe, it is false, and should be rejected. The rejection of the persistence of force, as the sole and adequate cause of universal evolution, does not, of course, involve the rejection of the conservation of energy as a law of general physics. It simply involves the acceptance of the doctrine already emphasized by Aristotle, Leibnitz, and Kant, that no purely mechanical principle can explain the facts of adjustment and co-ordination which exist in nature, and which are inexplicable except as being the result of thought as well as force." (William C. Morey, "Herbert Spencer in the Light of History," Baptist Quarterly Review, Vol. 5, pp. 279-309, 1883. Pp. 307-308)
"Up to that moment, science was a mere collection of facts and rules, with no coherent body of governing truths, while the new conception of the unity of nature bound all these facts together in a web of causation. It seemed possible to write nature's history back to the primitive chaos, and one saw that all its phenomena, instead of being unrelated and produced by the Creator's personal whim, were parts of an unbroken chain of cause and effect. Suns and stars, plants and animals had followed one law of development from a common source, and man was also a part of this cosmic drama. Through all the vast sweep of time, from the primordial vapour to the multifarious world one knew today, one saw the various forms of nature evolving from previous forms... Such was the great Spencerian vision that Fiske expounded at Harvard, with his own interpretations and amplifications." (Van Wyck Brooks, New England: Indian Summer. E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc., New York, 1965. P. 114)

"In 1855 Mr. Herbert Spencer (Principles of Psychology, 2nd edit. vol. I, p. 465) expressed "the belief that life under all its forms has arisen by an unbroken evolution, and through the instrumentality of what are called natural causes." (John Tyndall, Address Delivered Before the British Association Assembled in Belfast, With Additions. Longmans, Green, and Co. London, 1874. P. 37, n. 17)

"As indicating most clearly the state of national feeling, we have the immense popularity of Mr. Rudyard Kipling, in whose writings one-tenth of nominal Christianity is joined with nine-tenths of real paganism; who idealizes the soldier and glories in the triumphs of brute force; and who, in depicting school-life, brings to the front the barbarizing activities and feelings and shows little respect for a civilizing culture." (Herbert Spencer, Facts and Comments, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1902. P. 185)

"In its simplest shape Spencerian evolution is an assertion of the all-sufficiency of natural law, a denial of intervention from outside at any stage in the process by which the universe has become what it is." (The author, a theist with a D.D. degree from Glasgow, does not seem too happy with this concept.) (Robert Mackintosh, From Comte to Benjamin Kidd, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1899. P. 77)


"I demur entirely to the supposition, which is implied in the book [Henry George's Progress and Poverty], that by any possible social arrangements whatever the distress which humanity has to suffer in the course of civilisation could have been prevented. The whole process, with all its horrors and tyrannies, and slaveries, and wars, and abominations of all kinds, has been an inevitable one accompanying the survival and spread of the strongest, and the consolidation of small tribes into large societies; and among other things the lapse of land into private ownership has been, like the lapse of individuals into slavery, at one period of the process altogether indispensable. I do not in the least believe that from the primitive system of communistic ownership to a high and finished system of State ownership, such as we may look for in the future, there could be any transition without passing through such stages as we have seen and which exist now." (Letter from Herbert Spencer to A. R. Wallace, July 6, 1881. Quoted in Alfred Russel Wallace; Letters and Reminiscences, by James Marchant. Two Volumes. Cassell and Company, Ltd. London, 1916. Vol. 2, pp. 154-155)

NEGLIGENCE OF SPENCER


The curriculum of St. John's College in Annapolis Maryland involves the reading of 110 books, which do not include any work of Spencer, although it does include Virchow's Cellular Pathology, Peacock's Treatise on Algebra, and Dedekind's Essays on Numbers. (Mark Van Doren, Liberal Education, Henry Holt and Company, New York, 1943, Pp. 150-152)
"Although the serious history of later-nineteenth-century British anthropology has barely been begun, it seems at first glance a rather dry and dull period, of interest primarily for the light it casts back on the intellectual and institutional effort of the earlier evolutionary generation, and forward to the surge of activity out of which modern British social anthropology emerged after 1900."


"... the failure of historians of science seriously to consider Spencer at all. Their books are symptomatic of the mutual isolation between the study of the history of science and the study of social theory, while their subject is someone who never made that distinction." (Robert M. Young, *Darwin's Metaphor, Nature's Place in Victorian Culture*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1985. P. 185)

"Herbert Spencer, from whom anthropology has taken some of its most important methodological concepts and whom it has forgotten ...." (E. E. Evans-Pritchard, *Theories of Primitive Religion*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1965. P. 23)

Thus it appears that Herbert Spencer, like Karl Marx suffered in that their scientific propositions about society have been ignored or resisted because of the fact that, combined with these, were political doctrines strongly defending certain courses of action, while attacking others. (RLE)
"Nietzsche adopted a Spencerian attitude. Many of his ideas are derived from evolutionary theories." (Emanuel Radl, The History of Biological Theories, translated from the German by E. J. Hatfield, Oxford University Press, London, 1930. P. 373)

Early in 1902 the Society of Authors in England had recommended that the Nobel Prize in Literature for that year be awarded to Herbert Spencer. The other leading candidate was George Meredith. Of this decision Mrs. Humphry Ward wrote: "... to compare Mr. Spencer's power of clear statement with the play of imaginative genius in Meredith would be absurd—in the literary field. And this is or should be a literary award.... I am not venturing to dispute Mr. Spencer's great position in the history of English thought .... But to be the philosopher of evolution is one thing; to be our first man of letters is another." (In 1901 the Nobel Prize in Literature seems to have gone to Sully Proudhommé) (Letter from Mrs. Humphry Ward to the Society of Authors dated January 19, 1902. Quoted in Janet Penrose Trevelyan, The Life of Mrs. Humphry Ward, Dodd, Mead and Company, New York, 1923. P. 181)

"In 1902, the Swedish Academy had to strike a balance between two such outstanding but incommensurable literary works as those of Herbert Spencer and the German Historian, Theodor Mommsen, the outcome being that the latter was finally selected because of his superior literary artistry." (This was for the Nobel prize in Literature) (H. Schück, et al., Nobel—the Man and His Prizes, Elsevier Publishing Company, Amsterdam, 1962. P. 87)

"... the letters of Alfred Nobel also reveal that he had carefully studied and valued the philosophical work of his contemporary, Herbert Spencer, whose ideas tallied with his own in so many respects." (Nils K. Ståhle, Alfred Nobel, Translated by Alan Blair, Thomas Nelson and Sons Ltd, London, 1962. P. 165)
Spencer had lost out to Sully Prudhomme for the Nobel prize in literature in 1901, the year the prizes were first awarded. This information does not appear in the book quoted above, but I have seen it in print elsewhere.

"On the invitation of Mr. Edmund Gosse, given on behalf of the Society of Authors, Lord Avebury came on the Committee to decide (in the absence of a British Academy of Letters) on the candidate for the Nobel prize for literature, and was appointed Chairman. The choice of the Committee eventually fell on Mr. Herbert Spencer, though not without some little searchings of heart ...." (Horace G. Hutchinson, editor, The Life of Sir John Lubbock, Lord Avebury, 2 Vols., Macmillan and Co., Limited, London, 1914. Vol. 2, pp. 164-165)

"My Dear Avebury--Your letter gave me a double surprise. Being now so much out of the world I did not know that a Nobel Prize Committee had been appointed, still less did I know that I had been nominated by it. Let me thank you heartily for the part you have taken in the matter, but I doubt not that your advocacy as President had much to do with the decision. Whatever may be the issue it will always be a pleasure hereafter to remember this mark of appreciation and sympathy given by the select of my brother authors. Sincerely yours, Herbert Spencer." (Letter from Herbert Spencer to Sir John Lubbock dated January 27, 1902. Quoted in Horace G. Hutchinson, editor, The Life of Sir John Lubbock, Lord Avebury, 2 Vols., Macmillan and Co., Limited, London, 1914. Vol. 2, p. 166)

W. E. H. Lecky had declined to join the Committee to select an English candidate for the Nobel Prize in Literature, primarily because of ill health. " ... I have however received an urgent notification from the Society of Authors /A committee of which was to select the English candidate/ asking me to vote without delay and suggesting Herbert Spencer as their Candidate. Would you tell me whether this is the unanimous recommendation of your Committee, or at all events whether it has your approval? I suppose the First Principles may be said to have "an idealistic tendency" /evidently this is what the Committee, feeling this to be an important consideration, was contending/, though I am not very clear about what that means. I don't think any of his other works can be said to have it. I have not been following carefully the Nobel question, but I was under the impression that the prize was to be awarded to a work recently published; and the First Principles appeared I suppose half a century ago. I have a great admiration for Herbert Spencer (though I should never have thought of him as an idealist) and should be glad to do anything I could for him ... but I am a good deal perplexed about what to do, and if my vote is not particularly wanted I should be rather inclined to do nothing." (Letter from W. H. Lecky to Sir John Lubbock dated January 18, 1902. Quoted in Horace G. Hutchinson, editor, The Life of Sir John Lubbock, Lord Avebury, 2 Vols., Macmillan and Co., Limited, London, 1914. Vol. 2, p. 166)
... the letters of Alfred Nobel also reveal that he had carefully studied and valued the philosophical work of his contemporary, Herbert Spencer, whose ideas tallied with his own in so many respects." (Nils K. Ståhle, Alfred Nobel, Translated by Alan Blair, Thomas Nelson and Sons Ltd, London, 1962. P. 165)
In 1867 Spencer was asked to become a candidate for the professorship of Mental Philosophy and Logic at University College, London, but he declined. Several other such offers were tendered to him in subsequent years, but he always turned them down. (Auto. II, 146-70)

Spencer could not have been more unacademic. He had practically no formal schooling at all. Never took an examination. Never taught a course, hardly ever lectured. Turned down every offer of an honorary degree.
Frank Norris, at the end of The Octopus, wrote: "... the individual suffers, but the race goes on. Annixter dies, but in a far-distant corner of the world a thousand lives are saved. The larger view always and through all shams, all wickedness, discovers the Truth that will, in the end, prevail, and all things, surely, inevitably, resistlessly work together for good." (Complete Works of Frank Norris, Vol. 2, p. 361) Those were the words of a disciple of Spencer; the law of the survival of the fittest was a law that sometimes bore hard on the individual but was of the greatest importance for the race. Like Spencer and his followers Norris saw only the group, the nation, the world as the unit of survival, favoring the belief that the species counted for more than the individual." (Lars Ånæntrink, The Beginnings of Naturalism in American Fiction, 1891-1903, Russell & Russell, Inc., New York, 1961. P. 230)

Darwin and Spencer are referred to in Frank Norris' (1870-1902) "Kiplingesque" story, "A South Sea Expedition." (Norris, Complete Works, Vol. 10, p. 88)
"In brief, trustworthy interpretations of social arrangements imply an almost passiveness consciousness. Though feeling cannot and ought not to be excluded from the mind when otherwise contemplating them, yet it ought to be excluded when contemplating them as natural phenomena to be understood in their causes and effects." (Principles, Vol. II, p. 232. N.Y., 1899)

"The natural man would rather be passionately denounced than treated as a phenomenon to be co-ordinated [as Spencer does]. His disposition, when so treated, is to leave the philosopher who so treats him severely alone upon the pinnacle to which he has made out his title." (Francis Gribble, "Herbert Spencer: His Autobiography and His Philosophy," The Fortnightly Review, Vol. 81, pp. 984-995, 1904. P. 988)


Spencer's distinction between operative and regulative institutions is a good one which no one is contemporary social science makes.
Early chiefdoms are generally based on the personal qualities of the (war) leader. Often the chiefdom is named after him (Powhatan, Coosa(?), Calusa, some Cauca Valley chiefdoms). The persistence of the chiefdom may depend on him. If no good successor emerges, the chiefdom may not outlive him. But gradually, the chiefdom becomes institutionalized. There is a role or office of paramount chief, that somebody has to fill. An ideology of the chiefdom and of obligations toward the chief develop (e.g., tax collecting in Fiji).

During the Middle Ages, the king thought of the kingdom as his personal property, to be divided up among his sons when he died, if he so wished. The concept of the state as an entity in and of itself, above and beyond the person of any given ruler, was yet to come. It still survived into the age of Louis XIV ("L'état c'est moi.")

In a well establish chiefdoms, the power of the chief resides in the office, rather than in the individual, as is the case with the New Guinea "Big Man."

The fact that the early Frankish kings were elected reflects their original status as war leaders—where ability was paramount and heredity negligible. (Glaessen, p. 209)

The position of paramount chief is first a personal attainment before it becomes an institutional role.

When does "the office" of paramount chief become divorced from the individual qualities of the political leader?
"In the light of fuller knowledge and in the face of the demands of a critical method other elements than the derivation of animal worship from the misinterpretation of nicknames of Spencer's theory of the origin of religion prove equally fallacious. The very idea of a double as the first form of spirit is questionable, for multiplicity of spirits or souls of individuals is so commonly encountered among even the most primitive communities that it may well be assumed that in many instances, if not all, a plurality of souls preceded one soul." (Alexander A. Goldenweiser, Early Civilization, F. S. Crofts & Co., New York, 1922. P. 332)

"The fact is that there has not been a single tribe, no matter how rude, known in history or visited by travellers, which has been shown to be destitute of religion, under some form. The contrary of this has been asserted by various modern writers of weight, for example by Herbert Spencer and Sir John Lubbock, not from their own observation, for neither ever saw a savage tribe, but from the reports of travellers and missionaries. I speak advisedly when I say that every assertion to this effect when tested by careful examination has proved erroneous." (Daniel G. Brinton, Religions of Primitive People, G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1897. Pp. 30-31)

"Mr. Spencer asserts that all forms of religious sentiment spring from the primitive idea of a disembodied double of a dead man. I assert that this is a rather complicated and developed form of thought; and that the simplest and earliest form of religious sentiment is the idea of the rudest savage, that visible objects around him--animal, vegetable, and inorganic--have quasi-human feelings and powers, which he regards with gratitude and awe. Mr. Spencer says that man only began to worship a river or a volcano when he began to imagine them as the abode of dead men's spirits. I say that he began to fear and adore them, so soon as he thought the river or the volcano had the feelings and the powers of active beings; and that was from the dawn of the human intelligence. The latter view is, I maintain, far the simpler and more obvious explanation; and it is a fault in logic to construct a complicated explanation when a simple one answers the facts." (Frederic Harrison, The Philosophy of Common Sense, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1907. Pp. 366-367)
"Biologists have been led to believe, as Herbert Spencer and others have sug- / gested, that anterior to the appearance of liv- / ing things on the Earth there would probably first have been a very slow elaboration of some proteid compounds before the actual produc- / tion of protoplasm in some amorphous condition like the hypotheti- / cal Bathybius of Huxley, followed in the course of time by the evo- / lution of actual Amoebae." (H. Charlton Bastian, The Origin of Life, G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1911. Pp. 20-21)

"As the first origin of life on this earth, as well as the con- / tinued life of each individual, is at present quite beyond the scope of science, I do not wish to lay much stress on the greater simpli- / city of the view of a few forms, or of only one form, having been originally created, instead of innumerable period miraculous crea- / tions having been necessary at innumerable periods; though this more simple view accords well with Maupertuis's philosophical axiom "of least action."" (Charles Darwin, The Variation of Animals and Plants Under Domestication, Orange Judd & Company, New York, 1868. P. 24)

"During those vast periods that expired before the appearance of mammalia, and whilst animate life was chiefly confined to rivers and seas ...." (p. 90) "Even after the creation of the higher or- / ders of vertebrata ...." (p. 91) " ... in ascending the scale of creation we find ...." (p. 93) " ... there appears to have been an aera in which the earth was occupied exclusively by cold-blooded creatures requiring but little oxygen; that it was subsequently inhabited by animals of superior organization consuming more oxy- / gen, and that there since has been a continual increase of the hot-blooded tribes and an apparent diminution of the cold-blooded ones." (p. 94) (Herbert Spencer, "Remarks upon the Theory of Re- / ciprocal Dependence in the Animal and Vegetable Creations, as re- / gards its bearing upon Palaeontology," The London, Edinburgh, and Dublin Philosophical Magazine and Journal of Science, Vol. 24, pp. 90-94, 1844)

"This is the point [the origin of consciousness] at which the theory of evolution offers aid in the completion of the view of naturalism. It proposes to explain the origin of life and of mind. Darwin's theory made no such attempt: his work was limited to chang- / es within the different forms of life,—the origin of species, the descent of man. He took life for granted, as / suming that life al- / ways comes from life; but he broke down the lines between species and thus between lower forms of life and higher forms. It remained for a generalized theory of evolution to attempt the passage from non-living to living, and from non-mental to mental. This general- / ized theory in its philosophical form we owe chiefly to Herbert Spencer. He assembled the scattered scientific work of his day into a picture so vast, and so impressive in its cumulation of details corroborating the universal law of development through "differenti- / ation and integration," that it became much easier to believe that the remaining difficulties would eventually be resolved." (William Earnest Hocking, Types of Philosophy, Revised edition, Charles Scrib- / ner's Sons, New York, 1939. Pp. 52-53)
"I have been favoured with a letter from Mr. Spencer touching this reference to his views on the origin of life, which appeared first in a note attached to the concluding Essay in the first edition of this work [1868], in which he uses the following language: 'At the close of your appended note you refer to certain views of mine, and to my apparent disbelief in spontaneous generation. This reference and the apparent incongruity that seems to be indicated, made me feel that it might have been well to express the limit to that disbelief. Were it to be shown that these [misprint for "there"] arise in some other way than by ordinary genesis, minute aggregates of protoplasm altogether indefinite and variable, the fact would not impress me as intrinsically anomalous; but that which I regard with scepticism, is the alleged spontaneous production of organisms of quite specific characters.' It will be seen that the view here expressed by Mr. Spencer, with his usual remarkable lucidity, accords with most accurately with that which I have here endeavoured to work out, and which was indicated in my paper read before the Royal Society, and elsewhere in my writings." (Gilbert W. Child, Essays on Physiological Subjects, second edition, Longmans, Green, and Co., London, 1869. Pp. 142n.-143n. Child was a botanist at Oxford.)
"Spencer was not a pioneer whose ideas had to be caught up with by society. He took the prevailing social conceptions—of social progress and the perfectability of man—and gave them a cosmic justification in a synthesis of the scientific knowledge of the day." (Abram Kardiner and Edward Preble, They Studied Man, The World Publishing Company, Cleveland, 1961. P. 55)

In the Herbert Spencer lecture for 1909 Prof. Bourne had gone along with the idea that Spencer had borrowed his zoology from Huxley and his botany from Hooker. Tillett wrote to Hooker about the matter and Hooker replied: "Spencer owes little if anything to me beyond a cordial encouragement in his botanical studies and perhaps a few suggestions and specimens from Kew to experiment with." (Letter from Sir Joseph Hooker to Alfred W. Tillett, dated October 2, 1910. Quoted in Alfred W. Tillett, Spencer's Synthetic Philosophy: What It Is All About, P. S. King & Son, London, 1914. P. 163)

"The thinker who elaborates a new system of philosophy deeper and more comprehensive than any yet known to mankind, though he may work in solitude, nevertheless does not work alone. The very fact which makes his great scheme of thought a success and not a failure is the fact that it puts into definite and coherent shape the ideas which many people are more or less vaguely and loosely entertaining, and that it carries to a grand and triumphant conclusion processes of reasoning in which many persons have already begun taking the earlier steps." (John Fiske, Edward Livingston Youmans, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. P. 102)

"Probably the points which would most strike any one reading these essays [Spencer's from 1850 to 1860] casually and for the first time would be their strong grasp upon deep-lying principles, and their extraordinary originality. On every page they reveal, be the subject what it may, an astonishing independence of thought, and an absolute freedom from all trace of traditional methods and ideas. It was this freshness of treatment and firmness of touch which perhaps most attracted the attention of thoughtful readers when they were first published—for the most part anonymously—in the pages of the various English magazines and reviews." (William Henry Hudson, "Herbert Spencer and the Synthetic Philosophy," The Popular Science Monthly, Vol. 41, pp. 1-16, 1892. P. 7)
"His general outlook on the universe has certainly not been discredited: it is in sum the attitude of science, of which the dominion grows daily more assured." (J. M. Robertson, Modern Humanists Reconsidered, Watts & Co., London, 1927. P. 180)

"... he is a man beyond all other men of his age to control the thought of the future...." (Letter from Edward L. Youmans to his sister, dated August 24, 1862. Quoted in John Fiske, Edward Livingston Youmans, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. Pp. 124-125)

Alfred Russel Wallace referred to Spencer as "our greatest philosophical student of science in general, Herbert Spencer." (Man's Place in the Universe, Chapman and Hall Limited. London, 1908, P. 102)

"In philosophy Herbert Spencer was a great master; in biology, a great organizer; in psychology, a great founder and in sociology, a great pioneer." (Arthur M. Lewis, An Introduction to Sociology, Charles H. Kerr & Company, Chicago, 1913. P. 88)

Allen referred to Spencer as "... the greatest brain of our time ...." (Grant Allen, "The Gospel According to Herbert Spencer," Part I, The Pall Mall Gazette, April 26, 1890, pp. 1-2. P. 2)

"Mr. Spencer had a radium mind which gave forth, of its own spontaneity, light and heat." (George Jacob Holyoake, Bygones Worth Remembering, 2 Vols., T. Fisher Unwin, London, 1905, Vol. 2, p. 37)

"An original mind must be judged by those positions that are in advance of his time at the moment when he takes them." (Franklin H. Giddings, "The Greatness of Herbert Spencer," The Independent, Vol. 55, pp. 2959-2962, December 17, 1909. P. 2960)

Leslie called Spencer: "... one of the most eminent living philosophers ...." (Thomas Edward Cliffe Leslie, Essays in Political and Moral Philosophy, Longmans, Green, & Co., London, 1879. P. 235)

"... Kant, Leibnitz, Newton, and Descartes. In point of comprehensiveness, coherence, and steady rationality of thought Spencer is comparable to the greatest of these." (J. M. Robertson, Explorations, Watts & Co., London, n.d. (ca. 1923). P. 114)
"To pretend that this body of doctrine [Spencer's theories] is as a whole discredited or superseded is the device of men whose animus is father to their thought. So far, it holds the ground, no similarly comprehensive scheme challenging it." (J. M. Robertson, Explorations, Watts & Co., London, n.d. (ca. 1923). P. 113)

"... a great figure in science should be judged by the characteristics which set him apart from and ahead of his contemporaries, not by the errors and shortcomings which he shares with them." (Leslie A. White, "Evolutionism in Cultural Anthropology: A Rejoinder," American Anthropologist, Vol. 49, pp. 400-413, 1947. P. 401)

"Admitting that he has probably said some things about man and the universe that are not true, it must at the same time be said that probably no other man has lived on this planet who has known so many true things about the universe as Mr. Spencer did." (Franklin H. Giddings, "The Greatness of Herbert Spencer," The Independent, Vol. 55, pp. 2959-2962, December 17, 1903. P. 2960)

"... his [Spencer's] contribution to the development of anthropological theory and method clearly equals, if it does not surpass, the contributions of the more highly regarded figures of Edward Tylor and Lewis Henry Morgan." (Marvin Harris, The Rise of Anthropological Theory, Thomas Y. Crowell Company, New York, 1968, P. 129)

"... the balance to the good in any fair estimate of Mr. Spencer's work is so enormous, that we should not hesitate to recognize as correct the verdict of all the world to the effect that he is one of the main factors in the main movement in the history of modern thought." (James Mark Baldwin, "Mr. Spencer's Psychology," The American Naturalist, Vol. 31, pp. 553-557, 1897. P. 557)

Speaking of Spencer's work: "It is work of the calibre of that which Aristotle and Newton did. Though coming in this latter age, it as far surpasses their work in its vastness of performance as the railway surpasses the sedan-chair, or as the telegraph surpasses the carrier-pigeon." (John Fiske, Excursions of an Evolutionist. Houghton, Mifflin and Company, Boston, 1894. P. 295.)

"But if we want to measure minds, as minds, one against another, I say fearlessly that scientific and philosophic grasp is the one true standard of the highest attainment, and that no man who ever yet trod our planet gave proof of such mastery in both these lines as Herbert Spencer." (Grant Allen, "Personal Reminiscences of Herbert Spencer," The Forum, Vol. 35, pp. 610-628, 1904. P. 610)
"Measured by the range of its influence, it (Spencer's mind) stands alone among the intellects of modern times. The summit that is seen from all distances and that baffles and deceives upon the nearer view is presumably loftier than others; it is broader based and more mysterious in its structure." (Franklin H. Giddings, "The Greatness of Herbert Spencer," The Independent, Vol. 55, pp. 2959-2962, December 17, 1903. P. 2959)

"The last of the great Thinkers who has attempted to reduce the history of intellectual development to law and order, is Mr. Herbert Spencer, who, in his magnificent and colossal work on Evolution, has, with a genius all his own, made the world of Thought his eternal debtor." (John Beattie Crozier, History of Intellectual Development: On the Lines of Modern Evolution, 2 Vols., 2nd edition, Longmans, Green, and Co., London, 1902. Vol. 1, pp. 10-11)

"Of no modern thinker have so many or so various estimates been offered to the world as of Herbert Spencer. By his disciples he has been described as the greatest intellect since Aristotle. By his traducers he has been characterized as a purveyor of pretentious explanations of the universe that already have passed into the shadow-world of bygone philosophies." (Franklin H. Giddings, "The Greatness of Herbert Spencer," The Independent, Vol. 55, pp. 2959-2962, December 17, 1903. P. 2959)

"Spencer is thus the philosopher of vastness. Misprised by many specialists, who carp at his technical imperfections, he has nevertheless enlarged the imagination, and set free the speculative mind of countless doctors, engineers, and lawyers, of many physicists and chemists, and of thoughtful laymen generally. He is the philosopher whom those who have no other philosopher can appreciate." (William James, Memories and Studies, Longmans, Green, and Co., New York, 1911. P. 126)

"It is strange, but it is true, that many British writers find it impossible to do any sort of justice to Spencer. And yet where is there the British writer, save Darwin, whose name and theories are to be found in the whole world's literature of a half-dozen great subjects, since 1850, as Spencer's are? We hear it said that half the world nowaday thinks in terms of Darwinism; but it is truer to say, "in terms of evolutionism"; for half of the half thinks its evolutionism in terms, not of Darwinism, but of Spencerism. Moreover, in the Latin countries and in the United States, it was the leaven of Spencer's evolutionism that first worked its way through the lump. Why not, then, recognise Spencer as what he was, one of the greatest intellectual influences of modern times, a glory to British thought? In psychology this is specially worth insisting upon, since Spencer came / just at a time of surprising barrenness in this department in England." (James Mark Baldwin, History of Psychology, 2 Vols., G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1913. Vol. 2, pp. 98n.-99n.)
Spencer's detractors continually point to his shortcomings as if they cancelled out his scientific contributions, or at least seriously diluted them. But such a view seems to disregard the way in which science advances. Scientific progress does not come to us unalloyed in any individual. The same person who advances science in some significant respect may at the same time harbor ideas and attitudes reflecting traditional and unscientific modes of thought. No greater stride forward was ever taken in science than that brought about by Sir Isaac Newton. It was Newton's formulation of the laws of celestial mechanics that changed man's conception of the universe from one run by capricious and inescrutable divine will to one governed by definite and immutable natural laws. Yet Newton himself was far from rejecting the idea of God. On the contrary, it is well known that he believed his own work to have presented more clearly the divine plan, and that what he had accomplished was for the greater glory of God. Thus, in Newton, traditional and pre-scientific views of the cosmos comingled with those of a radically new science.

It was much the same with Herbert Spencer. Spencer's formulation of the general principle of evolution provided, for the first time, the explanatory key which laid bare the continuous process which had led from cosmic dust to the most complex human societies. Yet the same brain that conceived this law also entertained beliefs that represented the feelings of small British shopkeepers of the early 1800's, and, at the very time he was vigorously championing them, were already considered obsolete by many of Spencer's contemporaries. But in evaluating Spencer's contribution to the history of thought it is his breakthroughs and innovations that deserve to be stressed. As White has said in evaluating the contributions of Morgan, ...

"The last-named writer /Spencer/ is one daily rising into wider influence. In spite of the internecine warfare between his principles and the theological and metaphysical principles officially admitted, even antagonists are compelled to admit the force and clearness of his genius, the extent and profundity of his scientific knowledge. It is questionable whether any thinker of finer calibre has appeared in our country; although the future alone can determine the position he is to assume in History." (George Henry Lewes, The History of Philosophy from Thales to Comte, 3rd edition, Longmans, Green, and Co, London, 1867. 2 Vols. Vol. 2, p. 653)

"It is now many years ago, and at a time when he /Spencer/ was not known so extensively as he is now, that I had occasion to publish my estimate of him (Intuitions of the Mind, Part III., c. i. §8). "His bold generalizations are always instructive, and some of them may in the end be established as the profoundest laws of the universe." I find that the American publishers of his works have been using this testimony of mine in their advertisements, and I have no objections / that they continue to do so." (James McCosh, Herbert Spencer's Philosophy as Culminated in His Ethics, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1885. Pp. 5-6)
"A star of the first magnitude went out of the firmament of original thought by the death of Herbert Spencer.... Men have to go back to Aristotle to find Spencer's compeer in range of thought, and to Gibbon for a parallel to his protracted persistence in accomplishing his great design of creating a philosophy of evolution. Mr. Spencer's distinction was that he laid down new landmarks of evolutionary guidance in all the dominions of human knowledge."


In making an over-all assessment of Spencer we would do well to keep in mind the remark of Leslie White in reappraising Lewis H. Morgan: "... a great figure in science should be judged by the characteristics which set him apart from and ahead of his contemporaries, not by the errors and shortcomings which he shares with them."180


"Surveying his work as a whole, we may confidently assert that Spencer brought to a conclusion a great task and was himself great in its execution. The present generation can, perhaps, hardly realize how potent his influence was on the thought of the latter half of the last century. Many of his conclusions run counter to those which were, in his day, widely accepted. If only they seemed to him to be true, however, he held to them with a tenacity which his opponents branded as obstinacy." (C. Lloyd Morgan, Spencer's Philosophy of Science, The Herbert Spencer Lecture for 1913, The Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1913. P. 46)

"In spite of the internecine warfare between his principles and the theological and metaphysical principles officially admitted, even antagonists are compelled to admit the force and clearness of his genius, the extent and profundity of his scientific knowledge. It is questionable whether any thinker of finer calibre has appeared in our country; although the future alone can determine the position he is to assume in History.... He alone of British thinkers has organised a System of Philosophy." (George Henry Lewes, The History of Philosophy from Thales to Comte, 2 Vols., third edition, Longmans, Green, and Co, London, 1867. Vol. 2, p. 653)
"... it is impossible to-day for the specialist in physics, in biology, in psychology, in sociology, or in ethics to offer any new hypothesis or constructive doctrine without directly or indirectly defining its relation to the philosophy of Herbert Spencer. It is this fact that justifies the comparison of Spencer to Aristotle. For, in the whole history of human thought, these two men alone have so presented and interpreted the knowledge of their time that all other thinkers must of necessity take a position of antagonism to these masters or of agreement with them." (Franklin H. Giddings, "The Greatness of Herbert Spencer," The Independent, Vol. 55, pp. 2959-2962, December 17, 1903. P. 2960)

"Spencer's philosophy was admirably suited to the American scene. It was scientific in derivation and comprehensive in scope. It had a reassuring theory of progress based upon biology and physics. It was large enough to be all things to all men, broad enough to satisfy agnostics like Robert Ingersoll and theists like Fiske and Beecher. It offered a comprehensive world-view, uniting under one generalization everything in nature from protozoa to politics. Satisfying the desire of "advanced thinkers" for a world-system to replace the shattered Mosaic cosmogony, it soon gave Spencer a public influence that transcended Darwin's." (Richard Hofstadter, Social Darwinism in American Thought, revised edition, The Beacon Press, Boston, 1955. P. 31)

"Until about 1860 Spencer was ahead of his generation: a pre-Darwinian evolutionist; a republican Radical with leanings towards Chartism, feminism, and Godwinian anarchism; a formidable, sceptical, unconventional, revolutionary reformer. After 1860, for some quarter of a century, while he was working out the great scheme of his synthetic philosophy, he was—as the arch-agnostic, and as the supreme interpreter of the universe (within the limits of time and space) in terms of evolutionary science—one of the prime representatives of his contemporaries. He marched with his generation, holding aloft their banner of scientific affirmation and religious negation. From 1885, however, when he sank into chronic invalidism, he fell out of the ranks of the progressives. Even as an exponent of evolution he, with his continued insistence on the inheritance of acquired characteristics, fell behind Darwin and Weismann. Still more did his pacifism, secularism, little-Englandism, and administrative nihilism alienate him from a new generation dominated by militarism, irrationalism, imperialism, socialism, and sentimentalism. Abandoning his juvenile adhesion to the causes of Chartism, feminism, and land-nationalisation, he became the exponent of a reactionary conservatism, the guide, philosopher, and friend of the leaders of the Liberty and Property Defence League." (F. J. C. Hearnshaw, "Herbert Spencer and the Individualists," in The Social & Political Ideas of Some Representative Thinkers of the Victorian Age, ed. by F. J. C. Hearnshaw, pp. 53-83, George G. Harrap & Co., London, 1933. P. 54)
"Throughout his entire discussion of social evolution Pareto utilizes Spencer's concept of social differentiation. His notion of a cumulative increase in the degree of social differentiation from Roman times to the present also derives from Spencer; and, so we may surmise, does his basic concept of the mutual interdependence of all social phenomena." (S. E. Fø Finer, Introduction to Vilfredo Pareto: Sociological Writings, pp. 1-91, Frederick A. Praeger, New York, 1966. P. 16)

"It is more than a minor irony that Professor Talcott Parsons, who opened his first major work with a hearty assent to these words ['Who now reads Spencer?'], should in recent years have revived the doctrine of social evolution and led several other prominent sociologists back to Spencerian conceptions." (J. D. Y. Peel, "Spencer and the Neo-Evolutionists," Sociology, Vol. 3, pp. 173-191, 1969. P. 173)

"... and even Talcott Parsons, who is more conscious of his intellectual forbears, seems to stress the novelties and improvements of his own approach rather than the respects in which he is directly indebted to Spencer. But as I have shown elsewhere, "Spencer and the Neo-Evolutionists," Sociology, Vol. 3, 1969 and as Nisbet Social Change and History has also argued, the differences are more apparent than real; the core of neo-evolutionism is thoroughly Spencerian." (J. D. Y. Peel, Herbert Spencer on Social Evolution, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1972. P. xliii)
"Concerning the present position of the human race, we must therefore say, that man needed one moral constitution to fit him for his original state; that he needs another to fit him for his present state; and that he has been, is, and will long continue to be, in process of adaptation. By the term civilization we signify the adaptation that has already taken place. The changes that constitute progress are the successive steps of transition. And the belief in human perfectibility, merely amounts to the belief, that in virtue of this process, man will eventually become completely suited to his mode of life." (Herbert Spencer, Social Statics, John Chapman, London, 1851. P. 63)

"For the old static conception of the Cosmos, with its hopeless and baseless dogmas, such as the assertion that human nature is the same in all ages, Spencer, more than all his contemporaries and predecessors put together, has given us the dynamic view ..." (C. W. Saleeby, Evolution The Master-Key, Harper & Brothers Publishers, New York, 1906. P. 14)

"Man, in common with lower creatures, is held to be capable of indefinitely change by adaptation to conditions. In both Social Statics and Principles of Ethics he is regarded as undergoing transformation from a nature appropriate to his aboriginal wild life, to a nature appropriate to a settled civilized life; and in both this transformation is described as a moulding into a form fitted for harmonious co-operation." (Herbert Spencer, The Principles of Ethics, 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1904. Vol. 1, p. vi)

"It is not a little strange that, at the very moment when Germany is uttering its doleful cry of pessimism, scientific writers in England (especially Spencer) are seeking to build a theory of the future no less optimistic than the doctrine of human perfectibility preached at the close of the last century." (James Sully, Review of Herbert Spencer's The Data of Ethics, The Academy, Vol. 16, pp. 232-234, 1879. P. 233)

"Concerning the present position of the human race, we must therefore say, that man needed one moral constitution to fit him for his original state; that he needs another to fit him for his present state; and that he has been, is, and will long continue to be, in process of adaptation. By the term civilization we signify the adaptation that has already taken place. The changes that constitute progress are the successive steps of the transition. And the belief in human perfectibility, merely amounts to the belief, that in virtue of this process, man will eventually become completely suited to his mode of life." (Herbert Spencer, Social Statics, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1883. P. 78)
"... it is a rather amazing example of speculative self-confidence, even among philosophers, that anyone should have been able to convince himself that the whole necessary course of cosmic development is predictable from the base proposition that energy persists." (Arthur Kenyon Rogers, *English and American Philosophy Since 1800*, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1922. P. 154)


"When Mr. Spencer tells us that if we will grant him the single indubitable truth of the persistence of force, he will show us how nebulae and suns and planets and rocks and plants and brutes and men and histories and civilizations and literatures and philosophies have been necessarily evolved, we seem to be hearing Anaximander over again as he tells us that all things come from infinity ...." (Augustus Hopkins Strong, *Philosophy and Religion*, A. C. Armstrong and Son, New York, 1888. P. 40)

"His principle of the "Persistence of Force," which in his book of "First Principles" he supposes to be the same as the mechanical doctrine of the conservation of force--only a better name for it--has none of the technical precision and definiteness which belong to this doctrine; and the important conclusions which he deduces from the more general philosophical doctrine, "the Law of Causation," Mr. Spencer's "Persistence of Force" is in fact only a mechanical name for this fundamental postulate of science." (Anonymous (Chauncey Wright), "Spencer's Biology," *The Nation*, Vol. 2, pp. 724-725, 1866. P. 725)

"My first introduction to the fact of Huxley's existence was in February, 1861, when I was a sophomore at Harvard. The second serial number of Herbert Spencer's *First Principles*, which had just arrived from London, an on which I was feasting my soul, contained an interesting reference to Huxley's views concerning a "pre-geologic past of unknown duration." In the next serial number a footnote informed the reader that the phrase "persistence of force," since become so famous, was suggested by Huxley, as avoiding an objection which Spencer had raised to the current expression "conservation of force." Further references (John Fiske, "Reminiscences of Huxley," *Smithsonian Institution Annual Report, 1900* (1901), pp. 713-728. P. 713)
Referring to a passage in First Principles discussing the "persistence of force," Spencer says: "This passage was written in 1862 at a time when the nomenclature now current was not established. Hence the use of the word force instead of energy. I still, however, adhere to the use of the word persistence, for the reason that the word conservation is doubly inappropriate. Conservation connotes a conserver and an act of conserving—conceptions utterly at variance with the doctrine asserted; and it also implies that in the absence of a conserver and an act of conserving, the energy would disappear, which is also a conception utterly at variance with the doctrine asserted." (Herbert Spencer, "Stereo-Chemistry and Vitalism," Nature, Vol. 58, pp. 592-593, 1898. Pp. 592n.-593n.) Here Spencer's argument is exactly parallel to that he used in maintaining that "survival of the fittest" is superior to "natural selection."

"Did I think that men were likely to remain in the far future anything like what they now are, I should contemplate with equanimity the sweeping away of the whole race." (Herbert Spencer, letter to the poet Wilfrid Scawen Blunt dated October 6, 1898. Quoted in Life and Letters of Herbert Spencer, 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1908. Vol. 2, p. 137)
"Wendell Phillips, the "golden-tongued," was happy to be ranked as a reader and admirer of Mr. Spencer's writings. He had read Social Statics early, often quoted its author in his discussions, and asked me when I wrote you to convey his cordial respects, with an acknowledgement of his deep indebtedness to your labours. He was delighted with the project of reissuing your books, and begged to be used in any way that would forward the undertaking." (Letter from E. L. Youmans to Herbert Spencer dated November 23, 1863. Quoted in John Fiske, Edward Livingston Youmans, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. P. 163)

"Spencer, furthermore, was a philosopher rather than a scientist, concerned with constructing a formal, abstract system." (Harris E. Starr, William Graham Sumner. Henry Holt and Company. New York, 1925. P. 394.)

"Spencer ranks, in other words, among those who have made the two countries, science and philosophy, realize that they must reckon with each other; each admitting the other to its counsels." (A. H. Lloyd, "The Philosophy of Herbert Spencer," The Scientific Monthly, Vol. 11, pp. 97-111, 1920. P. 99)

"... he [Spencer] worked as a ... spider-philosopher weaving a web from his own entrails, and not as the scientist he fancied himself." (Israel Zangwill, "Herbert Spencer," The Reader Magazine, Vol. 4, pp. 27-29, 1904. P. 27)

"For Herbert Spencer, though a philosopher amongst men of science, was a scientist among philosophers; whilst with metaphysicians he may have been both, he was certainly not one of them." (John Butler Burke, "Herbert Spencer and The Master Key," The Contemporary Review, Vol. 89, pp. 783-794, 1906. P. 784)
"The scientists, it seems, found him too philosophical; the philosophers, too scientific; so that his success may be said to have fallen between the two. Thus he was actually and successfully neither, because on the whole both." (A. H. Lloyd, "The Philosophy of Herbert Spencer," The Scientific Monthly, Vol. 11, pp. 97-111, 1920. P. 97)


"... Mr. Spencer bases philosophy upon science, and makes it what may be called a science of the sciences." (Edward L. Youmans, "Herbert Spencer and the Doctrine of Evolution," The Popular Science Monthly, Vol. 6, pp. 20-48, 1874-75. P. 42)

"Herbert Spencer's significance in the history of English thought depends on his position as the philosopher of the great scientific movement of the second half of the 19th century ...." (p. 635) (F. C. S. Schiller, "Herbert Spencer," The Encyclopaedia Britannica, 11th ed. 1911. Vol. 25, pp. 634-637)

"It is as the philosophical embodiment of modern physical science, that Mr. Spencer is pre-eminently distinguished." (Anonymous, "clearly by Mivart"--Herbert Spencer], Review article of Spencer's Principles of Psychology, First Principles, and Essays, The Quarterly Review, Vol. 135, pp. 509-539, 1873. P. 511)
"I habitually speak of him as the only living Englishman who can fairly lay claim to the name of philosopher; nay, he is, I believe, the only man in Europe now living who has constructed a real system of philosophy." (Frederic Harrison, The Philosophy of Common Sense, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1907. P. 353)

"... there perhaps never lived a philosopher more enthusiastically bent upon explaining the phenomena which he actually observed, rather than the mass of accumulated testimony and opinion about it." (L. L. Bernard, "Herbert Spencer; The Man and His Age," The South Atlantic Quarterly, Vol. 21, pp. 241-251, 1922) (p. 243)

"Mr. Herbert Spencer has received, and probably deserves, the title of England's greatest philosopher; and when we reach England's greatest in any achievement of mind, we have usually also reached the world's greatest." (Lester F. Ward, Dynamic Sociology, 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. Vol. 1, p. 139)


The Synthetic Philosophy "... constitutes one of the most complete coordinated systems of philosophy in existence ...." (Walter B. Pillsbury, The History of Psychology, W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., New York, 1929. P. 190)

"Spencer was really a cosmic philosopher unlike people like Giddings, Bernard, and Ogburn, who were simply sociologists who turned to social problems as an incidental phase of the application of his laws of physical development to social evolution." (Harry Elmer Barnes, "The Fate of Sociology in England," American Sociological Society, Papers and Proceedings, Vol. 21, pp. 26-46, 1926. P. 27)

"... England has for the first time in her history produced a system of philosophy—that of Mr Herbert Spencer; and this with the distinct understanding that the object of philosophy is the unification of knowledge." (John Theodore Merz, A History of European Thought in the Nineteenth Century, 6 Vols., William Blackwood and Sons, Edinburgh, 1907. Vol. 1, p. 48)
"... the philosophical system which is without doubt the clearest profoundest expression of the general culture of the second half of the nineteenth century--i.e. the philosophy of Spencer." (Guido Villa, Contemporary Psychology, translated by Harold Manacorda, Swan Sonnenschein & Co Ltd, London, 1903. P. 322)

Spencer is referred to as "... this latest "runner" in the wonderful race of British empirical "torch-bearers."" (R. M. Wensley, Review of Life and Letters of Herbert Spencer, by David Duncan, Science, Vol. 28, pp. 760-763, 1905. P. 761)

"Whatever may be the verdict of the future, the man who is regarded as the great philosopher of evolution has within his own time won an acceptance and renown such as no preceding philosopher ever personally enjoyed." (Henry George, A Perplexed Philosopher, Robert Schalkenbach Foundation, New York, 1965. P. xiii)

"But whatever part of his philosophy may be transitory, Mr. Spencer's influence is indisputable; and since the lamented death of Mill, no one can now contest his claim to the philosophic supremacy in these islands." (Anonymous, "The Development of Psychology," The Westminster Review, Vol. 101, pp. 377-406, 1874. P. 400)

"Herbert Spencer holds the present greatest name among the philosophers. He is scarcely known in his own country outside the circles of fogies, but abroad he enjoys a wonderful reputation as the leader of all modern thought." (Jehu Junior, "Men of the Day--No. CXCIX., Mr. Herbert Spencer," Vanity Fair, April 26, 1879, p. 241. P. 241)

"And in awarding "points" to the various candidates for immortality in the "Pantheon of Philosophy," few are entitled to a higher mark than Mr. Spencer on this score of positive and systematic form. Whatever greatness this quality imports--and surely it is as rare and great as any--belongs to Mr. Spencer in the fullest measure." (William James, "Herbert Spencer," The Critic, Vol. 44, pp. 21-24, January, 1904. P. 21)

"On the whole, with qualifications which will appear presently, I belong to Herbert Spencer's camp ..." (p. 162) "When I rub my eyes and look at things candidly, it seems evident to me that this world is the sort of world described by Herbert Spencer, not the sort of world described by Hegel or Bergson. At heart these finer philosophers, like Plato, are not seeking to describe the world of our daily plodding and commerce, but to supply a visionary interpretation of it, a refuge from it in some contrasted spiritual assurance, where the sharp facts vanish into a clarified drama or a pleasant trance. Far be it from me to deride the imagination, poetic or dialectical; but after all it is a great advantage for a system of philosophy to be substantially true." (p. 163) (George Santayana, Obiter Scripta; Lectures, Essays and Reviews. Charles Scribner's Sons. New York, 1936)

"As a member of the tribe of the arachnidae constructs its web out of its own bowels, so did Mr. Spencer construct his system of philosophy out of his own head." (Unsigned, "The Exploded Quack," Blackwood's Magazine, Vol. 201, pp. 717-727, 1917. P. 722)

"But his Principles of Psychology and his First Principles as compared to Principles of Biology seem to me far too metaphysical; he is always asleep in hypotheses, always explaining not how things are actually accomplished, but how it is possible that they might be accomplished. Nothing is more interesting and ingenuous than his theory of universal evolution and his treatment of progressive differentiations. Yet to my mind there is something of romance in all this, just as I find in Hegel or in Schopenhauer. Darwin goes as far as I can follow; beyond this, especially when Haeckel leads the way, I have to stop, for the ground is no longer firm beneath my feet. I have the same impression when studying Spencer's negations after considering his affirmations." (Letter from Hippolyte Taine to Th. Ribot dated July 6, 1873. Quoted in Life and Letters of H. Taine, 3 Vols., abridged and translated from the French by E. Sparvel-Bayly, Archibald Constable & Co Ltd, London, 1908. Vol. 3, pp. 115-116)

"Herbert Spencer, indeed, has done for modern British philosophy what Byron did for British poetry: he has carried its prestige to the continent, which he has conquered even more than the island." (Israel Zangwill, "Herbert Spencer," The Reader Magazine, Vol. 4, pp. 27-29, 1904. P. 27)

"He [Herbert Spencer] brought home the idea of philosophic synthesis to a greater number of the Anglo-Saxon race than had ever conceived the idea before." (A. S. Pringle-Pattison, "The Life and Philosophy of Herbert Spencer," The Quarterly Review, Vol. 200, pp. 240-267, 1904. P. 267)

"His [Spencer's] contributions to moral and political philosophy still have a certain interest but we shall look in vain to Spencer for any rigorous discussion of philosophical issues. He is the nineteenth-century publicist par excellence." (John Passmore, A Hundred Years of Philosophy, A Pelican Book, Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, 1968. P. 42)

"Nowhere else ... is there a more beautiful and fearless exposition of ... recent scientific notions ... as affecting our views of metaphysical problems." (David Masson, Recent British Philosophy, Macmillan and Co., London, 1877. P. 165)

"Indeed, I should say that he [Spencer] is the British thinker who has most distinctly seen the necessity that Philosophy should deal with the total cosmological organism ... if it would grasp all the present throbings of the speculative intellect." (David Masson, Recent British Philosophy, Macmillan and Co., London, 1877. P. 166)

"... the treatment of the latter subject [the "rhythm of motion"] offers one of the most brilliant examples of strict philosophic thinking which the world has yet produced." (Lester F. Ward, Dynamic Sociology, 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. Vol. 1, p. 160)

"St. George Mivart, who as a Catholic is also at variance with Spencer in important matters, says "we cannot deny the title of philosopher to such a thinker as Mr. Spencer, who does genuinely bind together different and hitherto alien subjects, and that by a clear and wide though neither an all-comprehensive nor a spiritual hypothesis, the principle of evolution." (Henry George, A Perplexed Philosopher, Robert Schalkenbach Foundation, New York, 1965. P. xii)

"Of all our thinkers he [Spencer] is the one who, as it appears to me, has formed to himself the largest new scheme of a systematic philosophy, and, in relation to some of the greatest questions of philosophy in their most recent forms, as set or reset by the last speculations and revelations of science, has already shot his thoughts the farthest" (David Masson, Recent British Philosophy, Macmillan and Co., London, 1877. P. 165)

"All metaphysical problems and speculations Spencer explicitly excluded from the purview of philosophy, properly so called, and, whether or no we agree with such a limitation, we must not forget to estimate his work in the light of his own object and aim." (H. S. Shelton, "Spencer's Formula of Evolution," The Philosophical Review, Vol. 19, pp. 241-258, 1910. P. 242)

"There has been no noteworthy attempt in English philosophy to give a conception of the world, of man, and of society, wrought out with systematic harmonising of principles. There has not been an effort to systematise the scattered labours of isolated thinkers. Mr. Herbert Spencer is now for the first time deliberately making the attempt to found a philosophy." (George H. Lewes, Problems of Life and Mind, first edition, 1873. Vol. 1, p. 84)

After discussing "the Unknowable," "the Universal Postulate," "Transfigured Realism," etc., Perry says: "... the powerful influence which it [Spencer's philosophy] exerted in the latter half of the nineteenth century was due rather to its grandiose architecture than to the solidity of its foundations." (Ralph Barton Perry, Philosophy of the Recent Past, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1926. P. 34)
"The real modern era of philosophy may be said in a way to begin with the publication of the System of Synthetic Philosophy ...." (p. 795) "... his work must form the basis of any future system of philosophy evolved in the fulness of time." (p. 795) "While our own universities made themselves snug and smug in the half-way houses of Kant and Hegel, foreign nations were accepting England's great philosopher as of more value than the Germans." (p. 795) (W., "Herbert Spencer," The Athenaeum, No. 3972, December 12, 1903, pp. 794-795. P.795)

"It would be easy to enumerate the particular contributions which other great English thinkers like Bacon, Hobbes, Locke, Berkeley, and Hume have made to the evolution of human thought, but it would not be true to say of any one of them that he had essayed to produce a complete system of philosophy co-ordinated and articulated in all its parts. That is the unique distinction of Herbert Spencer among English thinkers." (Review of Herbert Spencer's An Autobiography, The London Times, reprinted in The Living Age (Boston), Vol. 241 (23 n.s.), pp. 560-565, 1904. P. 560)

"In English-speaking countries it stood for several decades as the most imposing monument of science, in which the extensive but scattered results of research were so conjoined as to afford a unified picture of the total cosmos. The materials were drawn from all the special sciences, inorganic as well as organic, but they received their structural and pictorial unity from the principle of development or evolution." (Ralph Barton Perry, Philosophy of the Recent Past, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1926. Pp. 34-35)

"It was a pity that he called his system a "philosophy," for it was really only a synthesis of the sciences. It dealt wholly with the phenomenal, and not at all with the noumenal; it was concerned with processes, not with essences; its scope was less wide than even epistemology, from ontology it deliberately held aloof." (F. J. C. Hearnshaw, "Herbert Spencer and the Individualists," in The Social & Political Ideas of Some Representative Thinkers of the Victorian Age, ed. by F. J. C. Hearnshaw, pp. 53-83, George G. Harrap & Co. Ltd., London, 1933. P. 66)

"There are not a few, especially in America, who think that Herbert Spencer has reached the end of philosophic thought, has achieved a final and conclusive system and a logical and harmonious statement of the one all-embracing law into which can be ranged and classified all the phenomena of matter and force, of life and of mind, of society and of science, of art and of religion; in short, a philosophy of the universe which fails to be accepted by any, only because they fail to comprehend it." (Van Buren Denslow, Modern Thinkers Principally upon Social Science, Belford, Clarke, & Co., Chicago, 1880. P. 211)
"... Herbert Spencer (1820-1903) endeavored to build the stray bricks of scientific knowledge into a philosophical structure." (Reuben Post Halleck, History of English Literature, American Book Company, New York, 1900. P. 387)

"Mr. Spencer exercises a wider influence than any contemporary philosopher ...." (Arthur W. Benn, "Another View of Mr. Spencer's Ethics," Mind, Vol. 5, pp. 489-512, 1880. P. 489)


"It is often made a reproach against English philosophy that it is deficient in system and comprehensiveness.... It can never be said again that no English mind has conceived and carried out a comprehensive system of philosophy." (L. F. Austin, "Herbert Spencer," The Illustrated London News, Vol. 123, p. 898, December 12, 1903. P. 898)

"... in the power of synthesis and grasp of principles it is doubtful if any thinker of ancient or modern times, with the exceptions of Aristotle, has surpassed or even approached the level of his great intellect, or achieved work of such colossal magnitude." (John Butler Burke, "Herbert Spencer and the Master Key," The Contemporary Review, Vol. 89, pp. 783-794, 1906. P. 783)

"However commonplace the oft-repeated saying may be that a prophet is without honour in his own country, it seems to be most truly applicable to the one great philosopher that Englishmen can claim. Others, from other lands, have been received with acclamation here, but he whose mind and character were most distinctly English for years found little sympathy. Such an one was Herbert Spencer, the philosopher, as we say, the only philosopher, indeed, that England has produced." (John Butler Burke, "Herbert Spencer and The Master Key," The Contemporary Review, Vol. 89, pp. 783-794, 1906. P. 783)

"A man like Spencer can afford to be judged, not by his infallibility in details, but by the bravery of his attempt. He sought to see truth as a whole. He brought us back to the old ideal of philosophy, which since Locke's time had well-nigh taken flight, the ideal, namely, of a "completely unified knowledge," into which the physical and mental worlds should enter on equal terms. This was the original Greek ideal of philosophy, to which men surely must return." (William James, "Herbert Spencer," The Critic, Vol. 44, pp. 21-24, 1904. Pp. 23-24)
Spencer's leading positions, "... whether they be finally conclusive in their logic or not, they possess a rising and increasing momentum which will compel all persons, who make any pretense of giving attention to philosophic utterance, to weigh them, and will leave none at liberty to ignore them." (Van Buren Denslow, Modern Thinkers, Principally upon Social Science, Belford, Clarke, & Co., Chicago, 1880. P. 209)

"In 1880, Francis Greenwood Peabody (H.U. 1869) was appointed Parkman Professor in the Harvard Divinity School, where he taught homiletics, ethics, and the philosophy of religion. In 1882-83 he added to the scope of the philosophical instruction by offering two courses in the philosophical department of the College. One of these courses was upon the philosophy of religion and the other upon ethics in relation to religion. In the latter course, he used Spencer's "Data of Ethics" and Maurice's "Social Morality." (Benjamin Rand, "Philosophical Instruction in Harvard University from 1636 to 1906," Part III, The Harvard Graduates' Magazine, Vol. 37, pp. 296-311, 1928-29, P. 300)

"No system of natural philosophy has, with equal consecutiveness and completeness, adapted the achievements and hypotheses of modern natural science to the construction of a philosophy on a scientific foundation." (p. 197) "The works included in the "Synthetic Philosophy" form parts of a great system held together by the principle of evolution: displaying stupendous learning, and a rare universality of scientific culture, entitling their author to a place, mutatis mutandis, beside Aristotle himself. These comprehensive writings afford, even to those who cannot accept their underlying principles, a plenitude of instruction." (Friedrich von Baerenbach, "A German View of the "Data of Ethics,"" The Popular Science Monthly, Vol. 23, pp. 195-202, 1887. Translated and abridged from FSM by Thomas Cross)

"Two courses in systematic philosophy are particularly identified with the instruction given by Professor Josiah Royce at Harvard. From 1885 to 1896 he conducted the course in cosmology or philosophy of nature which Professor James had previously taught from 1879 to 1885. Professor Royce here gave in review the fundamental presuppositions which enter into the more important theories of the order of nature and contrasted the mechanical and theological interpretations of the world. He chose, as the most influential example of cosmological speculation, Spinoza's "Ethics" and Spencer's "First Principles." (Benjamin Rand, "Philosophical Instruction in Harvard University from 1636 to 1906," Part III, The Harvard Graduates' Magazine, Vol. 37, pp. 296-311, 1928-29, P. 306)
"But the great force of his [Spencer's] philosophy grew from the fact that his metaphysical ideas were based upon sound science; if evolution had remained what it was in 1852--just another unsubstantiated theory--a great system of thought based upon the idea of evolution could not have won much adherence. On the other hand, with evolution in the physical world an accepted and all but demonstrated belief, any system of philosophy which was based upon it must have been respectfully listened to." (Julian M. Drachman, Studies in the Literature of Natural Science, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1930. P. 355)

"Philosophy to these men [Comte, Mill, and Spencer] was merely a synopsis of the fundamental concepts and principles employed in the specialized sciences (with Comte: mathematics, astronomy, physics, chemistry, biology, and sociology; with Spencer: biology, psychology, sociology, and morals). The synoptic study of these sciences was 'philosophical' by virtue of its general positivistic character, its refutation of all transcendental ideas. Such philosophy thus amounted to the refutation of philosophy." (Herbert Marcuse, Reason and Revolution: Hegel and the Rise of Social Theory, Beacon Press, Boston, 1960. P. 376)

"Of Spencer's work it may be said that no more heroic, and I will add no more successful, attempt to wield singlehanded such a mighty weapon as unified science has ever been made. If science no longer looks askance at Philosophy, but recognizes therein a most powerful ally, it is mainly due in modern times to the impression produced by the author of the Synthetic Philosophy." (Raphael Meldola, Evolution: Darwinian and Spencerian. The Herbert Spencer Lecture for 1910. The Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1910. P. 13.)

"I am now working at a review of Herbert Spencer [published in the Academy. April, 1873], which, I think, adds to my general despair. I find myself compelled to form the lowest opinion of a great deal of the results, and yet I have an immense admiration for his knowledge, his tenacious hold of very abstract and original ideas throughout a bold and complicated construction, his power of Combination and Induction. But the grotesque and chaotic confusion of his metaphysics!" (Letter from Henry Sidgwick to H. G. Dakyns dated February, 1873. Quoted in Henry Sidgwick, A Memoir, by A. S. Arthur Sidgwick and E. M. S. Eleazar Mildred Sidgwick, Macmillan and Co., Limited, London, 1906. P. 277)

"The advent of Spencer's new work, however, took the American public by storm. There was in this country in the period after the Civil War a great mass of people who had become fairly prosperous, but who had not acquired much of a classical education. They were avid, as many people are today, for culture on easy terms, and Herbert Spencer offered them a vest pocket guide to all problems of philosophy and science. Thus one who did not know what life is might read in Spencer that it is the sum of all vital activities and feel that he had acquired the essence of philosophical thereby." (Morris Raphael Cohen, American Thought: A Critical Sketch, Collier Books, New York, 1962. P. 89. [first published by The Free Press, 1954])
"From this new theory of man as having developed through organic evolution there will be developed a new philosophy not like most of the airy systems of metaphysical speculation hitherto prevalent, but one founded upon the solid ground of Comparative Zoology. A beginning of this has already been made by the great English philosopher Herbert Spencer. Haeckel refers here to Spencer's First Principles, Principles of Biology, and Principles of Psychology, 1869 (= 1855?) edition. ... this new monistic philosophy first opens up to us a true understanding of the real universe."


"Enough has been said to show that as a philosopher Mr. Spencer can hardly be accorded high rank. His work began about the same time as the great naturalistic revival of the generation just past, and he became the official philosopher of the movement. In this way he acquired a prestige beyond what his speculative work deserves. It was a time of loose and yeasty thinking, with great evolution of speculative gas. Bubbles covered with prismatic colors looked solid. It was just the time for the philosophical impressionist; and Mr. Spencer, with his big canvas and big brushes, was just the man for the time. But works of art produced in this way suffer from close inspection."


"The student of Spencer's First Principles cannot fail to notice the adoption of Mansel's Metaphysics, and especially its application by the author to fix the limits of religious thought. Mr. Spencer's doctrine of the unknowable depends on the validity of Mansel's theory. It is worth while, therefore, at the outset to look at the foundations of this theory. It is well known that Mansel borrowed the idea from Sir William Hamilton, his master, who claimed that the ideas of the Absolute and Infinite are negative ideas, expressing out incapacity to conceive the Infinite rather than our positive comprehension of it." (William T. Harris, "Herbert Spencer and His Influence on Education," *Journal of Proceedings and Addresses of the National Education Association*, 1904, pp. 214-223. P. 216)

"He assumed a world of noumena of which we can know absolutely nothing, except in the appearances which they present to us, and called by him phenomena. The relativity of all possible knowledge was stoutly defended by him. Herbert Spencer, in spite of his boast that he had never read Kant, formulated a not dissimilar theory. Both assumed that things in their reality were totally different from what they appeared to us to be. Both regarded the objective world as merely appearances, implying some deep underlying substratum which Kant called 'Dinge an sich' (thing in itself) and Spencer called 'The Unknowable.' We cannot but regard both these theories as rank metaphysics. What title have we to assume that there is a reality underlying our visible and tangible Universe?"

"Spencer was not a sociological monist. He did not single out some one factor that pushes society ahead through the various phases of its evolution. The whole evolutionary process, for Spencer, was the prime force, the motive power which explains everything, an unknowable and impersonal force, determining every becoming in all realms of being. But his ideas about disturbances, ideas which he did not develop extensively, show that he was inclined to believe that there was no single determining factor in change." (Nicholas S. Timasheff, Sociological Theory: Its Nature and Growth, third edition, Random House, New York, 1967. P. 42)

"... although Mr. Spencer has shown that the progress of Civilization thus depends remotely on the Law of Evolution, he has not shown us the immediate factors by which it has been produced, and the way in which they have united to produce it." (pp. 385-386) "And thus it is that Mr. Spencer, by attaching the progress of Civilization to a remote, abstract, and impersonal law of Nature, rather than to immediate human, and concrete causes, has left the problem still unsolved." (p. 386) (John Beattie Crozier, Civilization and Progress, Outlines of a New System, 3rd edition, Longmans, Green, & Co., London, 1893)

"From beginning to end of these three volumes [Or Principles of Sociology] there is no pretense of anything like a continuous scheme of social evolution—nothing that can be called a philosophy of history; and yet a scientific theory of general history is the larger and far the most important part of Sociology. Spencer never had a glimmering of history." (Frederic Harrison, "Sociology: Its Definition and Its Limits," The Sociological Review, Vol. 3, pp. 97-104, 1910. P. 103)

"Mr. Spencer's theory of social causation is thus neither purely psychological nor purely physiographic. It is rather a theory of the correlations of subjective states with external circumstances; of social systems conceived as products of a human nature that is itself molded by the physical conditions of existence." (Franklin H. Giddings, "The Greatness of Herbert Spencer," The Independent, Vol. 55, pp. 2959-2962, December 17, 1903. P. 2961)

"... studying these generalizations of political economy, we trace them all to the truth that each man seeks satisfaction for his desires in ways costing the smallest effort—such social phenomena being resultants of individual actions so guided; ...." (Herbert Spencer, First Principles, 4th edition, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1880. P. 135)

"On the other hand, the environmentalist (as, e.g., Spencer) who explains the spiritual occurrences as processes of adjustments to the situation or environment, which to him is the only basis of reality, often overestimates the importance of the milieu." (Leopold von Wiese, Sociology, edited by Franz H. Mueller, Oskar Piest, New York, 1941. P. 52)
... it is best for the old to live on as long as it can, yielding inch by inch only as fast as the new grows up to replace it; and men's attachment to the old is the measure of its remaining vitality, and of the still continued need for it." (Letter from Herbert Spencer to Edward L. Youmans, probably written in 1866 or 1867. Quoted by Youmans in an unsigned article, "Herbert Spencer and His Reviewers," The Christian Examiner, Vol. 82, pp. 200-223(?), 1867/ P. 223)

Spencer was an ecological determinist, but I would say that Spencer stressed too much the molding effect that war-like relations of a society with others had in shaping its social organization, and not enough the effect of the mode of subsistence on the social structure of a society, or more specifically, how the food quest could help develop the powers of the chief.

"Spencer ably explains in what manner evolution will be produced, if it does take place, but he does not tell us the source producing it. As a matter of fact, the question is not even raised for him." (Emile Durkheim, The Division of Labor in Society, Translated from the French by George Simpson, The Free Press, Glencoe, Illinois, 1933. P. 265)

"Mr. Spencer's work has been mainly to give this century, and in part all time, its first great map of the field of sociology. He has brought all the pieces on the board, described them one by one, defined and explained the game. But what he has failed to do with sufficient precision, is to pick out the King and Queen." (Henry Drummond, The Lowell Lectures on the Ascent of Man, James Pott & Co., Publishers, New York, 1894. P. 43)

"Mr. Herbert Spencer's opinions on Parliament were published at the time of the Leicester election of 1884. Mr. Spencer held that "laws were practically made out of doors and simply registered by Parliament." (George Jacob Holyoake, Sixty Years of an Agitator's Life, 2 Vols., T. Fisher Unwin, London, 1892. Vol. 2, p. 256)

"In all Spencer's vast output there is nothing that can be called any theory of general history. What we have is the embryology of society. But no science is constituted if its conclusions are limited to embryology." (Frederic Harrison, "Sociology: Its Definition and Its Limits," The Sociological Review, Vol. 3, pp. 97-104, 1910. P. 103)

"... the law that opinion is ultimately determined by the feelings, and not by the intellect." (Herbert Spencer, Social Statics, John Chapman, London, 1851. P. 429)
"Ideas do not govern and overthrow the world: the world is governed or overthrown by feelings, to which ideas serve only as guides. The social mechanism does not rest finally on opinions; but almost wholly on character. Not intellectual anarchy, but moral antagonism, is the cause of political crises. All social phenomena are produced by the totality of human emotions and beliefs; of which the emotions are mainly pre-determined, while the beliefs are mainly post-determined. Men's desires are chiefly inherited; but their beliefs are chiefly acquired, and depend on surrounding conditions; and the most important surrounding conditions depend on the social state which the prevalent desires have produced. The social state at any time existing, is the resultant of all the ambitions, self-interests, fears, reverences, indignations, sympathies, etc., of ancestral citizens and existing citizens. The ideas current in this social state, must, on the average, be congruous with the feelings of citizens; and therefore, on the average, with the social state these feelings have produced. Ideas wholly foreign to this social state cannot be evolved, and if introduced from without, cannot get accepted—or, if accepted, die out when the temporary phase of feeling which caused their acceptance, ends. Hence, though advanced ideas when once established, act on society and aid its further advance; yet the establishment of such ideas depends on the fitness of the society for receiving them. Practically, the popular character and the social state, determine what ideas shall be current; instead of the current ideas determining the social state and the character. The modification of men's moral natures, caused by the continuous discipline of social life, which adapts them more and more to social relations, is therefore the chief proximate cause of social progress." (Herbert Spencer, "Reasons for Dissenting from the Philosophy of M. Comte," in Essays: Scientific, Political, & Speculative, 3 Vols., Williams and Norgate, London, 1891: Vol. 2, pp. 118-144. Pp. 128-129)

"He [Spencer] saw that the evolutionary process in society, as in plant and animal life, takes the form of a continuing adaptation of organism to environment, and that in human history the essential of the adaptation is a molding of human character to the relatively permanent circumstances of collective life. This one part of Mr. Spencer's philosophy has received less consideration than his conclusions on various other subjects, and yet it is second to nothing else in his writings in scientific significance or in practical importance." (Franklin H. Giddings, "The Greatness of Herbert Spencer," The Independent, Vol. 55, pp. 2959-2962, December 17, 1903. P. 2961)

"It is becoming a common remark that we are approaching a state in which laws are practically made out of doors, and simply registered by Parliament; and if so, then the actual work of legislation is more the work of those who modify the ideas of electors than of those who give effect to their ideas. So regarding the matter, I conceive that I should not gain influence, but rather lose influence, by ceasing to be a writer that I might become a representative." (Letter from Herbert Spencer to Rev. J. Page Hopps dated February 21, 1884. Quoted in David Duncan, Life and Letters of Herbert Spencer, 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1908. Vol. 1, p. 320)
"Progress, and at the same time resistance,"—that celebrated saying of M. Guizot, with which the foregoing position is in substance identical—no doubt expresses a truth: ...." (p. 469) "From time to time the struggle eventuates in change; and by composition of forces there is produced a resultant, embodying the right amount of movement in the right direction. Thus understood, then, the theory of "progress, and at the same time resistance," is correct." (p. 470) (Herbert Spencer, Social Statics, John Chapman, London, 1851)

"... we cannot find in Spencer even any sketch of general history, any dynamic laws of civilization at all, other than the mysterious all-explaining Evolution—which is little more than the statement that society does change and grows more and more heterogeneous. I will quote a passage from my Address—the first Herbert Spencer Lecture, delivered at Oxford in 1905:

"The Synthetic Philosophy of Evolution contains no history of human civilization in its entirety, as a continuous biography of man. There is not in it, and he never has even projected, any philosophy of general history, the dynamics in fact of Sociology. In his 'Principles of Sociology' there are a body of acute but miscellaneous observations, and some profound suggestions as to the origin of institutions, primitive habits, rudimentary groups. But we never get farther than glimpses of savage life, the variations in praeval rites, and the survival of ancient customs. In all Spencer's vast output there is nothing that can be called any theory of general history." (Frederic Harrison, "Sociology: Its Definition and Its Limits," The Sociological Review, Vol. 3, pp. 97-104, 1910. Pp. 102-103)

"In Social Statics almost everything is made to turn upon the doctrine—previously hardly more than hinted at—that from the very beginning of social life down to the present time there has been going on, and that there still is going on, a process of slow but none the less certain adjustment of the natures of men to society, and of the social organization to the natures of its constituent units: this adjustment being the result of a perpetual interaction between units and aggregates which ever tends to bring them into more perfect adaptation the one to the other. Such adaptation, it is further shown, is produced by the direct action of circumstances upon the natures of men, and by the preservation and accumulation by inheritance from generation to generation of the modifications thus initiated ...." (William Henry Hudson, "Herbert Spencer and the Synthetic Philosophy," The Popular Science Monthly, Vol. 41, pp. 1-16, 1892. P. 5)

"Spencer's dialectic of social change was not, as we have seen, derived from a study of history itself. It was merely the application of his cosmic law to historic data. The results appear formal and empty where they have not been proved wholly wrong or open to doubt. Obviously, not all social change is in the direction of greater complexity or heterogeneity. Nor do such developments, if and where they obtain, give greater stability to the aggregate. These and other objections cast doubt upon the validity of the formula as the correct law of change." (Newell LeRoy Sims, The Problem of Social Change, Thomas Y. Crowell Company, New York, 1939. Pp. 84-85)
Spencer saw great social changes, not as the outcome of acts of will by great men; but as the product of larger social forces. Thus he paraphrases a statement of Aristotle to read that "political changes are generated by great causes but out of small incidents." (Vol. II, p. 424) This is how 'history' and 'evolution' meet. Evolutionary forces are expressed in historical incidents.

Spencer speaks of "the permanent sentiments and ideas produced in them [industrial communities, i.e., the population of towns and cities] by their mode of life." (Vol. 2, p. 424). This indicates how Spencer believed the causal chain ran: mode of life → sentiments and ideas.


All kinds of cultural developments are explained by Spencer as natural outgrowths, as responses to, certain problems or situations which did not require "a flash of insight" or the intervention of "genius". This point of view is consistently maintained.

"The things that make life possible are likely to take precedence over the things that life makes possible." --Herbert Spencer, as quoted or paraphrased by Arnold J. Toynbee, with no reference.

"PHILOSOPHY OF STYLE"

"... he [Spencer] wrote a valuable essay on style, and the admonition that made the deepest impression on me, when I read that little book in my nonage, was that style should vary with the subject ..." (Gertrude Atherton, Adventures of a Novelist, Blue Ribbon Books, Inc., New York, 1932. P. 314)

"Nevertheless, style is one thing and diction is another. If some one should compel me by force to explain the difference between the two, my answer would be something like this: Diction is the body—the flesh and bone—and style is the spirit. But some years ago, that able Heathen, Mr. Herbert Spencer, had something he wanted to say about diction, and so he wrote it out and called it An Essay on Style, and ever since then the Heathens, the Pagans, and not a few who still call themselves Christians, have persisted in referring to diction as style ..." (Letter from Joel Chandler Harris to his daughter Lillian, dated May Day, 1898. Quoted in Julia Collier Harris, The Life and Letters of Joel Chandler Harris, Constable & Co. Limited, London, 1919. P. 394)

In speaking of an essay of Spencer’s dealing with "the laws of cause and effect in literary art," (undoubtedly "The Philosophy of Style"), the literary critic, Theodore Watts-Dunton, described it, many years after its publication, as "... an essay so searching in its analyses, and so original in its method and conclusions, that the workers in pure literature may well be envious of science for enticing such a leader away from their ranks ...." (Quoted in James Douglas, Theodore Watts-Dunton, Poet—Novelist—Critic, John Lane, New York, n.d. P. 214)

"... [Edwin L.] Godkin [editor of The Nation] came to me one night at the Century [Club] with: "You remember your controversy with the Nation over Spencer's reputation? Well, I've just read his Philosophy of Style. I don't know anything about the topics in dispute between you and my contributor, but I do profess to know something about English style. Spencer's work on it is a masterpiece, and, judging what I don't know by what I now do know, I am ready to presume that all you claim for him is well founded."" (Henry Holt, Garrulities of an Octogenarian Editor, Houghton Mifflin, Boston, 1923. P. 292)

"... the article on The Philosophy of Style ... should be by all means included [in the collection of Spencer's essays being prepared], as it has great value and is much admired. Bancroft was to-day eulogizing it to me in very high terms." (Letter from Edward L. Youmans to Herbert Spencer dated December 14, 1863. Quoted in John Fiske, Edward Livingston Youmans, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. P. 169)
"In connection with growth and its limits Spencer made a simple but shrewd observation, which seems also to have occurred to Prof. Leuckart and to Dr. Alexander James. He pointed out, that in the growth of similarly shaped bodies the increase of volume continually tends to outrun the increase of surface. The volume of living matter must grow more than the surface through which it is kept alive, if the surface remain regular in contour. In spherical and all other regular units the volume increases as the cube of the radius, the surface only as the square of the radius. Thus a cell, for instance, as it grows, must get into physiological difficulties, for the nutritive necessities of the increasing volume are ever less adequately supplied by the less rapidly increasing absorbent surface. There is less and less opportunity for nutrition, respiration, and excretion. A nemesis of growth sets in, for waste gains upon, overtakes, balances, and threatens to exceed repair. Growth may cease at this limit, and a balance be struck; or the form of the unit may be altered and surface gained by flattening out, or very frequently ramifying processes; or—and this is the most frequent solution—the cell may divide, halving its volume, gaining new surface, and restoring the balance." (J. Arthur Thomson—Herbert Spencer. J. M. Dent & Co. London, 1906, pp. 112-113)

"Spencer, Leuckart, and James pointed out independently that, as a cell of regular shape increases in volume, it does not proportionately increase in surface. If it be a sphere, the volume of material to be kept alive increases as the cube of the radius, while the surface, through which the keeping alive is effected, increases only as the square. Thus there tends to be a hazardous disproportion between volume and surface, which may set up instability. The disturbed balance may be restored by the emission of processes from the surface of the cell, making it like a country with a big coastline, as in Rhizopod Protozoa or in the ameboid cells found in most multicellular animals. But the disturbed balance is normally restored by the cell dividing into two cells." (J. Arthur Thomson, The System of Animate Nature, 2 Vols., Henry Holt and Company, New York, 1920. Vol. 1, pp. 92-93)

"Let us next note another little-known but important contribution to general evolutionary theory which we owe to Spencer the biologist. Every living organism begins as a single cell; but there invariably comes a time when, if the cell reaches a certain size, it begins to divide. It is this division that conditions the development of the heterogeneous multicellular individual from the homogeneous unicellular creature which, whatever the size to which it grew, could never be other than a lowly and primitive object. Now, Spencer's law of limit of growth teaches that, as a cell enlarges, its volume increases at a greater rate than its surface, as is evident." (C. W. Saleeby, Evolution The Master-Key, Harper & Brothers Publishers, New York, 1906. P. 157)

The principle of similitude "by which weight varies as the linear dimensions cubed and strength as the linear dimensions squared." (J. T. Bonner)
Largely because of the knowledge and outlook gained as an engineer Spencer became convinced that "to interpret the truths of a special science the truths of more general sciences have to be brought in aid." Certain problems of growth in living organisms, he maintained, "are inexplicable by one who limits himself to biology alone," and he argued that "mathematics and physics have to be invoked," and "certain relations between masses and surfaces, certain relations between proportional sizes and proportional strains" have to be determined before such problems can be solved.21


"The chapter on 'Growth' furnishes a good example, and furnishes, too, another illustration of the way in which, to interpret the truths of a special science the truths of more general sciences have to be brought in aid. The amounts and limits of growth exhibited by the different classes of organisms, plant and animal, are inexplicable by one who limits himself to biology alone. Mathematics and physics have to be invoked—certain relations between masses and surfaces, certain relations between proportional sizes and proportional strains, certain relations between the genesis of energy and the tenacity of the parts which expend energy." ("The Filiation of Ideas," in Duncan, p. 557)

"The first adequate discussion of growth is due to Spencer. He pointed out, that in the growth of similarly shaped bodies the increase of volume continually tends to outrun that of the surface. The mass of living matter must grow more rapidly than the surface through which it is kept alive. In spherical and all other regular units the mass increases as the cube of the diameter, the surface only as the square. Thus the cell, as it grows, must get into physiological difficulties, for the nutritive necessities of the increasing mass are ever less adequately supplied by the less rapidly increasing absorbent surface." (Patrick Geddes and J. Arthur Thomson, The Evolution of Sex, Walter Scott, London, 1889. P. 220)

"What he [Spencer] himself always aims at is to obliterate the separating lines between the organic and the inorganic, and to reduce all the phenomena of life to the terms of such purely physical agencies as the mechanical forces, --light, heat, and chemical affinity, etc." (The Duke of Argyll [George Douglas Campbell], Organic Evolution Cross-Examined, John Murray, London, 1898, P. 21)
Spencer has some interesting observations on evolution:
"... the law that motion is along the line of least resistance or the line of greatest traction or the resultant of the two" (Vol. III, p. 359). We are acquainted with Zipf's "principle of least effort." Here we have it, plus a deeper generalization.

"... the law that motion follows the line of least resistance—a law previously recognized as one needful to be taken account of in the interpretation of evolutionary processes." (Auto. II, 49)

Spencer introduced engineering principles to explain how larger societies are less cohesive than smaller ones. (See text page 127). Vol. II, p. 221.

"... despite his Spencer's elaborate and extended use of the organic analogy, Spencer derived his social theory ultimately from physics." (Cynthia Eagle Russett, The Concept of Equilibrium in American Social Theory, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1966. P. 38)

"... during the interval between First Principles and his Principles of Sociology Mr. Spencer grew cautious in the use of analogy, and came to prefer the laws of life to the laws of matter as the key to social processes ..." (Edward Alsworth Ross, "Moot Points in Sociology. II. Social Laws." The American Journal of Sociology, Vol. 9, pp. 105-123, 1903. P. 109)

"The truth is Spencer was primarily and essentially a physicist, holding development in a form which he could express in the terms of physics and which he applied not only to inorganic nature, but to organic and what he called super-organic forms." (A. M. Fairbairn, "Herbert Spencer," The Contemporary Review, Vol. 85, pp. 1-11, 1904. P. 10)
POLEMICS

"... Herbert Spencer, in whose Synthetic Philosophy we have much the most elaborate and thoroughgoing expression of nineteenth century naturalism." (Arthur Kenyon Rogers, English and American Philosophy Since 1800, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1922. P.135)

"Mr. Spencer's fire and sword shine most brightly in criticism." (Gabriel Compayre, Herbert Spencer and Scientific Education, translated by Maria E. Findlayson, Thomas Y. Crowell & Co., New York, 1907. P. 51)

"In controversy he [Spencer] was scrupulously fair, aiming at truth, and not at the barren victories of dialectics." (Francis Gribble, "Herbert Spencer: His Autobiography and His Philosophy," The Fortnightly Review, Vol. 81, pp. 984-995, 1904. P. 985)


"Replying to criticisms is, indeed, a bootless undertaking, save in those cases where the positions defended are further elucidated, and so rendered more acceptable to those who are not committed to antagonist views. On such as are committed to antagonist views, replies, however conclusive, produce no appreciable effects; and especially is this so when such antagonist views are involved in theological systems." (Herbert Spencer, "Replies to Criticisms on The Data of Ethics, Mind, Vol. 6, pp. 82-98, 1881. P. 98)

"Other interruptions were from time to time occasioned by his [Spencer's] having to turn aside from his work itself with matters only indirectly connected with it; such as replies to criticisms and the correction of misconceptions and perversions of his statements (in which distracting exercise some of us feel that he has spent somewhat too large a share of his time) ...." (William Henry Hudson, "Herbert Spencer: A Biographical Sketch," The Arena, Vol. 5, pp. 273-285, 1891-92. P. 284)
Spencer saw the rise of particular political forms not as matters of deliberate choice. He denied that recognition of "advantages or disadvantages of this or that arrangement furnished motives for establishing or maintaining" (Vol. II, p. 395) a form of government. But argued instead that "conditions and not intentions determine." (Vol. II, p. 395).

Typology of Political Evolution
1. Simple
2. Compound
3. Doubly Compound
4. Trebly Compound

"The remark which Grote quotes from Aristotle, "that seditions are generated by great causes but out of small incidents," if altered slightly by writing "political changes" instead of "seditions," fully applies to the Cleisthenean revolution. (Herbert Spencer, The Principles of Sociology, Vol. 2, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1899, P. 424)

"In conformity with the law of evolution of all organized bodies, that general functions are gradually separated into the special functions constituting them, there have grown up in the social organism for the better performance of the governmental office, an apparatus of law-courts, judges, and barristers; a national church, with its bishops and priests; and a system of caste, titles, and ceremonies, administered by society at large." (Herbert Spencer, "Manners and Fashion," The Westminster Review, Vol. 5, n.s., pp. pp. 357-392, April, 1854, Pp. 371-372)
C. E. M. Joad in his article on Spencer in the ESS discusses only Spencer's political philosophy, and says nothing, virtually, about his treatment of social evolution.

C. E. M. Joad's evaluation of Spencer in the ESS is solely on the basis of his propagandistic writings and takes no account of his scientific writings about society.

Thus, in his article on Spencer in his *Introduction to the History of Sociology*, Barnes chose to stress Spencer's political individualism and laissez faire rather than his contributions to sociological theory.
An announcement by D. Appleton & Company in the Popular Science Monthly in 1875 announced that: "The "Principles of Sociology" is published in Quarterly Parts of 80 to 96 pages each, by subscription, at $2.00 per year."


"Previous to the establishment of the 'Popular Science Monthly,' we had not in this country a single journal designed to diffuse the knowledge of either general or exact science." (Simon Newcomb, quoted in Charles M. Haar, "E. L. Youmans: A Chapter in the Diffusion of Science in America," Journal of the History of Ideas, Vol. 9, pp. 193-213, 1948. P. 197)

In the July, 1874, issue of The Popular Science Monthly there appeared what seems to be the first installment of The Principles of Sociology, an article entitled "Climate and Social Development" (The Popular Science Monthly, Vol. 5 [No. 27], pp. 322-327, 1874). A footnote to the title of the article reads: "From advance sheets of the "Principles of Sociology.--Part I. The Data of Sociology. Chapter III. Original External Factors." (P. 322n.)

On The Popular Science Monthly: "It has been started to help on the work of sound public education by supplying instructive articles on the leading subjects of scientific inquiry. It will contain papers, original and selected, on a wide range of subjects, from the ablest scientific men of different countries, explaining their views to non-scientific people." (Edward L. Youmans, "Purpose and Plan of Our Enterprise," The Popular Science Monthly, Vol. 1, May, 1872. P. 113)

"It [The Popular Science Monthly] was entered upon as an experiment, and generally thought to be a hopeless one." (p. 745) "... we had the most discouraging assurances that they [the reading public] will not sustain a solid and really instructive magazine, which requires them to think." (p. 745) "There has been an almost unanimous expression of opinion on the part of individuals and the press that THE POPULAR SCIENCE MONTHLY has met an urgent public need, that it is the most valuable magazine now before the American public, and deserves an extensive patronage." (p. 745) (Edward L. Youmans), "Our First Year's Work," The Popular Science Monthly, Vol. 2, pp. 745-746, April, 1873)

"... the Popular Science Monthly may be regarded as one of the by-products of his /Spencer's/genius." (James McKeen Cattell, "The Life and Letters of Herbert Spencer," The Popular Science Monthly, Vol. 73, pp. 283-285, 1908. P. 285. Cattell was at that time editor of Popular Science Monthly)

The last article by Herbert Spencer in The Popular Science Monthly was "Professor Ward on "Naturalism and Agnosticism," which appeared in Vol. 56, pp. 349-357, January, 1900.


"We have, however, worked up a very deep feeling of hostility toward The Popular Science Monthly, and hear constantly of people who "won't have it in the house."" (Letter from Edward L. Youmans to Herbert Spencer, dated [? around the end of 1873]. Quoted in John Fiske, Edward Livingston Youmans, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. P. 313) (The circulation of the PSM was then around 11,000; same ref.)

"I must take this opportunity to tell you how much I depend on The Popular Science Monthly. It comes to me like the air they send down to the people in a diving bell. I seem to get a fresh breath with every new number." (Letter from Oliver Wendell Holmes to Edward L. Youmans, dated May 3, 1874. Quoted in John Fiske, Edward Livingston Youmans, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. P. 315)
"Looking only at the present and the immediate future, it is unquestionably true, that, if unchecked, the rate of increase of people would exceed the rate of increase of food." (Herbert Spencer, "A Theory of Population, Deduced from the General Law of Animal Fertility," The Westminster Review, Vol. 57, pp. 468-501, 1852. P. 498)

"In all cases, Spearner has cited instances of increased agricultural productivity, manufacture, and commerce, increase of numbers is the efficient cause." (Herbert Spencer, "A Theory of Population, Deduced from the General Law of Animal Fertility," The Westminster Review, Vol. 57, pp. 468-501, 1852. P. 499)

"Evidently, so long as the fertility of the race is more than sufficient to balance the diminution by deaths, population must continue to increase: so long as population continues to increase, there must be pressure on the means of subsistence; and so long as there is pressure on the means of subsistence, further mental development must go on, and further diminution of fertility must result. Hence, the change can never cease until the rate of multiplication is just equal to the rate of mortality; ..." (Herbert Spencer, "A Theory of Population, Deduced from the General Law of Animal Fertility," The Westminster Review, Vol. 57, pp. 468-501, 1852. P. 500)


"... excess of fertility has itself rendered the process of civilization inevitable. From the beginning, pressure of population has been the proximate cause of progress. It produced the original diffusion of the race. It compelled men to abandon predatory habits and take to agriculture. It led to the clearing of the earth's surface. It forced men into the social state; made social organization inevitable; and has developed the social sentiments. It has stimulated to progressive improvements in production, and to increased skill and intelligence. It is daily pressing us into closer contact and more mutually-dependent relationships." (Herbert Spencer, "A Theory of Population, Deduced from the General Law of Animal Fertility," The Westminster Review, Vol. 57, pp. 468-501, 1852. P. 501)

"As to the adjustment of population to subsistence, Mr. H. Spencer has sufficient faith in the beneficence of nature to believe this will come about of itself through a biological law—that multiplication and individuation vary inversely, so that, as the physical and intellectual culture of the individual is more and more attended to, the increase of the species will gradually diminish. This "law" is however as yet only a mere speculation of Mr. Spencer's." (David G. Ritchie, Darwinism and Politics, Swan Sonnenschein & Co., London, 1889. Pp. 97-98)
"From the beginning pressure of population has been the proximate cause of progress. It produced the original diffusion of the race. It compelled men to abandon predatory habits and take to agriculture. It led to the clearing of the Earth's surface. It forced men into the social state; made social organization inevitable; and has developed the social sentiments. It has stimulated to progressive improvements in production, and to increased skill and intelligence. It is daily thrusting us into closer contact and more mutually-dependent relationships. And after having caused, as it ultimately must, the peopling of the globe, and the raising of its habitable parts into the highest state of culture. . . . " (Herbert Spencer, *The Principles of Biology*, revised edition, 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1899. Vol. 2, p. 536)

Spencer was the first (?) to point out (in *First Principles*, 4th ed., Ch. 22, Sec. 173; possibly earlier in *Principles of Biology*) that all plant and animal species fluctuate in number because of variations in the amount of food and the number of enemies. But he noted that " ... amid these oscillations produced by their conflict lies that average number of the species at which its expansive tendency is in equilibrium with surrounding repressive tendencies." (Quoted by Lotka, p. 62). This notion, that the population of organic species tends to fluctuate toward an equilibrium, was accepted, expressed and interpreted mathematically by A. J. Lotka, who concluded: "These conclusions are the analytical confirmation and extension of an inference drawn by Herbert Spencer on qualitative grounds:" (pp. 57-63) (quote on p. 61) (Alfred J. Lotka, *Elements of Physical Biology*, Williams & Wilkins Co., Baltimore, 1925)

"More influential than Thomas Doubleday's *The True Law of Population* (1842) was the famous population theory set forth by Herbert Spencer in 1852. He held that there is a fundamental antagonism between what he called "individuation" and "genesis." As civilization becomes more complex, a larger proportion of available physiological energy is used up in problems of personal development and expression; hence, there is less energy which remains available for reproductive purposes. In short, advanced civilizations seem to be antagonistic to high fecundity. Spencer's theory was widely adopted, especially by the influential American economist, Henry C. Carey, who used it as a means of combating the pessimism of Malthus. It was upon the basis of this idea that Carey transformed the perspective of classical economics in the United States from a pessimistic to an optimistic cast." (Harry Elmer Barnes, *Society in Transition*, Prentice-Hall, Inc., New York, 1939, P. 231)
POSITIVISM


"The degree of agreement in many fundamental doctrines between the Positivist School of thought and Herbert Spencer is so large ..." (Frederic Harrison, "Herbert Spencer's "Life"", The Positivist Review, Vol. 16, pp. 145-149, 1908. P. 146)

"In looking over the American press notices of your works I find the dominant idea is that you belong to the positive school; although not one in a hundred knows what Positivism is, all are agreed that it is positively dreadful." (Letter from Edward L. Youmans to Herbert dated December 14, 1863. Quoted in John Fiske, Edward L. Youmans, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. P. 169)

In his work The Rise of European Civilization all that Charles Seignobos, the celebrated French historian, found it necessary to say about Herbert Spencer was: "An English positivist, Herbert Spencer, amended the theory of positivism, "which reduced all knowledge to the "positive" knowledge acquired by observation of the phenomena accessible to the senses" by the idea of the "unknowable," admitting that there is a part of reality which man has no means of knowing." (Charles Seignobos, The Rise of European Civilization, Translated from the French by Catherine Alison Phillips, Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1942. P. 368)

"The stupid old public (begging its pardon, nothing personal intended!) would probably have gone on calling us all "positivists" to this day, had not Huxley, once in a moment of happy inspiration, fired off the term "agnostic." It took so beautifully that people have by this time almost forgotten that there ever was any such thing as "positivism"; and as a missile of theological vituperation the word "agnostic" is so innocent of all definite significance that nobody need mind being pelted with it." (John Fiske, Edward Livingston Youmans, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. Pp. 291 n.-292 n.)

"When Huxley has his scrimmage with Congreve, in 1869, over the scientific aspects of positivism, I was giving lectures to post-graduate classes at Harvard on the positive philosophy. I never had any liking for Comte or his ideas, but entertained an absurd notion that the epithet "positive" was a proper and convenient one to apply to scientific methods and scientific philosophy in general. In the course of the discussion I attacked sundry statements of Huxley with quite unnecessary warmth, for such is the superfluous of youth." (John Fiske, "Reminiscences of Huxley," Smithsonian Institution Annual Report, 1900 (1901), pp. 713-728. Pp. 715-716)
"Ten years after the publication of the article in which M. Laugel said of Spencer in the Revue des Deux Mondes, that he was condemning himself to poverty and obscurity from his devotion to speculations of an unpopular kind, the Revue Positive, of Paris, charged him "with having turned his back on the immortal Stuart Mill to sacrifice to the golden calf, the source of all popularity, in company with Darwin, Lubbock, Tyndall and Huxley." (Le Transformisme devant le Positivisme, in the Revue Positive for January and February, 1875)." (Count Goblet d'Alviella, The Contemporary Evolution of Religious Thought in England, America and India, translated by J. Moden, G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1886, P. 138n.)
In 1882 Spencer visited the United States, and while in Washington was shown through the exhibits of the Smithsonian Institution by Major Powell. (Auto. II, 397-8)

"Should the philosophy of [Herbert] Spencer, which confounds man with the brute and denies the efficacy of human endeavor, become the philosophy of the twentieth century, it would cover civilization with a pall and culture would again stagnate." (John Wesley Powell, "From Barbarism to Civilization." American Anthropologist, Vol. 1, pp. 97-123, 1888. P. 122)

"Herbert Spencer, who was enjoying a great vogue in those years, he [John Wesley Powell] detested, but at least we know he was acquainted with Spencer's works." (Paul Meadows, John Wesley Powell: Frontiersman of Science, University of Nebraska Studies, New Series, No. 10, 1952. P. 77)

"The secretary of the Anthropological Society of Washington recorded the following illuminating minutes of a meeting for March 15, 1881. "He (Powell) said that the doctrines taught by Herbert Spencer and that school, would, at a rough estimate, if practiced, neutralize nine-tenths of the legislation of the world." (Paul Meadows, John Wesley Powell: Frontiersman of Science, University of Nebraska Studies, New Series, No. 10, 1952. P. 83)

"Powell rejected Spencer's sociology [here Darrah is apparently referring to Spencer's social philosophy of laissez faire] emphatically, but there is more than a little Spencerian nomenclature scattered throughout Truth and Error. Spencer held that some things were unknowable; the Major denied this, arguing that the mind cannot conceive an unknowable thing." (William Culp Darrah, Powell of the Colorado, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1951. P. 382)

"Now there is a cheap scholarship which goes far and wide to collect these prejudiced and ignorant statements [to the effect that the languages of other peoples are rudimentary and their customs absurd] and bases upon them a theory of savage culture. By these easy lessons it is discovered that savagery is a state of perpetual warfare; that the life of the savage is one of ceaseless bloodshed, that the men of this earliest stage of culture live but to kill and devour one another, and that infanticide is the common practice. Starting with man in this horrible estate these same scholars construct a theory of the transition from savagery to civilization as the transition from militancy to industrialism. Such is the Spencerian philosophy of human development, and it has many adherents." (J. W. Powell, "From Barbarism to Civilization," The American Anthropologist, Vol. 1, pp. 97-123, 1888. P. 102)
"And now another philosopher has arisen in the world, and he has discovered another fundamental principle, a major premise; that human progress is by the survival of the fittest in the struggle for existence; that the fittest may survive, the unfit must die. Then let the poor fall into deeper degradation, then let the hungry starve, then let the unfortunate perish, then let the ignorant remain in his ignorance—he who does not seek for knowledge himself is not worthy to possess knowledge, and the very children of the ignorant should remain untaught, that the sins of the fathers may be visited upon the children. Let your government cease to regulate industries, and instead of carrying the mails let them erect prisons; let government discharge their state-employed teachers and enlist more policemen. And they establish journals to advocate these principles, and edit papers to advocate these principles, and they have become the most active propagandists of the day, and the millions are shouting, "Great is philosophy and great are the prophets of philosophy." Thus it is that fundamental principles, "major premises," are discovered to justify injustice..." (J. W. Powell, "Competition as a Factor in Human Evolution," The American Anthropologist, Vol. 1, pp. 297-323, 1888. Pp. 322-323)

"The savage tribes of mankind carried on petty warfares with clubs, spears, and bows and arrows. But these wars interrupted their peaceful pursuits only at comparatively long intervals. The wars of barbaric tribes were on a larger scale and more destructive of life; but there were no great wars until wealth was accumulated and men were organized into nations. The great wars began with civilization, and have continued to the present time. Steadily armies have become larger, and more thoroughly organized as naval and land forces, and the land forces as infantry, artillery, and cavalry; and with the progress of civilization armies have been equipped with implements of warfare more and more destructive... Warfare has had its course of evolution, as have all other human activities. That human progress has been from militancy to industrialism is an error so great that it must necessarily vitiate any system of sociology or theory of culture of which it forms a part." (J. W. Powell, "From Barbarism to Civilization," The American Anthropologist, Vol. 1, pp. 97-123, 1888. Pp. 102-103)

Without mentioning Spencer by name, but having him clearly in mind, Powell wrote: "Government does not begin in the ascending of chieftains through prowess in war, but in the slow specialization of executive functions from communal associations based on kinship. Deliberative assemblies do not start in councils gathered by chieftains, but councils precede chieftaincies. Law does not begin in contract, but is the development of custom. Land tenure does not begin in grants from the monarch or the feudal lord, but a system of tenure in common by gentes or tribes is developed into a system of tenure in severalty. Evolution in society has not been from militancy to industrialism, but from organization based on kinship to organization based on property, and alongside of the specialization of the industries of peace the arts of war have been specialized. So, one by one, the theories of metaphysical writers on sociology are overthrown, and the facts of history are taking their place, and the philosophy of history is being erected out of the materials accumulating by objective studies of mankind." (J. W. Powell, "On Limitations to the Use of some Anthropologic Data," First Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology, 1879-'80, pp. 71-86, Washington, D.C., 1881. P. 83)
"His philosophy is the only philosophy that satisfies an earnestly inquiring mind. All other philosophies (at least in my experience) serve more to perplex than to enlighten. As it seems to me, we have in Herbert Spencer not only the profoundest thinker of our time, but the most capacious and most powerful intellect of all time. Aristotle and his master were not more beyond the pygmies who preceded them than he is beyond Aristotle. Kant, Hegel, Fichte, and Schelling are gropers in the dark by the side of him. In all the history of science there is but one name which can be compared to his, and that is Newton's; but Newton never attempted so wide a field, and how he would have succeeded in it, had he done so, must be only matter of conjecture." (Letter from F. A. P. Barnard to Edward L. Youmans dated November 10, 1882. Quoted in Edward L. Youmans, editor, Herbert Spencer on The Americans and The Americans on Herbert Spencer, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1883. P. 87)

"Stifled for a time in the United States because it had neither an organization nor a sufficient number of enthusiastic devotees to further it, naturalism was given new life through the development of evolutionary concepts. Less tied to any particular ideology than their opponents, the naturalists were inclined toward a freer interpretation of new knowledge. The result was that they came to look upon Darwin as the empirical basis for their thinking and upon Spencer as the philosopher who gave it systematic form." (Paul Russell Anderson and Max Harold Fisch, Philosophy in America, from the Puritans to James, D. Appleton-Century Company, New York, 1939. Pp. 327-328)

"... his books being most carefully thought out and organized with a thoroughness and precision which have characterized the works of but few authors. He brought to each period of composition well digested material which expressed itself with an admirable lucidity, rendering his books the most fascinating reading of modern philosophers." (L. L. Bernard, "Herbert Spencer's Work in the Light of His Life," The Monist, Vol. 31, pp. 1-35, 1921. P. 20)

"Unfortunately, the historical forms of naturalism have often been distinguished by their readiness to compromise, or cautiously to set limits to the use of scientific method. Thus, the naturalism of Spencer was tempered by his agnosticism; and the same may be said of Huxley." (Roy Wood Sellars, V. J. McGill, and Marvin Farber, "Foreword" to Philosophy for the Future, pp. v-xii, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1949. P. ix)

"Resources of advanced physical science, such as Locke and Hume never knew, are marshaled in its defense. And to these Mr. Spencer adds a faculty of popular exposition such as no preceding thinker of his ability has possessed." (Augustus Hopkins Strong, D.D., Philosophy and Religion, A. C. Armstrong and Spn, New York, 1888. P. 40)
"Bye the bye, see if they have any of Herbert Spencer's books in the Mechanics' Institute Library. He is perhaps our greatest living philosopher." (Letter from George Gissing to Algernon Gissing dated January 19, 1879. Quoted in Letters of George Gissing to Members of His Family, Collected and arranged by Algernon and Ellen Gissing, Constable and Company, Ltd., London, 1927. P. 40)

"Probably there never was anywhere before or since as widespread an interest in a philosophy as the American interest at that time in Spencer's." (P. 50) "Probably no other philosopher ever had such a vogue as Spencer had from about 1870 to 1890." (P. 298) (Henry Holt, Garrulities of an Octogenarian Editor. Houghton Mifflin Company. Boston, 1923.)

"While inditing tragedies and a huge epic in the romantic vein (fortunately long ago burnt), I was plotting out a rationalistic philosophy which should accomplish what Darwin and Spencer had failed to finish (and this too went to the flames)." (Paul Elmer More, quoted in Arthur Hazard Dakin, Paul Elmer More, Princeton University Press, Princeton, N.J., 1960. P. 313)
Frederick Jackson "Turner arrived at Johns Hopkins in 1888 to study for a Ph.D. under Herbert Baxter Adams. He brought with him the conviction that the present age surpassed all previous eras, that its glorious hallmarks were science and democracy, and that its heroes were Darwin, Spencer, and Lincoln." (John Higham, History; Professional Scholarship in America, The Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 1989. P. 174)

"Much of Spencer's way of thinking and many of his ideas have become part of the very atmosphere we breathe and cannot but accept ...." (Unsigned, Obituary of Herbert Spencer, Nature, Vol. 69, pp. 155-156, December 17, 1903. P. 156)

"The ideas of which Mr. Spencer is the greatest living exponent are to-day running like the weft through all the warp of modern thought, and out from their abundant suggestiveness have come the opinions of many who do not profess any special 'allegiance' to Mr. Spencer ...." (John Fiske, Excursions of an Evolutionist. Houghton, Mifflin and Company. Boston, 1894. P. 181.)

"There remains room for a full biographical study of Spencer which places him and his work in their time and draws on a wide reading of the literature about him as well as his relationships, e.g., with Lewes, George Eliot, his American promoters, and the wide current of nineteenth-century naturalism. He was as pervasive in the decades in which he flourished as a Malthus or a Chambers was in his own." (Robert M. Young, Darwin's Metaphor, Nature's Place in Victorian Culture, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1985. P. 270n.)

"Personally we think the tendency at the moment is generally to underestimate the importance of his [Spencer's] labours, and the permanent value of many of his conclusions." (David Church Somervell, English Thought in the Nineteenth Century, 5th ed., Methuen, London, 1947. P. 6)


"Mr. Spencer's faculties were all devoted to the service of mankind, and few men can have lived whose personal conduct unremittingly trod so close upon the heels of their ideal." (William James, "Herbert Spencer," The Critic, Vol. 44, pp. 21-24, 1904. P. 24)

"Your philosophy, Heaven be praised, has no narrowness or taint of nationality about it. It belongs to the world's civilization; let it not be blemished by any external mark of partiality." (Letter from Edward L. Youmans to Herbert Spencer dated November, 1870. Quoted in John Fiske, Edward Livingston Youmans, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. P. 263)

"As far as the frontiers of knowledge where the intellect may go, there is no living man whose guidance may more safely be trusted. Mr. Spencer represents the scientific spirit of the age. He makes note of all that comes within the range of sensuous experience, and declares whatever may be derived therefrom by a careful induction." (Anonymous, Review of Illustrations of Progress, by Herbert Spencer, The Atlantic Monthly, Vol. 13, pp. 775-777, 1864. P. 776)

Of Herbert Spencer: "... an intellect probably the most stupendous yet evolved in the history of our globe." (Caleb Williams Saleeby, "The Sun Forgotten," The Academy and Literature, Vol. 66, p. 447, 1904. P. 447)

"Specialists in almost every walk acknowledge their indebtedness to him [Spencer], and writers on astronomy, musical theory, and literary style, no less than those who deal with psychology and ethics, find it necessary, even when it is to express disagreement, to take his speculations and conclusions under consideration." (Unsigned, "Herbert Spencer," The Westminster Review, Vol. 161, pp. 1-6, 1904)

J. Arthur Thomson called Spencer "... one of the most scientific minds that ever lived." (Herbert Spencer. J. M. Dent & Co. London, 1906. p. vii)

"We cannot part with Mr. Spencer (only for a time it is hoped) without again expressing sincere admiration for his genius and gratitude for his self-sacrificing labours." (G. Lloyd Morgan, "Mr Spencer's Biology," Natural Science, Vol. 13, pp. 377-383, 1898. P. 383)

"We have now lost the last great man of the nineteenth century." (L. F. Austin, "Herbert Spencer," The Illustrated London News, Vol. 123, p. 898, December 12, 1903. P. 898)
PRAISE OF SPENCER

"He [Herbert Spencer] has taken the materials which the world already possessed and made the most of them. He has accepted the estate which human thought and labor have bequeathed, and fitted it up for the occupancy of a higher and nobler race of beings."


Replying to the charge that Spencer did not himself establish the facts that he used for his interpretations, Henry Holt remarked: "As if a philosopher were to grub his own facts, any more than a cook to grub his own potatoes!" (Garrulities of an Octogenarian Editor. Houghton Mifflin Company. Boston, 1923. P. 53.)

PREADAPTATION

"This theory, usually called "preadaptation" and associated with the name of Guénôt, who emphasized and expounded it in greatest detail (1921, 1925) ...." (George Gaylord Simpson, Tempo and Mode in Evolution, Columbia University Press, New York, 1944. P. 76) "Guénôt discusses this aspect of the problem at length. For the property in an animal of suitability for some change in its habit or habitat, he uses the term pre-adaptation." "According to Guénôt the term was first used by C. B. Davenport [1903]." (G. S. Carter, Animal Evolution, Sidgwick and Jackson Limited, London, 1951. P. 275, 275n.) "Among principles derived from the principle of economy is the principle of pre-adaptation—a name which we may appropriately coin to indicate an adaptation made in advance of the time at which it could have arisen in the course of phylogenetic history." (Herbert Spencer, The Principles of Biology, revised edition, 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1898. Vol. 1, p. 460)

PRIMITIVE COMMUNISM

Likewise, Spencer did not see an early stage of "primitive communism." While recognizing that "land is jointly held by hunters because it cannot be otherwise held" (Vol. I. P. 664, 1st ed.), Spencer observed that since the most primitive peoples known today habitually own their weapons, implements, and ornaments individually, it was probably the same in very early times.
Spencer did not believe in an early stage of primitive communism. He held that there probably was private ownership of tools, utensils, weapons and ornaments from the beginning, even though land and game were thought of as jointly owned. This is the modern anthropological view of the matter.
"The experience of many other travellers similarly show us that friendly conduct on the part of uncivilized races when first visited, is very general; and that their subsequent unfriendly conduct, when it occurs, is nothing but retaliation for injuries received from the civilized." (Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1891. P. 211)
"I do not think the evidence warrants us in concluding that promiscuity ever existed in an unqualified form ..." (Vol. I, p. 662, 1st ed.) Spencer did not accept the theory that promiscuity was the earliest stage of human marriage.

However, Spencer did believe that because of the difficulty of knowing true paternity in early stages, in which, while not universal, promiscuity was common, kinship was first reckoned in the female line. (Vol. I, pp. 665-666, 1st ed.). But he had reservations about it, stressing the fact that even in primitive matrilineal societies a term for 'father' always existed and this implied a consciousness of male kinship. (Vol. I, p. 667, 1st ed.).


"It was quite in keeping with the evolutionary philosophy of last century ethnologists such as Bachofen, McLennan, Lubbock, Morgan, and Spencer that marriage should have been conceived as evolving from an early state of sex promiscuity." (Raymond W. Murray, Introductory Sociology, second edition, F. S. Crofts & Company, New York, 1946. P. 249)

"Under the influence of Spencer and his disciples, a number of scientists sought to discover the necessary or pre-established stages of development of particular phases of social and cultural life. They asserted, for example, that evolution of the family began with sexual promiscuity, ...." (Nicholas S. Timasheff, Sociological Theory; Its Nature and Growth, 3rd edition, Random House, New York, 1967. P. 133)

"Similarly, Spencer favored the notion of primitive promiscuity on theoretical grounds. Evolution, in all realms, physical, biological, social, was to Spencer a general process involving a movement from indefinite incoherent homogeneity to a definite coherent heterogeneity and social evolution moved from the homogeneity of the herd toward greater and greater social complexity and individuation." /No citation to any of Spencer's writings is made in this paper./ (Lila Leibowitz, "Dilemma for Social Evolution: The Impact of Darwin," Journal of Theoretical Biology, Vol. 25, pp. 255-275, 1969. P. 269)
Mr. Herbert Spencer has endeavored to account for the origin of the segmentation of muscles into myotomes, and the division of the sheath of the notochord into vertebrae, by supposing it to be due to the lateral swimming movements of the fishes, which first exhibit these structures. (Principles of Biology, 2nd ed. Vol. 2, pp. 197-201) With this view various later authors have agreed, and I have offered some additional evidence of the soundness of this position with respect to the vertebral axis of Batrachia, and the origin of limb articulations. (Cope gives refs. here.) It is true that the origin of segmentation in the vertebral column of the true fishes and the Batrachia turns out to have been less simple in its process than was suggested by Mr. Spencer, but his general principle holds good, now that paleontology has cleared up the subject." (E. D. Cope, The Primary Factors of Organic Evolution, The Open Court Publishing Company, Chicago, 1896. Pp. 367-368.)

"...[instance in which he] through the logical pursuit of a great principle, has developed a minor but important truth, whose enunciation and proof have won for him the highest encomiums from the leading specialists of the world. I refer to his celebrated and now generally accepted theory of the mode of development of the Annulosa." (Lester Frank Ward, Dynamic Sociology, 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1883. Vol. 1, p. 182)

"What strikes one most forcibly on reading the "Principles of Biology" in this new and enlarged edition is the extraordinary range and grasp of its author, the piercing keenness of his eye for essentials, his fertility in invention and the bold sweep of his logical method. In these days of increasingly straitened specialization it is well that we should feel the influence of a thinker whose powers of generalization have seldom been equalled and perhaps never surpassed." (C. Lloyd Morgan, "Mr. Herbert Spencer's Biology," Natural Science, Vol. 13, pp. 377-383, 1898. P. 377)
"The volume [Vol. 1 of The Principles of Biology] of the work is materially increased, and new sections of much interest have been added. But though the intellectual weight has also been augmented, it is an open question whether it would not have been wiser to leave intact a treatise of such unique historical importance and value, relegating corrections and additions to notes and appendices. With all the labour and care Mr Spencer has expended on it during the last two years, it cannot be said that, having due reference to the contemporary state of knowledge in each case, the revised volume of 1898 holds the same position as the original work of 1864." (C. Lloyd Morgan, "Mr Herbert Spencer's Biology," Natural Science, Vol. 13, pp. 377-383, 1898. P. 377)

"... in his /Spencer's/ epochal and remarkably suggestive Principles of Biology, ... in his theory as to the origin of the notochord, and of the segmentation of the vertebral column and the segmental arrangement of the muscles by muscular strains, he laid the foundations for future work along this line." (Alpheus S. Packard, Lamarck, The Founder of Evolution, Longmans, Green, and Co., New York, 1901. P. 384)

"Quite apart from the evolution theory, "Principles of Biology" was an epoch-making work. Even as a balance sheet of the facts of life the book is a biological classic. Consciously or unconsciously, we are all standing on Spencer's shoulders. But the great work was more than a careful balance sheet of the facts of life. It also displayed the facts of life and the inductions from these for the first time clearly in the light of evolution. I cannot say that I have any sympathy with those who call Spencer an abstract biologist, a philosophical biologist, and mean thereby to suggest that he is not in touch with and is not treating the real facts of life. I should rather think he got nearer the relations than anyone else." (J. Arthur Thomson, quoted in Anonymous, "The Philosophy of Herbert Spencer," The Edinburgh Review, Vol. 199, pp. 352-373, 1904. P. 364)

"Herbert Spencer's "Principles of Biology" is the gem of his "Synthetic Philosophy," and must rank for all time as his masterpiece." (p. 10) "... Spencer's handling of biological problems is nothing short of masterful. In his chapters on growth, development, function, adaptation, generation ("genesis"), heredity, variation, etc., although not a specialist in any branch of biology, he marshals an immense body of facts in support of fundamental principles, many of which had never before been discovered." (p. 11) "... we must admit that Spencer possessed a remarkable faculty of accurately stating biological facts that he had not himself observed, and a still greater talent for correlating and interpreting them and fitting them into his universal scheme." (p. 12) (Lester F. Ward, "The Career of Herbert Spencer," The Popular Science Monthly, Vol. 74, pp. 5-18, 1909)


"The Principles of Biology (1864-67) also is not wholly satisfactory. For Spencer's knowledge of his subject was amateurish and second-hand, and he did no experimental work. He felt that he had to treat biology as a basis for psychology, but he had little interest in it for its own sake. Huxley, however, kept him from gross errors." (F. J. C. Hearnshaw, "Herbert Spencer and the Individualists," in The Social & Political Ideas of Some Representative Thinkers of the Victorian Age, ed. by F. J. C. Hearnshaw, pp. 53-83, George G. Harrap & Co. Ltd., London, 1933. P. 67)

"But, considering the state of the science when this treatise was written, and the fact that Mr. Spencer does not profess to be a naturalist, it must be admitted that the "Principles of Biology" is a true masterpiece. Precisely what this science needed, ridden as it had so long been by narrow specialists and inflexible systematists, was a broad and enlightened survey of its field, and a philosophic synthesis of its principles. This is pre-eminently the service performed in this work, and for this the "Principles of Biology" is deserving of the highest commendation." (Lester Frank Ward, Dynamic Sociology, 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1883. Vol. 1, p. 184)

"... the general truth which should be ascribed to him [Spencer], that throughout the organic world, both among animals and among plants, and in the vertebrate sub-kingdom as well as in the invertebrate series, there is everywhere a striking conformity in the shape of the organism to the conditions under which it exists and the circumstances out of which it has been evolved. All the facts of phylogeny and of ontogeny, of geographical distribution and of anatomical symmetry, or morphology and of physiology, conspire to confirm this universal law, whose first systematic presentation is to be found in the "Principles of Biology."" (Lester Frank Ward, Dynamic Sociology, 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1883. Vol. 1, pp. 183-184)

"Spencer's heroic attempt mechanically to explain the genesis of living forms is altogether too coarsely carried out in the former book ... [The Principles of Biology]." (William James, "Herbert Spencer," The Critic, Vol. 44, pp. 21-24, 1904. P. 23)
Look in Spencer's Principles of Biology, 1st edition, especially in Vol. 1 (1864) to see if there is any adumbration of the concept of homeostasis. Claude Bernard's first full statement of the idea came in 1867, but he made an earlier presentation of the notion in 1859. See Langley, Homeostasis, for a discussion of the history of the idea.

When Medawar was preparing to give the Herbert Spencer Lecture for 1963, he speaks of "... finding myself the first man ever to have read the two volumes of Spencer's Principles of Biology acquired by the Royal Society's library more than half a century beforehand." (Peter B. Medawar, The Art of the Soluble, Methuen & Co Ltd, London, 1967. P. 39)

"... the "Principles of Biology" can but be regarded as a masterpiece of the highest merit, and as the precursor of a new era in the study of both animals and plants. While our space forbids any extended examination of this truly great work, a cursory glance at some of the most important truths brought out in it seems to be demanded." (Lester Frank Ward, Dynamic Sociology, 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1883. Vol. 1, p. 168)

"How is it that his Principles of Biology and Principles of Psychology have been adopted as a ground-work by all our rising physiologists, such as Romanes, Bastian, and Lancaster?" (Grant Allen, "The Genesis of Genius," The Atlantic Monthly, Vol. 47, pp. 371-381, 1881. P. 381)

"... we must here close the consideration of Mr. Spencer's truly great work on the "Principles of Biology," a work which will be still replete with fresh truths and profound suggestions after the science of biology shall have become as firmly established as many of its sister sciences are now." (Lester Frank Ward, Dynamic Sociology, 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1883. Vol. 1, p. 184)

"The amount and cogency of this species of evidence, as marshaled here in this work Principles of Biology, are not only surprising but convincing, while the manner in which it is presented by Mr. Spencer is that best calculated to make its force felt and its relation to the general argument appreciated." (Lester Frank Ward, Dynamic Sociology, 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1883. Vol. 1, p. 182)

The second volume of The Principles of Biology "... consists of a systematic effort to establish, a posteriori, from a multitude of appropriate illustrations, both in the department of morphology and in that of physiology, the several general principles arrived at deductively in the first volume." (Lester Frank Ward, Dynamic Sociology, 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1883. Vol. 1, p. 181)
"No account of the argument for the transmutation hypothesis has appeared to us abler or clearer than part third of this volume [Vol. 1 of Spencer's Principles of Biology]. Not even Mr. Darwin's remarkable book present the evidence so conclusively." (Anonymous / Chauncey Wright, "Spencer's Biology," The Nation, Vol. 2, pp. 724-725, 1866. P. 725)


"I have almost finished the last number of H. Spencer's [The Principles of Biology], and am astonished at its prodigality of original thought. But the reflection constantly recurred to me that each suggestion, to be of value to science, would require years of work." (Letter from Charles Darwin to J. D. Hooker dated June 30, 1866. In More Letters of Charles Darwin, edited by Francis Darwin, 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1903. Vol. 2, p. 235)

"See, as to the theory of evolution as a whole, the very bold, precise, and most suggestive work of Herbert Spencer, "Principles of Biology."" (Hippolyte Taine, On Intelligence, translated from the French by T. D. Haye, Holt & Williams, New York, 1872. P. 495n.)

"I learn with pleasure from Germer-Baillière that you are translating his Spencer's Principles of Biology; it is his masterpiece." (Letter from Hippolyte Taine to Th. Ribot dated July 6, 1873. Quoted in Life and Letters of H. Taine, 3 Vols., abridged and translated from the French by E. Sparvel-Bayly, Archibald Constable & Co Ltd, London, 1908. Vol. 3, p. 115)

"What strikes one most forcibly [about Principles of Biology] is the extraordinary range and grasp of its author, the piercing keenness of his eye for essentials, his fertility in invention, and the bold sweep of his logical method." (C. Lloyd Morgan, "Mr Herbert Spencer's Biology," Natural Science, Vol. 13, pp. 377-383, 1898. P. 377)

"But it would probably be safe to say that, had not the "Origin of Species" been written, the hypothesis [presumably of organic evolution] presented in the "Principles of Biology" would still be regarded as but a "philosophical phantasy" [as, according to Haeckel, German biologists in 1863 still regarded organic evolution]. For the biologist, the facts presented are too general, too little specific, to prove their case." (Henry Sewall, "Herbert Spencer As a Biologist," University of Michigan, Philosophical Papers, First Series, No. 4, pp. 1-13. P. 12. Sewall was Professor of Physiology at Michigan.)
Spencer's Principles of Biology proclaims organic evolution, "... while the contrary hypothesis of special creation is reduced by crushing logic to an impalpable pulp and finally relegated to the nethermost limbo of impossible concepts." (Grant Allen, "The Gospel According to Herbert Spencer," Part II, The Pall Mall Gazette, April 28, 1890, p. 3. P. 3)


"It has been said that Mr. Spencer's work on the "Principles of Psychology" would probably be the one on which his reputation would finally rest. This may be the popular view, since the reading public is more competent to pass judgment upon a psychological than upon a biological treatise. But to those considerably acquainted with the forms of life, and who regard a philosophical co-ordination of the laws and phenomena of the vital and sentient universe as of greater value at this time than the analysis of mental operations—to such the "Principles of Biology" can but be regarded as a masterpiece of the highest merit, and as the precursor of a new era in the study of both animals and plants." (Lester F. Ward, Dynamic Sociology, 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. Vol. 1, p. 168)

"Unquestionably the most able portion of Herbert Spencer's treatise on biology is his discussion and analysis of the principles of "Equilibration" in Chapters XI and XII of Volume I. It is here that he deals directly with the great problem whose partial solution at the hands of Charles Darwin has thrown the whole scientific world into the very throes of revolution. But, keen as was the insight of this world-renowned naturalist, Mr. Spencer clearly shows that he by no means probed this question to the bottom. The principle which Darwin designated by the term Natural Selection is only one of the chief divisions of the far wider law of Equilibration." (Lester F. Ward, Dynamic Sociology, 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. Vol. 1, pp. 176-177)

"... it (the second volume of Spencer's Principles of Biology) consists of a systematic effort to establish, a posteriori, from a multitude of appropriate illustrations, both in the department of morphology and in that of physiology, the several general principles arrived at deductively in the first volume." (Lester F. Ward, Dynamic Sociology, 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. Vol. 1, p. 181)

"... a single instance in which he [Spencer], through the logical pursuit of a great principle, has developed a minor but important truth, whose enunciation and proof have won for him the highest encomiums from the leading specialists of the world. I refer to his celebrated and now generally accepted theory of the mode of development of the Annulosa." (Lester F. Ward, Dynamic Sociology, 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. Vol. 1, p. 182)
... he seems to have approached Psychology through the avenues of science. He has not been a student of the old psychology—he has sat at the feet of no professor, learning from him what the schools had thought and taught. He seems very slightly acquainted with the writings of that illustrious line of thinkers from Aristotle to Hegel who have tried to solve the great problems .... his remarks on Kant, Hume, and Sir W. Hamilton, which are purely critical and polemical, are, if we remember rightly, the only passages in which the psychological schools are recognised at all."


"The book Spencer's The Principles of Psychology is a remarkable one in many respects, and its wide-reaching systematisation of so many heterogeneous elements is very imposing. But was there ever so strange a notion (for a man who sees so much) as that the doctrine of the Conservation of Force is a priori and a law of Consciousness? He expresses himself almost as if he thought that there is no objective standard of truth at all, which is in one sense true, but not in the obvious sense; inasmuch as each person's phenomenal experience is to have a standard relatively objective, and the correction of error consists to each mind in bringing its ideas and their relations into clearer accordance with what are, or would be in the given circumstances, its sensations or impressions and their relations." (Letter from John Stuart Mill to Alexander Bain dated January 7, 1863. Quoted in The Letters of John Stuart Mill, edited by Hugh S. R. Elliot, 2 Vols., Longmans, Green and Co, London, 1910. Vol. 1, p. 273)

"Mr. Herbert Spencer's "Principles of Psychology," though not so sound as a whole, contains many searching analyses of complex mental phenomena, and happy applications of the principle of association. He has unfortunately put at the head of it a dissertation under the title of the "Universal Postulate," which seems to me not only erroneous, but quite inconsistent with the philosophy of the work it is prefixed to." (Letter from John Stuart Mill to Henry Carleton dated October 12, 1857. Quoted in The Letters of John Stuart Mill, edited by Hugh S. R. Elliot, 2 Vols., Longmans, Green and Co, London, 1910. Vol. 1, p. 197)

Writing about Spencer's Principles of Psychology, the 1855 edition, James Martineau said: "With all possible good-will towards physiology, and desire that the parallelism of phenomena—physical and mental—should be carefully noticed, I have no expectation of psychological results from merging mental philosophy in the study of organic functions.... Nor can I find that any results whatever have been attained by the physiological school entitling them to turn round so contemptuously on the old psychologists. Whatever becomes of comparative physiology in its future triumphs, it will never destroy the fundamental importance of the ancient "Self-knowledge."" (Presumably, introspection. /Letter from James Martineau to Richard R. Hutton dated November 4, 1855. Quoted in The Life and Letters of James Martineau, edited by James Drummond, 2 Vols., Dodd, Mead and Company, New York, 1902. Vol. 2, p. 287)
"It [Principles of Psychology, 1855] was in the fullest sense of the term an epoch-making book—epoch-making because it placed the study of mind, theretofore in the hands of the metaphysicians as sterile a subject as it had proved in the days of mediaeval scholasticism, upon an entirely new and promisingly fertile basis. Hitherto, mental philosophy had concerned itself only with the facts of adult human consciousness. Spencer, realizing how little could ever be accomplished by this time-worn and superficial method, broke away from all the traditions of the schools, and started out on an original investigation of the phenomena of mind, in the wide sweep of which he took in not only the mental growth of children and savages, but also the phenomena of intelligence as displayed by the whole range of the animate world down to the lowest creatures." (William Henry Hudson, "Herbert Spencer and the Synthetic Philosophy," The Popular Science Monthly, Vol. 41, pp. 1-16, 1892. P. 10)

"I have also read through Spencer's "Principles of Psychology," which is as much better than I thought as the "First Principles" are less good. He is, no doubt, a great deal too certain of many things, and on some he is clearly wrong, but much less so than I fancied (barring the Universal Postulate, on which he now tells me that my difference from him is chiefly verbal, but I do not think so). He has a great mastery over the obscurer applications of the associative principle. As you say, he is particularly good on the subject of resistance and extension." (Letter from John Stuart Mill to Alexander Bain dated April 10, 1864. Quoted in The Letters of John Stuart Mill, edited by Hugh S. R. Elliot, 2 Vols., Longmans, Green and Co, London, 1910. Vol. 2, p. 7)

"How different [from Samuel Bailey is] Herbert Spencer, whose "Psychology" I have been reading for the third time! The second of his four parts is admirable as a specimen of analysis. It is a great satisfaction to find how closely his results coincide with ours. I hope he will not make the book worse instead of better in the projected rewriting, as I am afraid he is going to do with his "Social Statics." The long miscellaneous chapter with which the second volume of the "Analysis" commences will give us a great deal of occupation, for under the guise of explaining names it contains the author's solutions of most of the great questions of metaphysics proper." (Letter from John Stuart Mill to Alexander Bain dated December 6, 1867. Quoted in The Letters of John Stuart Mill, edited by Hugh S. R. Elliot, 2 Vols., Longmans, Green and Co, London, 1910. Vol. 2, p. 99)

"My impression is that, of the systematic treatises, the "Psychology" will rank as the most original. Spencer broke new ground here in insisting that, since mind and its environment have evolved together, they must be studied / together. He have to the study of mind in isolation a definitive quietus, and that certainly is a great thing to have achieved." (pp. 139-140) "... to have brought in the environment as vital / in the study of mind/ was a master stroke." (p. 140) (William James, Memories and Studies, Longmans, Green, and Co., New York, 1911)
In Principles of Psychology, 1855 edition: "Mr. Spencer is original in his conception, original in his working out of the conception. We do not of course imply that he is not largely indebted to previous thinkers. It is certain that his own speculations are not only indebted to those of his predecessors, but that a few years earlier he could not have arrived at his conclusions: they are the result of the most recent physiological and psychological labours; and because they are so they will be accepted by many persons as ideas "which they already held;" it being the peculiarity of certain generalisations to carry with them so obvious an air (when once discovered) that men find it difficult to believe they overlooked them. We venture to assert, however, that never before has the identity of the vital and psychical process been shown. Never before has the genesis of each higher intellectual evolution been exhibited as dependent on and corresponding with a higher complexity of life. Never before has there been a physiological explanation of the Will and of voluntary actions. Never before has the growth of intelligence through successive generations, and how by transmission "The thoughts of men are widened by the process of the suns," been placed on an intelligible physiological basis. So that with all its obligations to predecessors there is no lack of originality to attract and fasten the philosophic student."

(George Henry Lewes, "Herbert Spencer’s Psychology," The Leader, Vol. 6, No. 291, pp. 1012-1013, October 20, 1855. P. 1013)

"But when I arrived at the volume in the 'Principles of Psychology' where the whole subject of the origin, genesis, and development of mind in its relation to the genesis and growth of the nervous system was worked out in detail, and especially where the relation borne by the higher and nobler emotions of the mind to its baser and unworthy elements, was brought clearly into view, then it was that the ideal within me struck to the heart, shrivelled and collapsed, and all the flowers that had sprung up in the mind under the genial influence of youth and hope, faded and withered." (John Beattie Crozier, My Inner Life, Being a Chapter in Personal Evolution and Autobiography, Longman's, Green, and Co., London, 1898. P. 253)

"But throughout The Principles of Psychology, the great range of exact knowledge possessed by Mr. Spencer, the originality of his treatment and leading generalizations, the sustained vigour of his scientific imagination, the patient precise ingenuity with which he develops definite hypotheses where other thinkers offer loose suggestions, are no less remarkable than the mazy inconsistency of his metaphysical results." (Henry Sidgwick, Review of Herbert Spencer's The Principles of Psychology, 2nd edition, The Academy, Vol. 4, pp. 131-134, 1873. P. 134)

"I want to tell you that we shall have two copies in our possession of Herbert Spencer's Principles of Psychology, so that if you do not like to pay 16s. for a big book on spec., we shall be able by and bye to lend you a copy. Mr. Lewes is mailed to the book by his interest in it. I have not had time to more than glance at it." (Letter from George Eliot to Sara Sophia Hennell dated August 24, 1855. Quoted in Gordon S. Haight, The George Eliot Letters, 7 Vols., Yale University Press, New Haven, 1954. Vol. 2, pp. 212-213)
"The "Principles of Psychology" has been by many regarded as Mr. Spencer's greatest work, and that upon which his reputation as a philosopher will finally rest. It creates an entirely new departure from all that had previously been thought to constitute the philosophy of the mind. Without going to the extreme lengths of Gall and Spurzheim in seeking to establish a purely physiological science of mind before the nature of the brain and nervous system were at all understood in their relation to function, Mr. Spencer has, nevertheless, sought to demonstrate that all the phenomena of the mind have this physiological basis." (Lester Frank Ward, Dynamic Sociology, 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1883. Vol. 1, pp. 184-185)

"In summing up our general estimate of the "Principles of Psychology," we are obliged to admit that, if it were Mr. Spencer's only production, it would go far toward making an epoch. At the same time we fail to discover any evidence, either internal or external, which is sufficient, from our point of view, to assign to this work a rank superior to that of the "Principles of Biology."") (Lester Frank Ward, Dynamic Sociology, 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1883. Vol. 1, p. 193


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"Many competent critics have regarded the Principles of Psychology as Spencer's greatest achievement, and not, perhaps, without good cause. Nowhere else, certainly, could we find a more striking exhibition of his magnificent powers of both analysis and synthesis, of his clear perception of the significance of the minutest details, of his daring sweep of generalisation and deduction, of his firm control over the longest and most intricate chains of reasoning." (William Henry Hudson, An Introduction to the Philosophy of Herbert Spencer, revised edition, Watts & Co., London, 1906, P. 61)
In a letter to Th. Ribot dated January 11, 1873, Taine complained that "the English reviews ... are treating my work /De l'Intelligence, first published in 1870, English translation 1871/ as a mere imitation, a French transcription of English theories." (Vol. 3, p. 103) Especially Spencer's theories. He asked, in so many words, whether several of Spencer's theories appearing in The Principles of Psychology, 1870-72 edition, which were essentially the same as his, might not in fact have been borrowed by Spencer without acknowledgement. (Life and Letters of H. Taine, 3 Vols., abridged and translated from the French by E. Sparvel-Bayly, Archibald Constable & Co Ltd, London, 1908. Vol. 3, pp. 101-103) (See Life and Letters of Herbert Spencer, Vol. 2, p. 347, 347n., for Spencer's refutation of at least one supposed "borrowing.")

"It requires a remarkable man, for instance, to produce a book like Wundt's Psychology, in which the author seems to have a good acquaintance with every important work on his subject, but, though such a work may be infinitely more valuable from a scientific point of view, it requires less of a genius to produce it than to evolve Spencer's Principles of Psychology from the recesses of one’s mind after having read less formal psychology than the average elementary-school teacher in an American public school." (Harry Elmer Barnes, "Some Typical Contributions of English Sociology to Political Theory," The American Journal of Sociology, Vol. 27, pp. 289-324, 1921. Pp. 294-295)

Spencer's Principles of Psychology... was mainly written in the open air, near Dieppe and in Wales, without works of reference. If the adjective original can fairly be applied to any philosophical work, it is to this invaluable book in which was founded the study of psychogenesis, or the origin of mind." (C. W. Saleebey, Evolution The Master-Key, Harper & Brothers Publishers, New York, 1906. P. 167)

"If Mr. Spencer had no other titles to fame, he would still be the greatest of psychologists." (pp. 399-400) "But the 'Principles of Psychology' will still remain, in its symmetrical completeness and perfect adequacy to the subject, at once the most remarkable of his achievements and the most scientific treatise on the Mind which has yet seen the light." (Anonymous, "The Development of Psychology," The Westminster Review, Vol. 101, pp. 377-406, 1874. P. 400)

"In summing up our general estimate of the "Principles of Psychology," we are obliged to admit that, if were Mr. Spencer's only production, it would go far toward making an epoch. At the same time we fail to discover any evidence, either internal or external, which is sufficient, from our own point of view, to assign to this work a rank superior to that of the "Principles of Biology."" (Lester F. Ward, Dynamic Sociology, 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. Vol. I, p. 193)

"Indeed, the Psychology of Spencer's Principles of Psychology, though grimly scientific, is in many respects the most original work of our most original worker: and its great triumph lies in its ample demonstration of the cardinal principle that Mind like Body has a natural origin, and undergoes a natural and parallel development." (Grant Allen, "The Gospel According to Herbert Spencer," Part II, The Pall Mall Gazette, April 28, 1890, p. 3. P. 3)

"This last extract is from Mr. Herbert Spencer, whose Principles of Psychology, in spite of some doctrines which he holds in common with the intuitive school, are on the whole one of the finest examples we possess of the Psychological Method in its full power." (John Stuart Mill, An Examination of Sir William Hamilton's Philosophy, Henry Holt and Company, New York, 1884. Original edition, 1865/ P. 292, Vol. 1)

"It is original in the true sense of the word, but not in the merely capricious departure from current opinions which some writers fondly imagine to be originality. It is new in its leading ideas, new in conception, new in illustration ..." (Anonymous (George H. Lewes), "Herbert Spencer's Principles of Psychology," The Saturday Review of Politics, Literature, Science, and Art, Vol. 1, pp. 1856. P. 352)

"... in our apprehension, this well-studied and deeply philosophic volume presents on the whole one of the most vigorous attempts which has yet been made in our country to place mental philosophy upon a broad and positive basis." (J. D. Morell, Review of Herbert Spencer's The Principles of Psychology, The British and Foreign Medico-Chirurgical Review, Vol. 17, pp. 282-285, 1856. P. 282)

Of Principles of Psychology: "... the most profound treatise upon mental phenomena that any human mind has yet produced ...." (John Fiske, Edward Livingston Youmans, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. P. 105)

John Stuart Mill is said to have pronounced Spencer's Principles of Psychology "the finest example we possess of the psychological method in its full power."
"You cannot open a competent book in any of three or four departments of thought, but you find the most fruitful discussions turning about the hypotheses of Spencer. I take it that this is one of the greatest possible services of a great man—to produce definitely directed effort, even though his private views go down in the result." (James Mark Baldwin, "Mr. Spencer's Psychology," The American Naturalist, Vol. 31, pp. 553-557, 1897. P. 555)

"The psychologist's debt to Spencer has been grudgingly paid. The reason is, perhaps, this, that with an unexampled programme for the science, and an equally unexampled wealth of plausible and research-exciting hypotheses, in this as in other sciences, Spencer combined a semi-deductive method, a speculative and ultra-logical manner, and a dry unattractive style." (James Mark Baldwin, History of Psychology, 2 Vols., G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1913. Vol. 2, pp. 98-99)
"... the evidence ... must dissipate once and for all the belief in a moral sense as commonly entertained. ... the human mind has no originally implanted conscience. ... I once espoused the doctrine of the intuitive moralists ..., yet it has gradually become clear to me that the qualifications required practically obliterate the doctrine as enunciated by them. It has become clear to me that ... / it is impossible to hold that men have in common an innate perception of right and wrong." (Herbert Spencer, The Principles of Ethics. 2 Vols. D. Appleton and Company. New York, 1904. Vol. 1, pp. 470-471.)

Principles of Ethics tried to show that ethics had a natural selection basis, and that moral precepts were not derived from any "categorical imperative" such as Kant and other philosophers had pos- ited (contended).
"... we can only in a few general phrases express our admiration of the profound, all-embracing philosophy of which the work [The Principles of Psychology] before us is an instalment. The doctrine of evolution when taken up by Mr. Spencer was little more than a crotchet. He has made it the idea of the age. In its presence other systems of philosophy are hushed, they cease their strife and become its servitors, while all the sciences do it homage." (Douglas A. Spalding, "Herbert Spencer's Psychology." Nature, Vol. 7, pp. 298-300, 1873. P. 298.)


"The views he hints at respecting the genesis of the nervous system, and the complicated nature of the human brain, as representing an infinity of experiences gained during the evolution of life from its lower to its higher forms, can only be regarded as theories at present totally unestablished, and which have to await the future light of physiological science ere any solid conclusion can possibly be built upon them." (J. D. Morell, Review of Herbert Spencer’s The Principles of Psychology, The British and Foreign Medical-Chirurgical Review, Vol. 17, pp. 282-285, 1856. P. 284)

"I have just finished the second volume of the Psychology, and expect to have it issued in a bound form in less than a fortnight." (Letter from Herbert Spencer to Edward L. Youmans, dated October 12, 1872. Quoted in John Fiske, Edward Livingston Youmans, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. P. 304)

"... this [The Principles of Psychology, 1855] was the first scientific and systematic application of it [the principle of evolution]." (p. 70) "... it [The Principles of Psychology, 1855] was the first legitimate and permanent scientific result of the application of the law of evolution." (p. 71) "Time was now first recognized as the supreme factor in the production of effects for which it had been formerly supposed that time was unnecessary." (p. 71) (Remarks prepared by Edward L. Youmans for the Spencer Farewell Dinner, but not spoken for lack of time, pp. 67-76. In /Edward L. Youmans, editor/ Herbert Spencer on the Americans and The Americans on Herbert Spencer, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1883)
"When, towards the close of the year, it is all written I shall feel that I have got through the portion of my work which of all was the most difficult to deal with." (Letter from Herbert Spencer to John Fiske, dated July 16, 1881. Henry E. Huntington Library Cat. No. HM 13738. Unpublished)

Some 500 written sources were drawn from for the factual illustrative material for *Principles of Sociology*.

It seems to me that the Economics part of *Principles of Sociology* is not as penetrating, well-organized, or illuminating as the sections on political organization. It could well be that Spencer's continuing decline in general health and mental vigor was a factor. It was not of the same high caliber. (Another possibility is Spencer's greater interest in and familiarity with politics as compared with economics.)

One gets the feeling when reading *Principles of Sociology* that Spencer has immersed himself in the facts of ethnography and synthesized them in a masterful way.

See Youmans' introduction to *The Study of Sociology* (my edition) for an account of the inductive basis of Spencer's *Principles of Sociology*.

No one ever brought to the organization of ethnographic data the powers of synthesis and generalization that Spencer did. Indeed, as a careful reading of *Principles of Sociology* will reveal, many of the valid propositions formulated by Spencer about the nature and evolution of human society were later "lost," and have yet to be rediscovered. Thus, in a very real sense, we have yet to catch up with Spencer.

The fact that *Principles of Sociology* was originally published as separate articles, and over a considerable period of time, makes for a certain overlap and repetition between the various parts of it.

Spencer meant to write a 4th volume of *Principles of Sociology*, treating Progress—Linguistic, Intellectual, Moral and Esthetic, but his failing health did not permit it.
"Just now I am reading the first volume of Herbert Spencer's Principles of Sociology. You must really read it too. The chapters on early man, especially the passages on the belief in ghosts and doubles, are most instructive and suggestive. Spencer casts an entirely new light upon mythology. Being no mythologist myself, and knowing nothing of Sanskrit, I am not in a position to judge as to whether he is right in his attack upon Max Müller and the celestial myths attributed to the maladies of language; but I should like Renan and Erdal to read his book. It is so full of originality, has so many careful evidences as to recorded facts, and its psychological point of view is so entirely novel." (Letter from Hippolyte Taine to Gaston Paris dated July 2, 1877. Quoted in Life and Letters of H. Taine, 3 Vols., abridged and translated from the French by E. Sparvel-Bayly, Archibald Constable & Co Ltd, London, 1908. Vol. 3, pp. 181-182)

"... he [Spencer] has collected a great mass of scattered facts and made them significant in the light of general ideas as no other living man could have done it. And for the present it is more needful to show that there is a general significance in matters hitherto supposed to be merely capricious than to interpret the meaning rightly in every case." (Anonymous, "Spencer's Ceremonial Institutions," The Saturday Review of Politics, Literature, Science, and Art, Vol. 49, pp. 21-22, 1880. P. 22)

"... Mr. Spencer may now and then seem to take needless pains in heaping up evidence where a smaller selection of facts would have served as well ...." (Anonymous, "Spencer's Ceremonial Institutions," The Saturday Review of Politics, Literature, Science, and Art, Vol. 49, pp. 21-22, 1880. P. 21)
"In fact, the whole volume Vol. 3 of The Principle of Sociology is replete with wisdom and suggestiveness. It amply maintains Mr. Spencer's reputation as the most influential living thinker in the English-speaking world." (W. D. Morrison, Review of The Principles of Sociology, Vol. 3, by Herbert Spencer, Mind, Vol. 6, n.s., pp. 241-245, 1897. P. 245)

"A long series of abstract propositions, taken without concrete illustrations, is likely to prove wearisome, and to leave but faint impression." (Herbert Spencer, Preface to Epitome of the Synthetic Philosophy of Herbert Spencer, by F. Howard Collins, William and Norgate, London, 1897, pp. vii-xi. P. xi)

"Spencer's Principles of Sociology encountered a strange reception. Lester Ward, who had bestowed lavish praise on Principles of Psychology and Principles of Biology, and who should have been in an even better position to appreciate the Principles of Sociology, treated it unsympathetically." --RLC

"The Principles of Sociology tends to disappoint, despite its learning (the list of references to books of history and travel is prodigious) and its many good discussions of particular topics. Much of it is a mechanical citation of facts to confirm well-established principles like differentiation with too little discussion of the anomalies (for which the blanket excuse is a "law of rhythm")." (J. D. Y. Peel, Herbert Spencer on Social Evolution, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1972. Pp. xxx-xxi)

"His [Spencer's] main object was to analyse the process of differentiation, but since this involved showing that the differentiated elements had a common origin, he had to give an account of this origin. His account is pseudo-history, offering us causes, but the rest of his study [The Principles of Sociology generally] is very unhistorical, for he is interested in the process of change and the morphology of institutions, rather than in the causes of the changes or the events of history." (J. D. Y. Peel, "Spencer and the Neo-Evolutionists," Sociology, Vol. 3, pp. 173-191, 1969. P. 181)

"This classification of societies [Into simple, compound, etc., by Spencer] constitutes an important contribution to ethnography, as we have only to glance over the tables to determine the true social position of any given tribe or race." (Lester Frank Ward, Dynamic Sociology, 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1883. Vol. 1, p. 210)

"... well written (quite different from the leaden measures of the Principles of Sociology) ... " (J. D. Y. Peel, Herbert Spencer on Social Evolution, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1972. P. 11)
"The belief is growing in the minds of careful students of savage life that the ultimate basis of regulative institutions must be sought in the facts which cluster round the conception of marriage and kinship, and that the course of the evolution of government and of other institutions has been fundamentally different from that marked out by Mr. Spencer in Principles of Sociology." (Lester Frank Ward, Dynamic Sociology, 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1883. Vol. 1, pp. 214-215)

"... firmly believing in the reign of undeviating law throughout the whole domain of human activity, he recognizes the paramount necessity of entering at once, and in earnest, upon the work of exploring this realm and of investigating the phenomena and laws of social existence, subject to the same canons and by the same methods that have been successfully applied to other phenomena and other laws." (Lester Frank Ward, Dynamic Sociology, 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1883. Vol. 1, p. 153)

"Then, too, a great deal of space in Principles of Sociology is devoted to primitive peoples, and the treatment of modern institutions suffers from their being subordinated to evolutionary trends of such length and geological gradualness that only their very general features, or those aspects that either exemplify or conspicuously fail to fit what Spencer considers the chief trends, are discussed. One misses the historical analysis of unique situations in the light of general categories that one may find in Marx, who was no less attached to his own suprahistorical scheme." (J. D. Y. Peel, Herbert Spencer on Social Evolution, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1972. P. xxxi)

"The word "ecclesiastical" in Ecclesiastical Institutions in Principles of Sociology might be stretched sufficiently to justify this were there no better term, but it is universally admitted that the priesthood was practically coeval with human society, and we possess an adjective corresponding to this noun which is more euphonious and more expressive than the one used. By all means, then, should the phrase sacerdotal institutions be substituted for "ecclesiastical institutions." Trivial and captious criticism (Lester F. Ward, The Career of Herbert Spencer, The Popular Science Monthly, Vol. 74, pp. 5-18, 1909. P. 15)

"The origins of religious and jural conceptions and usages, Mr. Alfred W. Benn thinks may fitly be sought in the traditions of the early Greek world; though as Curtius remarks (Bk. I, 136-7) this "is not ... a world of beginnings; it is no world still engaged in an uncertain development, but one thoroughly complete, matured and defined by fixed rules and orders of life." For myself, in seeking for origins, I prefer to look for them among people who have not yet arrived at a stage in which there are metal weapons and metal armour, two-horse war-shariots, walled towns, temples, palaces, and sea-going ships." (Herbert Spencer, "Replies to Criticisms on The Data of Ethics," Mind, Vol. 6, pp. 82-98, 1881. P. 97)
"We must remark that in general Mr. Spencer's authorities, both old and new, are too much counted and too little weighed. Not infrequently, too, he heaps up weak proofs on strong ones."

"A great many points are worked up with abundance and super-abundance of illustration which might as well have been lightly passed over, or even assumed as elementary. Mr. Spencer seems never to know when he has enough of a good thing. We confess that towards the middle of more than one of his chapters we have lost patience with his Hottentots, Lepchas, Todas, Dhimals, Santals, and other uncanny tribes known only to Indian officials and missionaries. They are like an army of men in buckram always ready to come on the stage and swear allegiance to Mr. Spencer's theories. We should like to be spared them now and then. We do not want the King of Dahomey to prove to us that military government tends to be despotic; and we can believe without assurances from the Neilgherries, that people will as a rule not fight if they have nothing to fight about."

"Came yesterday from London to Whittingehame; read in the train Spencer's Political Institutions, and think much more highly of it now that I come back to it after reading other, especially German, books. He is, as always, over-confident in generalisation, but it is a most vigorous and useful essay towards the construction of scientific sociology; I do not know anything as good."

"Mr. Spencer published "Social Statics," which interested readers wherever the English language was intelligible; and this he superseded by "Principles of Sociology," which was only intelligible to a limited class of advanced thinkers."
(George Jacob Holyoake, Sixty Years of an Agitator's Life, 2 Vols., T. Fisher Unwin, London, 1892. Vol. 1, p. 244)

"The remaining parts of the "Principles of Sociology," so far as published, furnish a fair indication of what the whole will be, but they are necessarily so laden with illustrative facts as to render them less attractive than Mr. Spencer's previous works, and afford him less opportunity to display his accustomed powers of logical analysis and his wonted originality. It is probably for this reason that some have supposed that Mr. Spencer's mental vigor was declining, but those who entertained this view were generally convinced of their mistake after the appearance of the "Data of Ethics," which he paused from his regular work to prepare."
"Doubtless many were disappointed in this work /Principles of Sociology/. It is certainly a very different book from what its title would lead one unacquainted with Mr. Spencer's other works to expect. The term society and the notion of social phenomena rarely give rise in the ordinary mind to any other ideas than such as are associated with advanced societies. The thought of going back to primitive man seldom occurs. A work on social philosophy is supposed to treat of the laws which govern industry, domestic relations, religious observances, social customs, the way in which men co-operate in business, carry on their commercial and manufacturing interests, dress, build houses—in short, the way men live. And if an historical view is taken, it is expected to compare the life of the Greeks and Romans, of the Chinese, Turks, etc., with that of modern civilized peoples. To go back of recorded history is deemed speculative and Utopian, and the thought seems scarcely to have struck any body /sic/ that existing non-historic races may be regarded as living representatives of the prehistoric ancestors of existing civilized races. The study of society from the standpoint of evolution, admitting the evolution of society as well as of the rest of nature, is therefore / a new departure, and the starting-point from primitive man in his pre-social state seems to many a strange way of looking at social questions." (Lester F. Ward, Dynamic Sociology, 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. Vol. 1, pp. 193-194)

"As the capstone of an all-embracing philosophy, Mr. Spencer's book /Vol. 3 of Principles of Sociology/ is a great disappointment. So far as it exercises any influence it will be to lend a color of philosophy to the enemies of every movement for social improvement. Whether workingmen are asking for better sanitary conditions, higher wages, shorter hours, better educational facilities or more public improvements, the author of the Synthetic Philosophy can be quoted to show that the demand is inimical to civilization." (Anonymous, "Spencer's Last Book," Gunton's Magazine, Vol. 12, pp. 291-304, 1897. P. 304)

Nowhere in his review of Vol. 3 of Herbert Spencer's Principles of Sociology (which runs to 645 pages) does Albion W. Small give any evidence of actually having read it. Moreover, this review is one of four which Small wrote for that issue of the American Journal of Sociology. The other three are of books which ran to 496, 332 and 375 pages. He had also contributed two book reviews (of books which were 266 and 381 pages) to the previous issue of the AJS, two months before. (See Albion W. Small, Review of Spencer's The Principles of Sociology, Vol. 3; American Journal of Sociology, Vol. 2, pp. 741-742, 1897)

"In sadness it must be admitted that Mr. Spencer's last book bears the evidence of a sick man who has long outlived his powers of new observation and assimilation—a man who is more concerned about the completion of a great work than about the perfection of each layer of the structure. His last contribution [Volume 3 of the Principles of Sociology] is like putting a wooden spire on a marble edifice—it may serve to complete the form, but the material is too crude and poor long to endure." (Unsigned [probably by George Gunton, the editor, himself], "Spencer's Last Book," Gunton's Magazine, Vol. 12, pp. 291-304, 1897. P. 304)

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"The [Principles of] 'Sociology' has probably a larger lease of life [than the Principles of Psychology]. It is more recent, and must long be valued as a vast collection of well-arranged anthropological facts. As a chapter in the "System of Philosophy" its value is almost evanescent, for the author's habit of periodically pointing out how well the phenomena illustrate his law of evolution seems quite perfunctory and formal when applied to social facts, so strained and unnatural is it to conceive of these as mechanical changes in which matter is integrated and motion dispersed." (William James, "Herbert Spencer," The Critic, Vol. 44, pp. 21-24, 1904. P. 23)

"Moreover, although Spencer's intellect is essentially of the deductive and a priori order, starting from universal abstract principles and thence proceeding down to facts, what strikes one more than anything else in his writings is the enormous number of facts from every conceivable quarter which he brings to his support, and the unceasing study of minutest particulars which he is able to keep up. No "Baconian" philosopher, denying himself the use of a priori principles, has ever filled his pages with half as many facts as this strange species of a prioriist can show. This unflagging and profuse command of facts is what gives such peculiar weightiness to Mr. Spencer's manner of presenting even the smallest topics." (William James, "Herbert Spencer," The Critic, Vol. 44, pp. 21-24, 1904. P. 22)

"The [Principles of] Biology, the [Principles of] Psychology, the [Principles of] Sociology, even were they able than they are, must soon become obsolete books; ..." (William James, "Herbert Spencer," The Critic, Vol. 44, pp. 21-24, 1904. P. 23)
"The remaining parts of the "Principles of Sociology," so far as published, furnish a fair indication of what the whole will be, but they are necessarily so laden with illustrative facts as to render them less attractive than Mr. Spencer's previous works, and afford him less opportunity to display his accustomed powers of logical analysis and his wonted originality. It is probably for this reason that some have supposed that Mr. Spencer's mental vigor was declining, but those who entertained this view were generally convinced of their mistake after the appearance of the "Data of Ethics," which he paused from his regular work to prepare." (Lester Frank Ward, Dynamic Sociology, 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1883. Vol. 1, p. 214)

Frederick W. Maitland wrote two articles on Spencer, entitled "Mr. Herbert Spencer's Theory of Society," which appeared in successive issues of Mind in 1883. They are concerned entirely with Spencer's ethical and political philosophy, as drawn largely from Social Statics and The Data of Ethics. This concern with questions of morals and values, rather than with social science, is very typical of the scholarship of the day, even, apparently, of students of historical jurisprudence, as Maitland was.

"That the "Principles of Sociology" none the less actually comprises three volumes [as originally projected by Spencer] is due to the expansion of the first two. There can, I think, be little reason to regret that Spencer abandoned his original intention of dealing with linguistic, intellectual, and aesthetic progress. Great as will be our gain when these subjects are systematically treated on the basis of evolution, Spencer himself was prepared neither by sympathy nor by training to do full justice to them; and though without question he would have said many things about them which would have been illuminating and suggestive, his discussion of them must necessarily, on the whole, have been unsatisfactory." (William Henry Hudson, An Introduction to the Philosophy of Herbert Spencer, revised edition, Watts & Co., London, 1906. P. 43n.)

"He [Spencer] was even indefatigable in the search for facts, had bureaus and detectives, yclept assistants, at work ransacking the world from China to Peru in search of facts. But obviously these facts had all to be in the interests of a theory, to which he was tied hand and foot, and from which he could not budge, however free from bias the great analyzer of the various species of bias might have fancied himself." (Israel Zangwill, "Herbert Spencer," The Reader Magazine, Vol. 4, pp. 27-29, 1904. P. 28)

"... the [Principles of] Sociology ... is the "larger section" of his [Spencer's] system, probably because it was written after advancing years had attacked his power of condensed statement; but this reason and many others make it far from "the more important" [as Hugh Elliot had argued]." (Henry Holt, Garrulities of an Octogenarian Editor, Houghton Mifflin, Boston, 1923. Pp. 311-312)
"This approach /"speculation into the effects of environment on physical and cultural types and of biological factors on technical and social change"7 owed an immense debt to Herbert Spencer, who not only insisted on the importance of reckoning with all the factors determining the qualities of a particular people or form of society, but also emphasised and illustrated the importance of comparative methods. He stressed the great value of data from primitive societies which were small in scale so that the totality of the way of life could more readily be grasped and analysed. It is, of course, necessary to distinguish between Spencer's programme and the details of his exposition, but the opening chapters of his Principles of Sociology can hardly be bettered today as a comprehensive statement of the general connection between physical, biological and cultural phenomena involved in the study of Man." (Daryll Forde, "The Integration of Anthropological Studies," Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute, Vol. 78, pp. 1-10, 1948. P. 2.)

"... Herbert Spencer, who wrote enormous volumes of fairy tales in the mistaken belief that he was applying scientific method to the interpretation and explanation of every department of human life." (Leonard Woolf, "Political Thought of the Webbs," in The Webbs and Their Work, edited by Margaret Cole, pp. 251-264, Frederick Muller Ltd, London, 1949. P. 255)

In Hofstader's Social Darwinism in America, his main preoccupation is with Spencer's political theories, and only very slightly does he go into Spencer's detailed analysis of social evolution. It appears that very few people have ever read Principles of Sociology.

"... the first thorough, systematic sociological work--Herbert Spencer's Principle of Sociology--was a general theory of all kinds of human societies, from the simplest to the most complex." (Florian Znaniecki, Social Relations and Social Roles, Chandler Publishing Company, San Francisco, 1965. P. 6)

"It was Spencer's Principles of Sociology which largely structured the thinking of the two generations of American social scientists before about 1920." (George W. Stocking, Jr., Race, Culture, and Evolution, The Free Press, New York, 1968. P. 117)

Of Spencer: "... his methodical transfer of file-slips to prodigious volumes of stupefying detail which can be read today only at the cost of narcolepsy." (Robert Nisbet, Review of J. D. Y. Peel, Herbert Spencer, the Evolution of a Sociologist, The New York Times Book Review, September 26, 1971, pp. 36, 38. P. 36)
"Hobhouse in England, Durkheim in France, von Wiese, Simmel and Oppenheimer in Germany, Albion Small, Sumner and Giddings in America, all outstanding sociologists, bear witness to the seminal influence exerted by Spencer's Principles of Sociology."


"... the third and longest [part of Vol. 3 of Principles of Sociology], on "Industrial Institutions," is new. It is this last that will excite most interest, for here Mr. Spencer diverges from sociology into politics in the philosophical sense, discussing what ought to be as distinguished from what is." (Anonymous, Review of Herbert Spencer's The Principles of Sociology, vol. 3, The Athenaeum, Vol. 108, pp. 865-866, December 19, 1896. P. 865)

"Came back to Cambridge to-day and read more Herbert Spencer ["Political Institutions"] in the train. I find History studied as inductive Sociology more and more interesting, and quite wonder that I have neglected it so long." (Entry in the Journal of Henry Sidgwick for January 9, 1886. Quoted in Henry Sidgwick, A Memoir, by A. S. [Arthur Sidgwick] and E. M. S. [Eleanor Mildred Sidgwick], Macmillan and Co., Limited, London, 1906. Pp. 436-437)

"... in the first division of the Principles of Sociology, evidence so great in quantity is set forth, that I have been blamed for over-burdening my argument with it ...." (Herbert Spencer, "Replies to Criticisms on The Data of Ethics" Mind, Vol. 6, pp. 82-98, 1881. P. 97)

"The Principles of Sociology was ultimately completed by the publication of divisions on Professional Institutions and Industrial Institutions; but in these the matter was less thoroughly organised than in preceding parts, and in places signs of haste and weariness were quite apparent." (William Henry Hudson, An Introduction to the Philosophy of Herbert Spencer, revised edition, Watts & Co., London, 1906. P. 42n.)

"The three volumes of his Spencer's Principles of Sociology, indeed, are of such interest and so entertaining that even the general reader would be well acquainted with them if their bulk were not a deterrent. Few men nowadays begin six hundred pages with a light heart--looking forward to twelve hundred more." (L. F. Austin, "Herbert Spencer," The Illustrated London News, Vol. 123, p. 898, December 12, 1903. P. 898)

In reading Spencer, Denslow felt "Oppressed by the vast and ceaseless descent of Mr. Spencer's Niagara of illustrations ...." (Van Buren Denslow, Modern Thinkers, Principally upon Social Science, Belford, Clarke, & Co., Chicago, 1880. P. 221)
"In sadness it must be admitted that Mr. Spencer’s last book bears the evidence of a sick man who has long outlived his powers of new observation and assimilation—a man who is more concerned about the completion of a great work than about the perfection of each layer of the structure. His last contribution is like putting a wooden spire on a marble edifice—it may serve to complete the form, but the material is too crude and poor long to endure." (The reviewer dealt solely with Spencer’s laissez faire philosophy in his review.) (Anonymous, “Spencer’s Last Book,” Gunton’s Magazine, Vol. 12, pp. 291-304, 1897. P. 304)

The anonymous writer of Spencer’s obituary said: "The three volumes of his "Sociology," indeed, are of such interest and so entertaining that even the general reader would be well acquainted with them if their bulk were not a deterrent. Few men nowadays begin six hundred pages with a light heart—looking forward to twelve hundred more." ("Herbert Spencer," anonymous obituary, The Illustrated London News, Vol. 123, No. 3373, p. 898, December 12, 1903. P. 898)

"... his 'Sociology' places him as the founder of a new and profound science before all his contemporaries." (Grant Allen, "Personal Reminiscences of Herbert Spencer," The Forum, Vol. 35, pp. 610-628, 1904. P. 628)


"If Herbert Spencer did not create sociology, he at least raised it into life and started it on its grand career. It required courage to do this and to embody it in a great scientific system on an equal footing with biology, psychology and ethics at a time when others passed it by and disdained to speak its name. This brave act will always be regarded as more than atoning for any shortcomings that the most critical will ever find in Herbert Spencer’s sociology. As one of those who have freely criticised that part of his vast scheme during his lifetime, the present writer feels it incumbent frankly to avow that nothing he could say in disparagement of certain aspects of Spencer’s treatment of the subject appreciably diminishes the debt of gratitude which he, in common with all lovers of truth, acknowledges to Herbert Spencer for the three monumental volumes in which he has unfolded that science." (Lester F. Ward, "Herbert Spencer’s Sociology," Glimpses of the Cosmos, Vol. 6, pp. 171-177. G. P. Putnam’s Sons, New York, 1918. P. 171)

"He was really writing about the conflict between a barbarian or agrarian society and an advanced agricultural society, with some extensions into the Europe of modern times." (L. L. Bernard, "Herbert Spencer’s Work in the Light of His Life," The Monist, Vol. 31, pp. 1-35, 1921. P. 7)
"Thus in the bulky first volume of Principles of Sociology of over 800 pages we get two parts largely made up of what other investigators call "Anthropology," with a certain amount of good sociology of savage life thrown in, and one part of abstract sociology presented largely in the light of biology and zoology. The entire progression is determined by predilection, by prepossessions in favour of static political doctrine, by the need to give a quasi-scientific basis to individualism, not by the total problem and phenomena of social evolution." (J. M. Robertson, Explorations, Watts & Co., London, n.d. (ca. 1923). P. 126)

"It all constitutes a great performance, but it is not the work of a sociologist in the sense in which the volumes on psychology and biology are the work of a psychologist and a biologist. The thinker is reducing human societies in general to an appointed place in his cosmic synthesis, and their phenomena are made to point the moral of his political prepossessions." (J. M. Robertson, Explorations, Watts & Co., London, n.d. (ca. 1923). P. 126)

"His 'Principles of Sociology,' in fact, constitute rather an Anthropology—in the English application of that term, which is typified by Tylor's Manual—than a Sociology in the proper sense. It is chiefly in his powerful handling of the origins of religion that his work is effectively sociological, as exhibiting causation. Viewed as an ordered pre/sentment of facts of primary social structure in connection with the fundamental data of social psychology, it is indeed a compilation of the greatest instructive value, representing as it does the unsurpassed schematic faculty of its author and a vast amount of sifted evidence collected under his direction by others." (J. M. Robertson, A History of Freethought in the Nineteenth Century, Watts & Co., London, 1929. Pp. 343-344)

182 Referring to Principles of Sociology Will Durant wrote: "When everything else of Spencer's has become a task for the antiquarian, these three volumes will still be rich in reward for every student of society." (The Story of Philosophy. New revised edition. Garden City Publishing Co., Inc. Garden City, N.Y., 1933. Pp. 409-410.)

"Spencer's evolutionary method goes to such an extreme that it leads him to neglect the facts of present society and to depend too much upon the use of anthropological and ethnological materials. Some sociologists and anthropologists would still classify Spencer's Principles of Sociology as a work in cultural anthropology." (Charles A. Ellwood, A History of Social Philosophy, Prentice-Hall, Inc., New York, 1938. P. 446)

"For more amateurish minds, the Principles of Sociology provided greater human interest [than Principles of Psychology]." (John Bowle, Politics and Opinion in the Nineteenth Century, Jonathan Cape, London, 1954. P. 235)
"Doubtless many were disappointed in this work /The Principles of Sociology/. It is certainly a very different book from what its title would lead any one unacquainted with Mr. Spencer's other works to expect... To go back of recorded history is deemed speculative and Utopian, and the thought seems scarcely to have struck any body that existing non-historic races may be regarded as living representatives of the prehistoric ancestors of existing civilized races. The study of society from the standpoint of evolution, admitting the evolution of society as well as of the rest of nature, is therefore a new departure, and the starting-point from primitive man in his pre-social state seems to many a strange way of looking at social questions." (Lester Frank Ward, Dynamic Sociology, 2 vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1883. Vol. 1, pp. 193-194)

"But Spencer found his main interest in the customs of savage peoples, and we may say that he almost completely neglected the history of civilised man, our human past growing for him the less significant, the further it retreated from the savage state." (A. M. Fairbairn, "Herbert Spencer," The Contemporary Review, Vol. 85, pp. 1-11, 1904. P. 10)

"... the Principles of Sociology, spread by the garrulity of declining years into three volumes ..." (Henry Holt, Garrullities of an Octogenarian Editor, Houghton Mifflin, Boston, 1923. P. 313)

That one man could have digested and organized all the vast body of data that Spencer and his assistants had collected is alone impressive.

There is hardly an aspect of social life that Spencer has not turned his attention to, e.g., the muscular expression of respect and submission.


"The inductions arrived at, thus constituting in rude outline an Empirical Sociology, suffice to show that in social phenomena there is a general order of co-existence and sequence; and that therefore social phenomena form the subject-matter of a science reducible, in some measure at least, to the deductive form." (Herbert Spencer, The Principles of Sociology, Vol. 1, 1st ed., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1878. P. 618)
"obviously for an invalid of seventy-six to deal adequately with topics so extensive and complex" as Linguistic, Intellectual, Moral and Aesthetic progress, "is impossible." Preface to the 4th edition of Epitome of the Synthetic Philosophy of Herbert Spencer, by F. Howard Collins, Williams and Norgate, London, 1897, pp. vii-xi. P. vi. It appears that Collins may be quoting from a letter from Spencer. Or could it be from the Preface to Volume 3 of The Principles of Sociology?

"From beginning to end of these three volumes /Principles of Sociology/ there is no pretence of anything like a continuous scheme of social evolution—nothing that can be called a philosophy of history; and yet a scientific theory of general history is the larger and far the most important part of Sociology. Spencer never had a glimmering of history. He leaps from the Dyaks of Borneo to the nose-slashing duels of German students." (Frederic Harrison, "Sociology: Its Definitions and Its Limits," The Sociological Review, Vol. 3, pp. 97-104, 1910. P. 103)

"Recognising how large an undertaking the Principles of Sociology would be, how vast the required assemblage of materials, and how impossible it would be for me to gather them, I decided as far back as 1867 to obtain help. I had to study the leading types of societies, from the savage to the most civilised; and I required something like a comprehensive account of the institutions of each. The only course was that of engaging one or more assistants who should, under guidance, collect facts for me." (Herbert Spencer, "The Filiation of Ideas," in David Duncan, Life and Letters of Herbert Spencer," Vol. 2, pp. 304-365, D. Appleton and Company, 1908. P. 351)

Spencer's analysis of the evolution of society in Principles of Sociology was so extensive, detailed, and precise, that it could maintain the interest and attention of only the social scientist, and how many of them were there at the time? His more general doctrines of political philosophy applied to issues and movements very much in the consciousness of educated laymen... But who was interested in following the rise of chiefdoms, or the _______ through 2,100 fact-studded, closely-reasoned pages? Consequently, while many of his other works became enormously popular, his Principles of Sociology remained largely unread. I do not know of a single social scientist who has given evidence in his writings of having read all of Principles of Sociology.

Spencer's Principles of Sociology is a work which is not concerned with stages of social evolution, but rather, with the process of social evolution—the sequence of steps involved and the determinants of these steps.
"Recognizing how large an undertaking the Principles of Sociology would be, how vast the required assemblage of materials, and how impossible it would be for me to gather them, I decided as far back as 1867 to obtain help. I had to study the leading types of societies, from the savage to the most civilized; and I required something like a comprehensive account of the institutions of each. The only course was that of engaging one or more assistants who should, under guidance, collect facts for me. My first step was to scheme an arrangement in which they should be so presented that while their relations of coexistence and succession were easily recognized, they should be so presented that those of each kind could be readily found when required. In the tables drawn up the primary division of social phenomena is into Structural and Functional, and the main divisions under these are Regulative and Operative. A glance will show that ranged under these main and subordinate groups, the heterogeneous masses of facts societies exhibit, disorderly as they at first seem, are made intelligible, and the comparing and generalizing of them easy." ("The Filiation of Ideas," in Duncan, pp. 566-567)

"The reason for the cessation [of installments of Principles of Sociology in the Fortnightly Review] was that the articles had not proved as attractive as I expected.... It seemed as if the mass of readers preferred to have their amusement unadulterated by thought." (Herbert Spencer, An Autobiography, 2 Vols., Watts & Co., London, 1926. Vol. 2, p. 312)

The first installment of the Principles of Sociology was issued in June, 1874.

The revised edition of Volume I of Principles of Sociology contained about 2,500 references to 455 works. (Auto. II, 299)

The reception accorded to the three volumes of Principles of Sociology was, on the whole, very slight. Taking a broad view of the critical uninterest in this work Spencer wrote: "Beliefs, like creatures, must have fit environments before they can live and grow: and the environment furnished by the ideas and sentiments now current, is an entirely unfit environment for the beliefs which the volume [Political Institutions] sets forth." (Auto. II, 374)

"How command of a wider kind follows military command, we cannot readily see in societies which have no records: we can infer that along with increased power of coercion which the successful head-warrior gains, naturally goes the exercise of a stronger rule in civil affairs." (Herbert Spencer, The Principles of Sociology, Vol. 2, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1898. P. 337)
"But now before trying to explain these most involved phenomena, we must learn by inspection the relations of co-existence and sequence in which they stand to one another. By comparing societies of different kinds, and societies in different stages, we must ascertain what traits of size, structure, function, etc., are associated." (Herbert Spencer, *The Principles of Sociology*, Vol. 1, 3rd ed., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1910. P. 442)

In J. D. Y. Peel's article on Spencer in the Dictionary of Scientific Biography (Vol. 12, pp. 569-572, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1975) there is no mention of *The Principles of Sociology* in the body of the article, although it is listed among Spencer's works.

"With the appearance of Mr. Herbert Spencer's concluding volume of "The Principles of Sociology" the end of a long journey is reached, and a noble monument, more enduring than bronze, will keep alive the memory of a great thinker to whom the world owes more than we can yet comprehend." (C. R. Henderson, "Mr. Herbert Spencer's Final Volume," *The Dial*, Vol. 22, pp. 45-47, Jan. 16, 1897. P. 45)
"No writer of his age, perhaps, was less given to proclaiming the services of other men, or acknowledging his own intellectual debts to any; or more determinedly careful to claim originality for himself. When he admits a debt to Von Baer, it is with no such stress as he puts into his claims for himself." (J. M. Robertson, Modern Humanists Reconsidered, Watts & Co., London, 1927. P. 180)


Herbert Spencer, "The Rev. Thomas Mozley and Mr. Herbert Spencer," The Athenæum, No. 2856, pp. 112-113, July 22, 1882. Spencer disavows Mozley's allegations that he derived the theory of universal evolution from his (Spencer's) father.


"The designation "molar" as representing the mechanical forces [In contradistinction to molecular ones], was given to me in private conversation by Thomas Graham [a chemist]; and I made use of it [In a lecture in 1867 and] on all occasions when these forces had to be classified. Its appropriateness was at once perceived by Herbert Spencer; and it was henceforth adopted in his own expository handling of the forces. Wishing to give me the credit of the suggestion, he asked me if I claimed the authorship,—which I could not." (Alexander Bain, Autobiography, Longman's, Green, and Co., London, 1904. P. 285)

"Still, many doubtless think that he [Spencer] could have well afforded to rest his reputation upon those vast original achievements which none can dispute, while frankly referring to their proper source [Comte] whatever great truths [the classification of the sciences] it was found necessary to recognize as having been already offered to the needy world by the noble thinkers who had preceded him." (Lester Frank Ward, Dynamic Sociology, 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1883. Vol. 1, p. 149)
This intellectual indebtedness to von Baer was the only major intellectual debt that Spencer ever felt. In 1864 in a letter to G. H. Lewes in which Spencer vigorously denied any intellectual debt to Auguste Comte (which Lewes had asserted), Spencer took the opportunity to reiterate his indebtedness to von Baer: "I do not admit that I am reluctant to recognize indebtedness to predecessors; it is a question of the predecessor. If anyone says that had von Baer never written I should not be doing that which I now am, I have nothing to say to the contrary--I should reply it is highly probable." (Autobiography, Vol. 2, p.486).

"... in 1857 the law of evolution, considered inductively as increasing heterogeneity, was enunciated as universal as well as the deductive interpretation of it as due to the instability of the homogeneous and the multiplication of effects; and ... the doctrine as it now stands was thus, in its universality and its chief outlines, set forth two years before the Origin of Species appeared." (Letter from Herbert Spencer to Edward L. Youmans, dated July 12, 1874. Quoted in John Fiske, Edward Livingston Youmans, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. p. 327)

Spencer is preeminently concerned with process: the series of stages by which something came to be, and the determinants of these steps. This applies to everything from private property in land to state ministries.
"Complexity of structure is generally accompanied with a greater tendency to permanence in form," says Dr. Hooker; or, conversely, "the least complex are also the most variable." (Herbert Spencer, The Principles of Biology, 2 Vols., Revised edition, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1898. Vol. 2, p. 295)

Tait, Kirkman, and William James professed to have trouble with Spencer's definition of evolution. But Upton Sinclair, despite being on the opposite side of the fence politically from Spencer, had no such trouble: "Herbert Spencer gives a definition of Evolution, phrased in technical terms, which might be roughly summed up in these words: A process whereby many similar and simple things become dissimilar parts of one complex thing." Sinclair then follows this with a neat example of the evolution of France from the feudal period to the monarchy. (Upton Sinclair, The Industrial Republic, Doubleday, Page & Company, New York, 1907. P. 27)

"From the earliest traceable cosmical changes down to the latest results of civilization, we shall find that the transformation of the homogeneous into the heterogeneous, is that in which Progress essentially consists." (Herbert Spencer, "Progress: Its Law and Cause," pp. 1-60, in Illustrations of Universal Progress, New York, 1865. P. 3) (Worded the same in the Westminster Review version?)

John A. Hobson's classic work, The Evolution of Modern Capitalism, was stated by its author to be:

"In a free application of Spencer's formula of evolution to modern industry I have not included the quality of 'definiteness,' which close reflection shows to possess no property which is not included under heterogeneity and cohesiveness." (John A. Hobson, The Evolution of Modern Capitalism, revised edition, George Allen & Unwin Ltd, London, 1926 [1942]. P. 166n.)

Spencer saw evolution as a contiguous adjustment of internal structures and functions to external conditions.

"Evolution is a change from an indefinite, incoherent, homogeneity to a definite, coherent, heterogeneity, through continuous differentiations and integrations." (Herbert Spencer, First Principles, 1st ed., 1862)

In social change "... each new factor, besides modifying in an immediate way the course of a movement, modifies it also in a remote way, by changing the amounts and directions of all other factors." (Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1873. Pp. 95-96)
"Evolution is a change from an indefinite, incoherent homogeneity, to a definite, coherent heterogeneity; through continuous differentiations and integrations." (Herbert Spencer, First Principles, 1st ed., Williams and Norgate, London, 1863. P. 216)


"Our British great railways began as comparatively small ones, and have grown to their present sizes by successive extensions and still more by successive amalgamations." (Herbert Spencer, An Autobiography, 2 Vols., Watts & Co., London, 1926. Vol. 1, p. 140)

"From the remotest past which Science can fathom, up to the novelties of yesterday, that in which Progress essentially consists, is the transformation of the homogeneous into the heterogeneous." (Herbert Spencer, "Progress: Its Law and Cause," in Illustrations of Universal Progress, New York, 1865. P. 30) (Worded the same in the Westminster Review version?)

"... that in which Evolution essentially consists, is the transformation of the homogeneous into the heterogeneous." (Herbert Spencer, First Principles, 1st ed., Williams and Norgate, London, 1863. P. 174)
(On the first 3 pages of the chapter on "The Law of Evolution" as it appears in the first edition of First Principles there is a discussion of the term "progress," containing Spencer's reasons for not using the term, but using "evolution" instead. This discussion was omitted from this chapter in later editions of First Principles. In fact, to judge by the index of the fourth edition, compiled by F. Howard Collins, there is no discussion of "progress" in subsequent editions of the work. So xerox this from the first edition at Columbia University Library.)


"The inference that as advancement has been hitherto the rule, it will be the rule henceforth, may be called a plausible speculation. But when it is shown that this advancement is due to the working of a universal law; and that in virtue of that law it must continue until the state we call perfection is reached, then the advent of such a state is removed out of the region of probability into that of certainty." (Herbert Spencer, Social Statics, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1883. P. 78)

"He seems to have identified evolution with progress, and 'fittest' with best, an error which Darwin and Huxley both emphatically condemned." (D. C Somervell, English Thought in the Nineteenth Century, 5th ed., Methuen, London, 1947. P. 137)

"Spencer ... referred to an undefined, unexplained, transcendental tendency toward progress." (George Gaylord Simpson, CA Comment to Derek Freeman, "The Evolutionary Theories of Charles Darwin and Herbert Spencer," Current Anthropology, Vol. 15, pp. 228-229, 1974. P. 229)
"Social progress is supposed to consist in the making of a greater quantity and variety of the articles required for satisfying men's wants; in the increasing security of person and property; in widening freedom of action; whereas, rightly understood, social progress consists in those changes of structure in the social organism which have entailed these consequences. The current conception is a teleological one. The phenomena are contemplated solely as bearing on human happiness. Only those changes are held to constitute progress which directly or indirectly tend to heighten human happiness; and they are thought to constitute progress simply because they tend to heighten human happiness. But rightly understood, we must learn the nature of these changes, considered apart from our interests." (Herbert Spencer, "Progress: Its Law and Cause," in Herbert Spencer, Essays: Scientific, Political, & Speculative, 3 Vols., Williams and Norgate, London, 1891. Pp. 8-62. P. 9)

"... the statistically inevitable progress through diversity postulated in Herbert Spencer's cosmic evolution." (p. 12) "... Herbert Spencer, who saw progression as an inevitable trend underlying the constant efforts of life to adapt to new conditions." (p. 55) "Herbert Spencer's evolutionary philosophy confirmed this point by treating progression as a statistically irreversible trend underlying the multiplicity of natural activities at both the biological and psychological levels." (p. 118) (Peter J. Bowler, Fossils and Progress, Science History Publications, New York, 1976)

"The bourgeois revolution not only established change as the characteristic element of the cosmos, but added direction and progress as well. A world in which a man could rise from humble origins must have seemed, to him at least, a good world. Change perse was a moral quality. In this light, Spencer's assertion that change is progress is not surprising." (Richard C. Lewontin, The Genetic Basis of Evolutionary Change, 1974)

"Both Spencer and Durkheim, like Comte, were imbued with a notion of progress or moral improvement, a conception which persisted well into the twentieth century ...." (Anthony Leeds, "Darwinian and "Darwinian" Evolutionism in the Study of Society and Culture," in The Comparative Reception of Darwinism, ed. by Thomas F. Glick, pp. 437-485, University of Texas Press, Austin, 1972. P. 453)

"The Spencerian philosophy, so far as I have been able to detect from a careful study of it, never recognizes what I have denominated anthropo-teleological progress in society. It treats sociology purely as a science, never touching upon its active or positive dynamical phase, and confining itself almost exclusively to its statical laws. Human progress Mr. Spencer contemplates from exactly the same stand-point as that from which he contemplated the progresss of biological differentiation." (Lester Frank Ward, Dynamic Sociology, 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1883. Vol. 1, pp. 150-151)
"Progress, therefore, is not an accident, but a necessity. Instead of civilization being artificial, it is a part of nature; all of a piece with the development of the embryo or the unfolding of a flower. The modifications mankind have undergone, and are still undergoing, result from a law underlying the whole organic creation; and provided the human race continues, and the constitution of things remains the same, those modifications must end in completeness."
(Herbert Spencer, Social Statics, John Chapman, London, 1851. P. 65)

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(Herbert Spencer, Social Statics, Preface dated 1872 D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1883. P. 80)

"Darwin had conceived of evolution in purely naturalistic terms; all his work implicitly denied the Aristotelian doctrine of evolution by ideal abstraction and was a triumph for naturalism as the basis of life and morals. But Herbert Spencer was seduced by the dramatic charm and glamour of evolution and converted good science into bad poetry. He identified evolution with progress, with betterment—a tribute to his humanitarian sympathies [sic], but completely unwarranted by sober science. He changed a biological truism: the survival of the fittest, into an unsound moral dogma that enabled many to rationalize their indifference to social injustice, their insensibility to human ideals, and their support of vested interests under the pretense of respect for historic necessity and the dictates of science." (Sidney Ratner, "Evolution and the Rise of the Scientific Spirit in America," Philosophy of Science, Vol. 3, pp. 104-122, 1936. P. 121)

"Spencer’s deterministic and laissez-faire doctrine that it [progress] takes place automatically and inevitably as a result of the competitive struggle for existence met opposition." (Fay quoted a passage to this effect on the previous page (p. 237) taken from Social Statics (1858, pp. 79-80), but typically does not quote from Spencer’s later Principles of Sociology in which he makes progress (evolution) depend on conditions rather than inherent tendencies.) (Sidney B. Fay, "The Idea of Progress," American Historical Review, Vol. 52, pp. 231-246, 1947. P. 238)

"... the uncertainties of heredity led him [Karl Marx], as it led Spencer, to assume that inevitability of progress which the nineteenth century found it so hard to avoid." (Pp. 403-404) "... the pleasing idea, propagated equally by Spencer and by Marx, that progress is inevitable." (P. 416) (C. D. Darlington, The Facts of Life, The Macmillan Company, New York, [1955])
"The anthropologists [Tylor, Morgan and Lubbock] were not outright and literal Darwinsians, and they were even less disciples of the evolutionary philosopher Herbert Spencer. Progress was not identical with evolution and could not, as Spencer insisted, be equated with it." (Idus L. Murphee, "The Evolutionary Anthropologists: The Progress of Mankind," Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society, Vol. 105, pp. 265-300, 1961. P. 266)

"I had long been convinced that the most direct avenue to the heart of Mr. Spencer's philosophy of life lay through his ideas upon the subject of militarism, and in a conversation with him in the summer of 1896 this opinion was confirmed. Almost the first thing that he said after greeting me was: "You have come on a day that is in some respects the most interesting of my life. This morning I wrote the last paragraph of the last chapter of the last volume of the 'Synthetic Philosophy.'" I asked him if his satisfaction was as profound as he had anticipated that it would be, if he should live to complete so vast an undertaking. He answered that it was sadly diminished by a regret and a disappointment. The regret, as he went on to say, was that he had misled many readers by his phrase, "The Unknowable" ... Keener, however, ... was his disappointment in the world's progress. It seemed to him that human society, having developed through all the stages of militarism and of industrialism, until it was on the point of becoming a complex of voluntary activities and relations subject to that law of equal freedom which was set forth in "Social Statics," was apparently about to be put back, perhaps for a thousand years, by war and "regimentation." (Franklin H. Giddings, "The Heart of Mr. Spencer's Ethics," International Journal of Ethics, Vol. 14, pp. 496-499, 1904. P. 497)

"I detest that conception of social progress which presents as its aim, increase of population, growth of wealth, spread of commerce. In the politico-economic ideal of human existence there is contemplated quantity only and not quality. Instead of an immense amount of life of low type I would far sooner see half the amount of life of a high type. A prosperity which is exhibited in Board-of-Trade tables year by year increasing their totals, is to a large extent not a prosperity but an adversity. Increase in the swarms of people whose existence is subordinated to material development is rather to be lamented than to be rejoiced over." (Herbert Spencer, Facts and Comments, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1902. P. 7)

"The current opinion [of progress] is a teleological one. The phenomena are contemplated solely as bearing on human happiness. Only those changes are held to constitute progress which directly or indirectly tend to heighten human happiness. And they are thought to constitute progress simply because they tend to heighten human happiness. But rightly to understand progress, we must inquire what is the nature of these changes, considered apart from our interests." [This was written before Spencer formally adopted the term 'evolution' to label those changes in society which he here wants to consider objectively.] (Herbert Spencer, "Progress: Its Law and Cause," in Illustrations of Universal Progress, pp. 1-60, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1883. P. 2)
"... human progress is measured by the degree in which simple acquisition is replaced by production; achieved first by manual power, then by animal-power, and finally by machine power." (Herbert Spencer, The Principles of Sociology, Vol. 3, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1897. P. 362)

"... the mechanistic view of Spencer's theory of evolution, which attempted to guarantee human progress ...." (Philip P. Wiener, Evolution and the Founders of Pragmatism, University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, 1972. P. 94)

"What Spencer has done is to equate progress with change, to say that change, whatever its direction may turn out to be, is progressive by its very nature. We come again to that nineteenth-century belief that change is good, in Spencer's words, "a beneficent necessity." (R. C. Lewontin, "Evolution: The Concept of Evolution," International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences, Vol. 5, pp. 202-210, The Macmillan Company & The Free Press, [New York], 1968. P. 206)

"Spencer was particularly concerned with man, and his belief in progress was unequivocal: the basic motive for his life's work was to place this belief on a secure foundation." (Robert M. Young, Darwin's Metaphor, Nature's Place in Victorian Culture, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1985. P. 18)

"... the sanguine belief in inexorable evolutionary progress which was characteristic of Spencer ...." (Robert M. Young, Darwin's Metaphor, Nature's Place in Victorian Culture, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1985. P. 51)
"One of the earliest postulates of anthropological science was that the ends achieved by all human cultures are basically similar. This universality in the general outlines of cultures supported the theory of the "psychic unity of mankind," which held that the resemblances between the institutions of different cultures are to be accounted for by the similar capacities of all men. This theory was at the basis of Herbert Spencer's elaborate scheme for the study of comparative sociology, as without an assumption of cultural equivalence, whether expressed or implicit, no such attempt at drawing comparisons could have been undertaken." (Melville J. Herskovits, Man and His Works, Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1948, P. 233)

"When the philosopher Herbert Spencer popularized the term evolution to denote the natural development of life on earth, he certainly intended to convey the impression of a necessary progress toward higher states." (Peter J. Bowler, Evolution; The History of an Idea. 3rd edition. University of California Press. Berkeley and Los Angeles, 2003. P. 8)

"But whatever else may be, we can categorically state that organic evolution is not progressive, either in a conventional sense of getting better or some such thing, or in a special Spencerian sense (if this be genuinely different). The falsity of the conventional sense has been seen in the last chapter, and talk of 'homogeneity' and 'heterogeneity' helps matters not a bit. In the well-known evolution of the horse, we get a reduction in the number of toes from four to one." (Michael Ruse, Taking Darwin Seriously, Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 1986, P. 40)
Spencer "... shows how Physiology and Psychology are different expressions of the same fundamental principle of life." (George Henry Lewes, "Herbert Spencer's Psychology," The Leader, Vol. 6, No. 291, pp. 1012-1013, October 20, 1855. P. 1013)

"He [Spencer] makes Psychology one of the great divisions of Biology. Bodily life and mental life are two divisions of life in general, being related to each other as species of which Life is the genus ..." (George Henry Lewes, "Life and Mind." The Leader, Vol. 6, No. 293, pp. 1062-1063, November 3, 1855. P. 1062)

"What Schwann did for Physiology, Herbert Spencer has done for Psychology. As Schwann set aside the old method of investigating the various tissue like independent objects, and proved the Unity of Composition which really underlies all the variety of forms, so Herbert Spencer sets aside the old method of dividing the mind into so many faculties, and proves the Unity of Composition, which makes Perception, Reasoning, Instinct, Memory, Will, and Feeling so many aspects of one identical process, differing in degree but not in essence. We may pause by the way to notice the stages of the history of this doctrine of Unity, which succeed each other according to the law of development, i.e., from general to particular. First comes Geoffroy St. Hilaire, who proclaims the Unity of Composition in the animal forms; then Schwann, who proves that Unity in the animal tissues, and finally Herbert Spencer, who proves that Unity in animal intelligence." (George Henry Lewes, "Herbert Spencer's Psychology," The Leader, Vol. 6, No. 291, pp. 1012-1013, October 20, 1855. P. 1013)


"If the doctrine of Evolution is true, the inevitable implication is that Mind can be understood only by observing how Mind is evolved. If creatures of the most elevated kinds have reached those highly integrated, very definite, and extremely heterogeneous organizations they possess, through modifications upon modifications accumulated during an immeasurable past—if the developed nervous systems of such creatures have gained their complex structures and functions little by little; then, necessarily, the involved forms of consciousness which are the correlatives of these complex structures and functions must have arisen by degrees. And it is impossible truly to comprehend the organization of the body in general, or of the nervous system in particular, without tracing its successive stages of complication; so it must be impossible to comprehend mental organization without similarly tracing its stages." (Herbert Spencer, The Principles of Psychology, 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company. New York, 1896. Vol. 1, pp. 291-292)
"Toward the end of the first edition of The Origin of Species, published in 1859, Mr. Darwin looked forward to a distant future when the conception of gradual development might be applied to the phenomena of intelligence. But the first edition of the Principles of Psychology, in which this was so successfully done, had already been published four years before—in 1855—so that Mr. Darwin in later editions was obliged to modify his statement and confess that, instead of looking so far forward, he had better have looked about him. I remember hearing Mr. Darwin laugh merely over this at his own expense." (John Fiske, "The Doctrine of Evolution: Its Scope and Influence," The Popular Science Monthly, Vol. 39, pp. 577-599, 1891. P. 593)

"In the future I see open fields for far more important researches. Psychology will be securely based on the foundation already well laid by Mr Herbert Spencer, that of the necessary acquirement of each mental power and capacity by gradation." (Charles Darwin, The Origin of Species, 6th ed., John Murray(?), London, 1872. P. 428. Check this reference. Cf. Fiske on Darwin's original unawareness of Spencer's evolutionary approach to psychology as early as 1855.)

"But there is one respect in which the doctrines of Mr. John Stuart Mill and Mr. Alexander Bain differ very importantly from the one which we have next to consider—that of Mr. Herbert Spencer. He also believes that the whole of our knowledge comes from experience; but while in the former view this experience is our own, and has been acquired during the lifetime of the individual, in the latter it is not the experience of you or me, but of all our ancestors. The perceptions, not only of former generations of men, but of those lower organisms from which they were originally derived, beginning even with the first molecule that was complex enough to preserve records of its own changes; all these have been built into the organism, have determined its character, and have been handed down to us by hereditary descent." (William Kingdon Clifford, Lectures and Essays, edited by Leslie Stephen and Frederick Pollock, 2 Vols., Macmillan and Co., London, 1879. Vol. 1, pp. 278-279) (See Spencer, Principles of Psychology, Vol. 1, Sec. 208)

Thompson called Spencer: "... the greatest psychologist of modern times—indeed, I believe I am justified in saying, the greatest in the world's history.... I think his peculiar merit lies in the fact that he has applied the law of evolution with its consequent methods to mental phenomena, and read the history of the development of those phenomena in the light of that law." (Letter from Daniel Greenleaf Thompson to W. J. Youmans dated November 6, 1882. Quoted in Edward L. Youmans, editor, Herbert Spencer on the Americans and the Americans on Herbert Spencer, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1883. P. 90)
George John Romanes, in his Mental Evolution in Animals (D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1884), criticizes, here and there, several of Spencer's theories regarding different problems in psychology (consciousness, instinct, etc.). These criticisms are specific, acute, and measured, based solely on evidence and argument, and not at all on a general philosophical antagonism to Spencer's views. Occasionally Romanes expresses agreement with Spencer's theories.

Butler argued that instinct was inherited memory. He was anxious to show that Spencer had not anticipated him in this conclusion. "... I saw that personality could not be broken as between generations, without breaking it between years, days, and moments of a man's life. What differentiates Butler's own "Life and Habit" from Spencer's "Principles of Psychology" is the prominence given to continued personal identity, and hence to bona fide memory, as between successive generations; but surely this makes the two books differ widely." (Samuel Butler, Luck, or Cunning, As the Main means of Organic Modification?, Trübner & Co., London, 1887. Pp. 26-27)

"In admitting, however, that there is something in our mind which is not the result of our own a posteriori experience, Mr. Herbert Spencer is a thorough Kantian, and we shall see that, without being aware of it, he is in other respects too far more of a Kantian than a Comtian." (Friedrich Max Müller, The Science of Thought, 2 Vols., Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1887. Vol. 1, p. 144)

"The discussion of the nature and origin of the different groups of movements, etc., making up the characteristic expression of the several emotions constitutes one of the most interesting chapters in modern psychology.... Mr. Spencer has the honour of having first suggested that instinctive expressions have been evolved out of serviceable actions during the course of human and pre-human life." (James Sully, The Human Mind, 2 Vols., Longmans, Green & Co., London, 1892. Vol. 2, p. 69)

"But all the while Herbart and Wundt and James--may the last-mentioned forgive me, but he more than others has ridden roughshod over the pages of Spencer--have been getting credit which they deserve for the coming of a naturalistic era in psychology. In this matter of naturalism, our ship has had to change her course one hundred and eighty degrees; Spencer set the compass true in the new direction, and through all the buffetings, and breastings, and poundings, and creakings we are only just now getting her head to bear after him his compass." (James Mark Baldwin, "Mr. Spencer's Psychology," The American Naturalist, Vol. 31, pp. 553-557, 1897. P. 554)
"As to Mr. Spencer's positive contributions to psychology .... They are mainly incidental to the ideas in the service of which his speculations were made. His theories have nearly all been disproved; I mean his particular theories. But his contributions by the way are of very great importance. And even the disproved theories, they have been leading-strings for thought and motives for research to countless workers." (James Mark Baldwin, "Mr. Spencer's Psychology," The American Naturalist, Vol. 31, pp. 553-557, 1897. P. 555)

"Two fundamental ideas rule the psychology of Mr. Herbert Spencer: that of the continuity of psychological phenomena; that of the intimate relation between the being and its medium. These two points a virtually contain his doctrine." (Th. Ribot, English Psychology, Translated from the French, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1897. Original French edition ca. 18717 P. 158)

"Herbert Spencer was the first to develop the theory of a progressive evolution of consciousness parallel to that of living organisms." (p. 38) "The merit of having pointed out the progressive evolution of consciousness in the species belongs to Spencer. Spencer's work, in conjunction with that of Fechner and Bain on individual Psychology, marks the beginning of a new conception of consciousness." (p. 267) (Guido Villa, Contemporary Psychology, translated by Harold Manacorda, Swan Sonnenschein & Co Ltd, London, 1903)

"Spencer's work possesses immense importance in the history of Psychology, and testifies to the greatly beneficial influence exercised during the last century on Psychology ... by biological studies. Just as Biology was beginning to consider all organic beings, including man, as connected with one another by a continuous chain of evolution, so Psychology ceased to consider man as an isolated being in order to explain the origin of conscious phenomena by means of the evolution of the species." (Guido Villa, Contemporary Psychology, translated by Harold Manacorda, Swan Sonnenschein & Co Ltd, London, 1903. P. 39)

"Spencer refuses to subscribe to the automaton theory (that is, psycho-physical parallelism, with consciousness only an epiphenomenon of brain function). Consciousness with him is not only a concomitant of certain nervous movements, but also a factor. But this is to introduce an element of confusion. We have in consciousness a factor which eludes all philosophic treatment, and defies scientific analysis. If, as Spencer holds, matter and motion quantitatively considered are the ultimate elements of the universe, what is to be said of consciousness, which operates as a factor in some obscure way, which cannot be reached by quantitative measurements? A system of philosophy which cannot account for, or reduce to definite law, a factor so influential as consciousness, can scarcely claim to be final. Spencer's opponents have not been slow to point to the serious hiatus between 'First Principles' and 'Principles of Psychology.'" (Anonymous, "The Philosophy of Herbert Spencer," The Edinburgh Review, Vol. 199, pp. 352-373, 1904. P. 366)
"In other words, it Spencer's theory of mind and knowledge assumed a ready-made external world, constituted, in the absence of any unifying consciousness, as an organised system of relations printing themselves off on a mind made equally ready to receive them. That was a view which no Kantian could possibly accept." (Alfred William Benn, The History of English Rationalism in the Nineteenth Century, 2 Vols., Longmans, Green, and Co., London, 1906. Vol. 2, p. 173)

"So the question of whether certain ideas were known a priori or not, which pitted Kant against Mill stood when Herbert Spencer intervened in its discussion. He could not entirely agree with either party to the dispute. Each, he said, saw one side of the truth, but only one. All knowledge comes from experience, and has no other conceivable source. So far Mill and the empiricists are right. But experience is of two kinds. There is the experience of the individual to which he owes much; but there is also the experience of the race to which he owes more--owes, indeed, the possibility of learning anything for himself. Organised in the brain by a process of gradual deposition and accretion, this experience constitutes an inheritance transmitted through successive generations and receiving fresh contributions from each in turn. It is thus, and by no transcendental process, that what we rightly call innate principles and truths are acquired, their persistence and stability being a guarantee for their objective validity. Inseparable associations have their origin and justification in the constant conjunction of phenomena given to the senses from without. They resemble the tracings left by the self-registering instruments of a scientific observatory; or, better still, the stellar configurations stamped on a sensitive plate by repeated impacts of light conveyed through the lenses of an equatorially mounted telescope." (Alfred William Benn, The History of English Rationalism in the Nineteenth Century, 2 Vols., Longmans, Green, and Co., London, 1906. Vol. 2, pp. 172-173)

"As Spencer has shown, intelligence is a part of the general process of adjustment which makes up the behavior of an animal." (S. J. Holmes, The Evolution of Animal Intelligence, Henry Holt and Company, New York, 1911. P. 139. Holmes was Assoc. Prof. of Zoology at the University of California)

"The relation between the pleasant and the beneficial is, however, probably not a primary one, and it is not improbable that it represents a connection established by natural selection, as was first maintained by Herbert Spencer." (S. J. Holmes, The Evolution of Animal Intelligence, Henry Holt and Company, New York, 1911. P. 169. Holmes was Assoc. Prof. of Zoology at the University of California)
"Spencer with his characteristic insight into fundamental problems has grappled with it [the problem of learning] and has attempted to give a physiological explanation." (S. J. Holmes, The Evolution of Animal Intelligence, Henry Holt and Company, New York, 1911. P. 172. Holmes was Assoc. Prof. of Zoology at the University of California)

"It is one of the many valuable contributions of the great pioneer in genetic psychology, Herbert Spencer, to have shown the fundamental unity of biological and psychological processes in all their varied manifestations. Instinct, memory, volition and reason are all parts of that general process of adjustment of the organism to its environment, in which life in all its stages essentially consists. As we pass from lower to higher forms we have an increase in the complexity and perfection of the adjustments; the correspondence increases in space and in time, in definiteness and in generality, but everywhere it is "the adjustment of internal relations to external relations." This conception of mental life marks an important advance upon the psychology current in Spencer's early years; it set aside the arbitrary distinctions of the so-called "faculties" and prepared the way for a clearer insight into the gradual unfolding of mind which the labors of genetic psychologists are slowly giving us." (S. J. Holmes, The Evolution of Animal Intelligence, Henry Holt and Company, New York, 1911. P. 9. Holmes was Assoc. Prof. of Zoology at the University of California)

"The native, a priori, forms of the mind are looked upon by Spencer in his Principles of Psychology as solidified social experience—acquired, stiffened, transmitted by heredity. To the individual they are native; but by the race they have been acquired. Innate ideas are the petrified deposits of race experience. Here is a reconciliation in principle of the empiricist and the rationalist: the principle is that of racial experience; it is substituted for individual experience." (James Mark Baldwin, History of Psychology, 2 Vols., G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1913. Vol. 2, p. 99)

"Herbert Spencer was the first to make a thoroughgoing attempt to describe the evolution of mind. His attempt is an important part of his philosophy of evolution. He described at some length the successive stages by which the nervous system may properly be supposed to have become increasingly complex and increasingly integrated. And he described how at some unspecified stage of this process, a stage at which the interplay of nervous currents in the brain had become very complex, consciousness came into existence .... And he described how, from that stage onwards, consciousness became increasingly complex as the complexity and integration of the brain increased." (William McDougall, "Mental Evolution." In Evolution in the Light of Modern Knowledge, A Collective Work, pp. 321-354. Blackie and Son Limited. London, 1925. Pp. 336-337.)
"... they found in Spencer a thinker outgoing in depth of analysis and breadth of synthesis all previous writers on psychology." (J. M. Robertson, *A History of Freethought in the Nineteenth Century*, Watts & Co., London, 1929. P. 212)

"And, immense as is the latter-day literature devoted to it, it may be said to owe its effective establishment to Spencer, if to any one." (J. M. Robertson, *A History of Freethought in the Nineteenth Century*, Watts & Co., London, 1929. P. 371)

"This first psychology of Spencer's never exercised great influence; it was simply another associational psychology, although by a very great man. Spencer's real influence upon psychology dates from the two volumes of the second edition published in 1870 and 1872. Here we find what has been called evolutionary associationism." (Edwin G. Boring, *A History of Experimental Psychology*, D. Appleton-Century Company. New York, 1929. P. 231)

"... he noted both vividness and repetition as conditions of association, and even went further in anticipating one of Ebbinghaus's laws when he observed that successive repetitions exhibit a diminishing effect." (Edwin G. Boring, *A History of Experimental Psychology*, D. Appleton-Century Company. New York, 1929. P. 232)

"The really important novelty in Spencer's psychology is, however, his evolutionary doctrine, which amounts to his making the associative law of frequency operate phylogenetically. Association, when often repeated, entails an hereditary tendency which in successive generations becomes cumulative: such was Spencer's view of the inheritance of acquired associations and the formation of instincts. Racially, the doctrine runs, instincts are formed in this way out of reflex actions, which are at the bottom of psychic life. Votions are formed in another way. Cognition and memory evolve from instinct. There is an evolutionary hierarchy, with simpler states giving rise to more complex." (Edwin G. Boring, *A History of Experimental Psychology*, D. Appleton-Century Company. New York, 1929. P. 233)

"Herbert Spencer is sometimes regarded as sharing with Bain in the last defence of associationism; it is more nearly true to say that he was the first of the evolutionists." (Gardner Murphy, *An Historical Introduction to Modern Psychology*, 2nd ed., Harcourt, Brace & Company, Inc., New York, 1930. P. 113)
"Spencer was the first to elaborate the conception that the mind is what it is because it has had to cope with particular kinds of environment. He laid great emphasis on the adaptive nature of nervous and mental processes, and on the notion that increasing complexity of experiences and of behaviour is a part of the process of adaptation." (Gardner Murphy, An Historical Introduction to Modern Psychology, 2nd ed., Harcourt, Brace & Company, Inc., New York, 1930. Pp. 114-115)

"Whereas Spencer's psychology never attained the popularity enjoyed by Bain's, his evolutionary teaching contributed indirectly to the widespread adoption by psychologists of biological conceptions, especially those relating to the principle of the adaptation of an organism to its environment." (Gardner Murphy, An Historical Introduction to Modern Psychology, 2nd ed., Harcourt, Brace & Company, Inc., New York, 1930. P. 115)

"But the most remarkable feature in this astonishing effort of genius was the way in which it suggested a mode of reconciliation between the sensationist and the intuitionist schools of mental philosophy. Sensationists, such as Locke, had maintained that the mind is originally a tabula rasa, and that all knowledge is derived from experience. On the other hand, intuitionists, like Descartes, had asserted the existence of innate ideas; or, like Kant, had contended that at least the forms of thought are innate. Spencer's reconciliation of their apparent incompatibles was effected by the brilliant and penetrating suggestion that ideas that transcend experience of the individual are yet derived from the experience of the race and are transmitted by inheritance." (F. J. C. Hearnshaw, "Herbert Spencer and the Individualists," in The Social and Political Ideas of Some Representative Thinkers of the Victorian Age, ed. by F. J. C. Hearnshaw, pp. 53-83, George G. Harrap & Co. Ltd., London, 1933. P. 64)


"Long before Thomas Hobbes constructed a psychological system using the pleasure-pain principle, certain philosophers were hedonists. An innovation came with Herbert Spencer, who "naturalized" hedonism by considering pain and pleasure as evolutionary adaptation for their control of learning and apart from any consciously sought end. Instead of justifying pleasure in terms of social ethics—Bentham's "greatest pleasure for the greatest number," for example—the evolutionist's system is a naturalistic ethics: there will be a correlation between those actions which give pleasure and those which promote survival. Rather than motives for action, pleasure and pain become agents of reinforcement." (Geraldine Jongich, The Sane Positivist: A Biography of Edward L. Thorndike, Wesleyan University Press, Middletown, Conn., 1968. Pp. 141-142)
"By 1898 Thorndike is actually closer to Spencer's views that ethics are based on considerations of survival than he had been in 1895, when he wrote a paper at Wesleyan entitled "A Review and Criticism of Spencer's Data of Ethics." Therein he criticized Spencer's presumption that "Deeds are not right or wrong but useful or harmful, according as they do or do not further happiness thru' furthering complete living, the chronological end of evolution." Spencer's description of the random behavior of an animal who by chance makes moves which result in pleasure clearly contributes to Thorndike's formulation in Animal Intelligence, although the source is left unacknowledged. Thorndike's failure to acknowledge Spencer may reflect his age's extreme and irrational tendency to reduce Spencer's once admittedly over-inflated reputation. Cf. Robert I. Watson /The Great Psychologists, From Aristotle to Freud/, p. 296. Bolles /Robert C. Bolles, Theory of Motivation, Harper & Row, New York, 1967, or possibly a longer unpublished manuscript, "Hedonism and the Law of Effect" (see footnote 3) "excuses" Thorndike, partly on the grounds that "he never gave credit to anybody." (Geraldine Jongich, The Sane Positivist: A Biography of Edward L. Thorndike, Wesleyan University Press, Middletown, Conn., 1968. P. 142, 142n.)

A list of 538 deceased individuals who had contributed to psychology between 1600 and 1967 was shown to a jury of 9 psychologists. They were asked to make 1, 2, or 3 checks in front of the name, the more checks indicating greater prominence in the field of psychology. Of the 53 out of the 538 persons who received the maximum possible number of checks, 27, Herbert Spencer was one. (Edith L. Annin, Edwin G. Boring, and Robert I. Watson, "Important Psychologists, 1600-1967," Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences, Vol. 4, pp. 303-315, 1968. P. 307)

"Darwin was anticipated by Herbert Spencer (1820-1903), both in his accepting evolution as a principle accounting for the diversity of living forms, and in his applying that principle to psychology... in his Principles of Psychology (1855) he argued that, 'mind can be understood by showing how mind is evolved', though it was the revised edition of this book (1870-2), where the evolutionary emphasis was far more basic, which proved most influential... Many of his original ideas have been absorbed and transformed in the general thinking of psychologists. However, he was a great intellectual power in his day... and he deserves to be remembered as an early influence reinforcing and supporting the impact of Darwin's genius on the new developmental approach to psychology." (Robert Thomson, The Pelican History of Psychology, Penguin Books Ltd, Harmondsworth, England, 1968. P. 103)
"According to the pregnant suggestion of Schiller, enlarged by Herbert Spencer, the aesthetic function is analogous to play in being the overflow of a redundant activity or energy not needed for the necessary or life-ministering functions. An individual and a community, so far as they cultivate beauty and art, are dispensing energies of sense-organ and brain not/used up in the preserving and securing of life. Hence the familiar fact that art is the resource of leisure hours, that it only flourishes at periods where a community is strong, secure, and materially prosperous, and so forth." (James Sully, *The Human Mind*, 2 Vols., Longmans, Green & Co., London, 1892. Vol. 2, pp. 134-135)

"Were we compelled to choose between the alternatives of translating mental phenomena into physical phenomena, or of translating physical phenomena into mental phenomena, the latter alternative would seem to be the more acceptable of the two." (Herbert Spencer, *Principles of Psychology*, Vol. 1, p. 159)

"Herbert Spencer, talking yesterday evening about people who were always occupied in forming schemes for the distant future, to the neglect of more obvious and immediate interests, said very happily that they were affected with mental presbyopia." (Sir Mountstuart E. Grant Duff, *Notes from a Diary 1873-1881*, 2 Vols., John Murray, London, 1898. Vol. 2, p. 123)

"You will be startled in America, as people are being startled here, by the marvelously sudden change of opinion that is taking place in our political world. The phenomenon reminds one of that which takes place with ice when much below the freezing point. You go on raising its temperature for a long time without any appreciable effect, and then all at once it begins to thaw rapidly. Doubtless in the same way a change has been going on here without producing any sign; and now it is making itself visible all at once." (Letter from Herbert Spencer to Edward L. Youmans dated February 25, 1867. Quoted in John Fiske, *Edward Livingston Youmans*, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. P. 229)
... the likenesses which the members of one human stock preserve, generation after generation, where the conditions of life remain constant, give place to unlikenesses that slowly increase in the course of centuries and thousands of years, if the members of that stock, spreading into different habitats, fall under different sets of conditions." (Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1891. P. 338)

"... we have still, among the races classed by the community of their language as Aryan, abundant proofs that subjection to different modes of life, produces in course of ages permanent bodily and mental differences: the Hindu and the Englishman, the Greek and the Dutchman, have acquired undeniable contrasts of nature, physical and psychical, which can be ascribed to nothing but the continuous effects of circumstances, material, moral, social, on the activities and therefore on the constitution." (Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1891. P. 338)

"... the sympathies that have become organic in the most developed men, produce spontaneous conformity to altruistic precepts." (Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1891. P. 308)

"Thousands of years of discipline, by which the impulsive improvident nature of the savage has been evolved into a comparatively self-controlling nature, capable of sacrificing present ease to future good ..." (Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1891. P. 180-181)

"Nothing like a high type of social life is possible without a type of human character in which the promptings of egoism are duly restrained by regard for others." (Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1891. P. 198)

"... it is manifest that in so far as human beings, considered as social units, have properties in common, the social aggregates they form will have properties in common; that likenesses of nature holding throughout certain of the human races, will originate likenesses of nature in the nations arising out of them; and that such peculiar traits as are possessed by the highest varieties of men, must result in distinctive characters possessed in common by the communities into which they organize themselves.... We need but to glance, on the one hand, at the varieties of uncivilized men and the structures of their tribes, and, on the other hand, at the varieties of civilized men and the structures of their nations, to see inference verified by fact." (Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1891. P. 59)
Among societies of all orders and sizes, from the smallest and rudest up to the largest and most civilized, it has to be ascertained what traits there are in common, determined by the common traits of human beings; what less-general traits, distinguishing certain groups of societies, result from traits distinguishing certain races of men; and what peculiarities in each society are traceable to the peculiarities of its members. In every case it [social science] has for its subject matter the growth, development, structure, and functions of the social aggregate ...." (Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1891. P. 53)

Ignoring for the moment the special traits of races and individuals ...." (Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1891. P. 51)


It is incorrect and unfair to label Spencer a "racist" (as Marvin Harris does) if by that term one means someone who would treat the "lower" races differently because they were thought to be less highly endowed. Spencer upheld the cause of native peoples throughout the world—Boers(?), Jamaicans, Bushmen, etc. He was a liberal (as we would use the word today) with regard to the treatment of native peoples and oppressed minorities.

"We know that there are warlike, peaceful, nomadic, maritime, hunting, commercial races—races that are independent or slavish, active or slothful,—races that display great varieties of disposition; we know that many of these, if not all, have a common origin; and hence there can be no question that these varieties of disposition, which have a more or less evident relation to habits of life, have been gradually induced and established in successive generations, and have become organic." (Herbert Spencer, The Principles of Psychology, London, 1855. Pp. 526-527. Quoted in John C. Greene, "Biology and Social Theory in the Nineteenth Century: Auguste Comte and Herbert Spencer," in Critical Problems in the History of Science, ed. by Marshall Clagett, pp. 419-446, The University of Wisconsin Press, Madison, 1962. P. 435)

"If there is any one theme capable of eliciting an enthusiastic consensus among contemporary American anthropologists, it is that the racist premises of Spencerism blocked the further development of the social sciences." (Marvin Harris, The Rise of Anthropological Theory, Thomas Y. Crowell Company, New York, 1968. P. 292)
RACIAL DIFFERENCES

But when Spencer states that cultural differences are due to "race," he does not use "race" in the modern sense of a major biological grouping of mankind. Rather, he employs the older definition of the term according to which a "race" can be any of numerous small groups, between which obvious physical differences need not exist. This usage is evident from statements such as "Surviving remnants of some primitive races in India [Santals, Sowrahs, and Todas] have natures in which truthfulness seems to be organic." 169

168 For example, see The Principles of Sociology, Vol. 2, pp. 601-602.


"Some facts seem to show that mixture of human races extremely unlike, produces a worthless type of mind—a mind fitted neither for the kind of life led by the higher of the two races, nor for that led by the lower—a mind out of adjustment to all conditions of life." (Herbert Spencer, "The Comparative Psychology of Man," Vol. 1, pp. 351-370, Williams and Norgate, London, 1891. P. 359)

"Clearly a very explosive nature—such as that of the Bushman—if unfit for social union ...." (Herbert Spencer, "The Comparative Psychology of Man," Vol. 1, pp. 351-370, Williams and Norgate, London, 1891. P. 359)

"Of course inequalities of nature and consequent inequalities of relative position are factors in social changes. Of course ... any assertion of the approximate equality of human beings, save in the sense that they are beings having sets of faculties common to them all, is absurd; and it is equally absurd to suppose that the unlikenesses which exist are without effect on social life." (p. 355) ("What Is Social Evolution?" The Nineteenth Century, Vol. 44, pp. 348-358, 1898)

"... instance the Negroes, some of whom are so innately musical, that, as I have been told by a missionary among them, the children in native schools when taught European psalm-tunes, spontaneously sing seconds to them." (Herbert Spencer, "The Comparative Psychology of Man," Vol. 1, pp. 351-370, Williams and Norgate, London, 1891. P. 366)
"The paradoxical ideas of Carlyle on slavery, impressive by reason of his absolute veracity and remoteness from the partizan arena, were quoted by men not free from partizanship. One Sunday evening I was taken by Tom Hughes to a room where the elder Macmillan received his friends. Conversation began on the American situation, and some participant spoke to me sharply. Thereupon Hughes broke out on my assailant with a severity from which the company could not recover. Herbert Spencer said to me in a low voice, "A good many intelligent people do not hold the same views of the negro and his position as those of the abolitionists." I was invited to join the newly formed Anthropological Society, and did so, but found that it was led by a few ingenious gentlemen whose chief interest was to foster contempt for of the negro. One of these, Dr. James Hunt, published a pamphlet entitled "The Negro's Place in Nature." Huxley pointed out to me privately the fallacies of Hunt, and I made speeches in the Anthropological Society, but it became plain to me that antislavery sentiment in England was by no means so deep as I had supposed." (Moncure Daniel Conway, Autobiography, Memories and Experiences, 2 Vols., Houghton, Mifflin and Company, Boston, 1904. Vol. 2, p. 1)

"... members of the inferior human races may be expected to complete their mental evolution sooner [ontogenetically] than members of the superior races; and we have evidence that they do this." (Herbert Spencer, "The Comparative Psychology of Man," in Essays: Scientific, Political, & Speculative, Vol. 1, pp. 351-370, Williams and Norgate, London, 1891. P. 355)


"The intellectual and emotional natures required for high civilization, are not to be obtained by thrusting on the completely-uncivilized, the needful activities and restraints in unqualified forms: gradual decay and death, rather than adaptation, would result." (Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1891. Pp. 349-350)

"Many conception which have become so familiar to us that we assume them to be the common property of all minds, are no more possessed by the lowest savages than they are by our own children ...." (Herbert Spencer, "The Comparative Psychology of Man," Vol. 1, pp. 351-370, Williams and Norgate, London, 1891. P. 365)

"... all biological science ... convinces you that by no possibility will an Aristotle come from a father and mother with facial angles of fifty degrees ...." (Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1891. P. 34)
"Want of rational curiosity respecting incomprehensible novelties, is a trait remarked of the lowest races wherever found; and the partially-civilized races are distinguished from them as exhibiting rational curiosity." (Herbert Spencer, "The Comparative Psychology of Man," Vol. 1, pp. 351-370, Williams and Norgate, London, 1891. P. 365)


"From the point of view of the history of theories of culture, it is Spencer and not Darwin who bears the greatest share of the responsibility for having crippled the explanatory power of cultural evolutionary theory by merging and mixing it with racial determinism." (Marvin Harris, The Rise of Anthropological Theory, Thomas Y. Crowell, New York, 1968. P. 129)

"A comprehension of mental development as a process of adaptation to social conditions, which are continually remoulding the mind and are again remoulded by it ..." (Herbert Spencer, "The Comparative Psychology of Man," Vol. 1, pp. 351-370, Williams and Norgate, London, 1891. P. 369)

"Possibly the rise of priest-lawyers, impeded by this local fixity and by want of cooperative organization among priests, may have been also impeded by the independence of the Greek nature, which, unlike Oriental natures, did not readily submit to the extension of sacerdotal control over civil affairs." (Principles, Vol. III, p. 265. N.Y., 1909)

Spencer believed that "the constitutional energy needed for continuous labour, without which there cannot be civilized life ... is an energy to be acquired only by inherited modifications slowly accumulated." (Vol. II, p. 270).


And in the later nineteenth century, thinking about racial temperament tended to be reduced to a simple Spencerian polarity, in which the immediate, impulsive, and concrete responses of dark-skinned "savages" were posed against the mediated, considered, and abstract thinking of white-skinned "civilized" Europeans (see Stocking 1968:110-32; 1986). It was to combat Spencerian evolutionary racialism that Mead's mentor, Franz Boas, offered his own interpretation of "the mind of primitive man" (1911)." (George W. Stocking, ed., Malinowski, Rivers, Benedict and Others, University of Wisconsin Press, Madison, 1986. Stocking's article, "Essays on Culture and Personality," pp. 3-12. P. 4)

Spencer did not believe in a 'pre-logical' mentality. He wrote: "... the laws of thought are everywhere the same; ... given the data as known to him, the inference drawn by primitive man is the reasonable inference." (Principles of Sociology, Vol. 1, p. 111) Nevertheless, he believed in racial differences in psychology, which were manifested in certain aspects of a people's social life.

"Surviving remnants of some primitive races in India, have natures in which truthfulness seems to be organic." (Principles, Vol. II, p. 234. N.Y., 1899)

"... Herbert Spencer, in many ways a son of the Age of Reason, despite his advocacy of evolution in the middle of the next 19th century." (Said in connection with Spencer's belief in the order of nature, unalterable laws of human societies, laissez faire, and "liberalism." (John Herman Randall, The Making of the Modern Mind, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1926. P. 331)

"Herbert Spencer completed the work begun by Locke a hundred and fifty years before, and his Synthetic Philosophy brought to conclusion the greatest intellectual movement of modern times." (Vernon L. Parrington, Main Currents in American Thought, Vol. 3: The Beginnings of Critical Realism in America: 1860-1920. Harcourt, Brace, & Co., Inc., 1930. P. 201)

Speaking of the classical evolutionists: "The individual mind was represented as facing external conditions, nature; and to these it reacted, innocent of all guidance or restraint on the part of ME of social norm or cultural pattern. This hypothetical mind, moreover, seems to have contained ideas and intellectual processes, but no emotions, conations, images, desires, or fantasies." (p. 77) "It will be readily conceded that the picture here drawn of man in the evolutionist's garden of Eden is extreme. It fits only the left-wing evolutionists, such as Spencer and Frazer," (p. 77n.) (Alexander A. Goldenweiser, History, Psychology, and Culture, Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., Ltd., London, 1933)

"Turning to the aspects of Spencer's thought which are no longer acceptable, a conspicuous one is to be found on the borderline of sociology and psychology. Here the critical point is his view that "emotional" factors almost always act in opposition to what he called the "intellectual." This is to say he saw the emotional or affective components of human motivation mainly as disturbances of the correctly rational operation of the intellect. This essentially is to say that he did not understand the sense in which cognitive and affective components must be integrated to form a basis for rational action, though he did have some inklings of the importance of emotion to the motivation of action." (Talcott Parsons, Introduction to The Study of Sociology by Herbert Spencer, pp. v-x, The University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor, 1961. P. viii)
"The process of rebarbarization which has long been going on is now going on at an increasing rate, and will continue to go on. Waves of human opinion and passion are not to be arrested until they have spent themselves. You appear to think, as I used to think in earlier days, that mankind are rational beings, and that when a thing has been demonstrated they will be convinced. Everything proves the contrary. A man is a bundle of passions which severally use his reason to get gratification, and the result in all times and places depends on what passions are dominant. At present there is an unusual resurgence of the passions of the brute. Still more now than a generation ago, men pride themselves not in those faculties and feelings which distinguish them as human beings, but in those which they have in common with inferior beings—pride themselves in approaching as nearly as they can to the character of the bulldog." (Letter from Herbert Spencer to Moncure D. Conway dated August 15, 1900. Quoted in Moncure Daniel Conway, Autobiography, Memories and Experiences, 2 Vols., Houghton, Mifflin and Company, Boston, 1904. Vol. 2, p. 450)
"I was in Italy when Spencer died, and was much struck by the Italians' appreciation of his work. From the Chamber of Deputies at Rome a message of condolence, full of Italian warmth, and beautiful Italian language too, was sent to our country on the loss of her great citizen. On reading it, I tried in vain to conceive the English House of Commons expressing in like manner its sorrow on the death of a distinguished foreign thinker. So far was such a message from our frigid English customs that, as the official Italian paper La Tribuna pointed out in an article headed "The Coldness of the English Public," our legislators appear to have taken no notice of Spencer's death. The journal added that Spencer had been "the great philosopher of the nineteenth century for all countries except his own."" (James Sully, My Life and Friends, T.F Unwin Ltd., London, 1918. Ep. 293-294)

"But I have been so interested in Herbert Spencer of late that I subordinate everybody else to him. And, my dear Mr. Whittier, it is absolutely surprising to see how that man is misunderstood. Why, dear, has it ever occurred to you that most people are numskulls? I don't know how to spell the word, but they don't know how to read. Patriotically, I can but be glad after a fashion to see that the English literary folk are as unscholarly and stupid and inaccurate and reckless as our American, and misunderstand and misrepresent Herbert Spencer. But I have seen the heavens opened!" (Letter from Gail Hamilton/Mary Abigail Dodge to John G. Whittier dated August 29, 1885. Quoted in Gail Hamilton's Life in Letters, edited by H. Augusta Dodge, 2 Vols., Lee and Shepard, Boston, 1901. Vol. 2, p. 865)

At a party at Madame Mohl's in Paris there were a number of persons present, including Anne Thackeray and Ernest Renan: "He (Renan) said that nobody ever persecuted to prove a thing that was provable, such as a problem of Euclid, but only to prove a thing that was unprovable such as religion or dogma, and then they all began to praise Herbert Spencer like mad." (Letter from Anne Thackeray Ritchie/Thackeray's daughter to Leslie Stephen, undated [1875]. Quoted in Hester Thackeray Ritchie, Thackeray and His Daughter, Harper & Brothers, New York, 1924. P. 178)

"Herbert Spencer and Matthew Arnold and John Fiske are the company that I drive M. to bed with. How should I remember where Mary C. was to take her lessons? I don't know St. James from St. Herbert Spencer. But won't the family generally be glad when they have ploughed through Herbert Spencer and can lie down under the apple-trees and enjoy themselves?" (Letter from Gail Hamilton/Mary Abigail Dodge to John G. Whittier dated 1886. Quoted in Gail Hamilton's Life in Letters, edited by H. Augusta Dodge, 2 Vols., Lee and Shepard, Boston, 1901. Vol. 2, p. 866)
"I had Munger and Herbert Spencer out with me, and it is not only that the Heavens are opened, which they have always been, but I can see that they are opened." (Letter from Gail Hamilton to John G. Whittier dated 1885. Quoted in Gail Hamilton's Life in Letters, edited by H. Augusta Dodge, 2 Vols., Lee and Shepard, Boston, 1901. Vol. 2, p. 862)

"When the news of Spencer's death reached Italy, the Italian Chamber suspended the Order of the Day to pay its tribute to the great philosopher. Signiori Berenini, Finchia and Biancheri recited the virtues and talents of the great dead amid generous and prolonged cheering." (Anonymous, "Herbert Spencer Notes," The Liberal Review, Vol. 1, pp. 18-21, 1904. P. 18)


"Indeed, Spencer was more readily and more generously recognized abroad than in his own country." ("W.", "Herbert Spencer," The Athenaeum, No. 3972, pp. 794-795, December 12, 1903. P. 795)
"... so far it is from being true, as he [J.E. Cairnes] supposes, that the existence of stationery societies is at variance with the doctrine [of evolution], it is, contrariwise, a part of the doctrine that a stationary state, earlier or later reached, is one towards which all evolitional changes, social or other, inevitably lead. (See First Principles, chap. xxii, "Equilibration.") And again, so far it is from being true that the slow social decays which in some cases take place, and the dissolutions which take place in others, are incongruous with the doctrine, it is, contrariwise, a part of it that decays and dissolutions must come in all cases. (See First Principles, chap. XXIII., "Dissolution.")" (Herbert Spencer; "A Note on the Preceding Article" /Actually, two articles by J. E. Cairnes, The Fortnightly Review, Vol. 17, n.s., pp. 214-216, 1875. P. 214)

"There is no uniform ascent from lower to higher, but only an occasional production of a form which, in virtue of greater fitness for more complex conditions, becomes capable of a longer life of a more varied kind." (Principles, Vol. III, p. 609. N.Y., 1909)

It has been said that Spencer believed in unending progress; that he saw human society climbing ever onward and upward. But such a view of Spencer's ideas cannot be sustained. In the first place, he argued that the evolution of social systems, like the evolution of systems of all kinds, proceeded only to the point at which an equilibrium was established between internal structures and functions and external forces and resistences. (p. 459) There evolution ceased. Furthermore, Spencer held that dissolution—the opposite of evolution—set in when the external forces operating on a social (or other) system exceeded the system's capacity to counter them with appropriate organization and action. History, Spencer noted, was full of illustrations of the dissolution of particular social systems.

But the case for dissolution was even stronger. While history showed us only empirically that individual societies declined and disintegrated, physics allowed us to infer theoretically that all human societies—indeed, all forms of organization in the universe—would inevitably decrease and eventually disappear. This conclusion Spencer derived from the physical principle, then still vigorously debated, which when finally established became known as the Second Law of Thermodynamics. The principle stated that for the cosmos as a whole differences in energy levels between one part and another decreased through time, and thus predicted the ultimate "heat death" of the universe. Spencer wrote: (Quote First Principles, Thinker's Library edition, pp. 461-462)

"While the current degradation theory is untenable, the theory of progression, in its ordinary form, seems to me untenable also. If, on the one hand, the notion that savagery is caused by lapse from civilization, is irreconcilable with the evidence; there is, on the other hand, inadequate warrant for the notion that the lowest savagery has never been any higher than it is now. It is possible, and, I believe, probable, that retrogression has been as frequent as progression." (Principles, Vol. I, p. 95. 3rd ed. N.Y., 1910)
Spencer does not see social evolution advancing forever upward and onward in a straight line. He sees reversions and regressions as commonplace. For instance, while the general evolutionary trend is for the political leader and the military leader to become differentiated, Spencer observes that "if there is a return to great militant activity, with consequent reversion to militant structure, there is liable to occur a reestablishment of the primitive type of headship, by usurpation on the part of the successful general ..." (Vol. II, p. 482).

"These sentences [quoted from Eimer on orthogenesis] contain one of those explanations which explain nothing; for we are not enabled to see how the "outward circumstances and influences" produce the effects ascribed to them. We are not shown in what way they cause the infinitely-varied forms in which organic evolution results. The assertion that evolution takes definitely-directed lines is accompanied by no indication of the reasons why particular lines are followed rather than others. In short, we are simply taken a step back, and for further interpretation referred to a cause said to be adequate, but the operations of which we are to imagine as best we may. This is a re-introduction of supernaturalism under a disguise." (Herbert Spencer, The Principles of Biology, revised edition, 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1898. Vol. 1, p. 564)

"The works of Herbert Spencer ...... supported by an encyclopaedic range of facts, ..... present a composite picture of the evolution of society, as it were, in a continuous straight line." (M. F. Ashley Montagu, Coming into Being among the Australian Aborigines, George Routledge & Sons, Ltd., London, 1937. P. 3)

"In general, approach from an underlying level may hope to explain the uniformities in phenomena of an upper level, but does not even attack the problem of their diversities."


"His [Spencer's] main intellectual interest lies in reducing the new to the old, and in explaining apparent advance in terms of what somehow has been there all the time. But if this be taken strictly, it empties the term evolution of the distinctive meaning which it conveys to the popular imagination, and it becomes, as Spencer's definition suggests, no more than a constant reshuffling of unchanging elements. These may attain to more complex and intricate groupings; but a difference in the group / ing of elements is nevertheless the whole story. There is no genuine element of novelty anywhere injected; no surprises can ever be sprung on the world." (Arthur Kenyon Rogers, English and American Philosophy Since 1800, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1922. Pp. 151-152)
"I wanted to say how successful and how important I thought was your presentation at the farewell dinner to Spencer at Delmonico's of the dual aspect, theological and ethical, of the Evolution doctrine. It is above all things needful that the people should be impressed with the truth that the philosophy offered to them does not necessitate a divorce from their inherited conceptions concerning religion and morality, but merely a purification and exaltation of them." (Letter from Herbert Spencer to John Fiske, November 24, 1882. Quoted in Ethel F. Fiske, The Letters of John Fiske, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1940. P. 479)

"the bare, hard logic of Spencer, the greatest English authority on evolution, leaves no place for this compromise, and shows that the theory, carried to its legitimate consequences, excludes the knowledge of a Creator and the possibility of his work." (Dawson, quoted by Asa Gray in Darwiniana: Essays and Reviews Pertaining to Darwinism. P. 249.

"Joseph Cook, who was a great figure in the religious world in the years 1874-80, though forgotten now, was listened to by the crowds in Tremont Temple which he endeavored to furnish a scientific demonstration of the truths of religion. I procured his volumes as they were published and read them with care, and what seemed to me his failures confirmed me in the conclusion to which Herbert Spencer compelled me—that I must choose between agnosticism and spiritual faith ...." (Lyman Abbott, Reminiscences, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1915. P. 450)

"I find from my correspondence that in 1866 I was studying Herbert Spencer .... As my boyhood's study of Jonathan Edwards had established my faith in the freedom of the will, so my study of Herbert Spencer confirmed my rejection of the rationalist philosophy ...." (p. 285) "I read Herbert Spencer's "First Principles," and they convinced me that all that science could possibly do was to show us a probably God / and a probable immortality, if it could do so much as that." (pp. 449-450) (Lyman Abbott, Reminiscences, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1915)

The Rev. George Matheson, D.D., a Scottish Presbyterian minister, wrote a book entitled Can the Old Faith Live with the New? (William Blackwood and Sons, Edinburgh and London, 1885. He says in the preface that two works stimulated him to write this book: Joseph John Murphy's The Scientific Bases of Faith, and Henry Drummond's Natural Law in the Spiritual World. Matheson quotes Spencer frequently, and bases a good deal of what he says on Spencer's authority. He takes full advantage of Spencer's "Unknowable." Spencer found it a clever reconciliation, and thought it would be useful to introduce evolution to "believers" in a congenial and sympathetic way. He even asked Youmans about the possibility of reprinting it in the United States. (See Edward Livingston Youmans)
"It would be hard to over-estimate the influence of this great man. From an immense intellectual elevation he has surveyed the world of thought. He has rendered absurd the idea of special providence, born of the egotism of savagery. He has shown that the "will of God" is not a rule for human conduct; that morality is not a cold and heartless tyrant; that by the destruction of the individual will, a higher life cannot be reached, and that after all, an intelligent love of self extends the hand of help and kindness to all the human race." (Robert G. Ingersoll, Preface to Prof. Van Buren Denslow's Modern Thinkers [1879], pp. 7-23 in The Works of Robert G. Ingersoll, 12 Vols., The Ingersoll Publishers, Inc., New York, 1900. Vol. 12, pp. 11-12)

"... I think that the doctrine of evolution and its relations to the work of Mr. Spencer—which takes in that, but a great deal more besides—to speak in plain language, is going to revolutionize theology from one end to the other...." (Rev. Henry Ward Beecher's Remarks at the Spencer Farewell Dinner, pp. 58-567. In Herbert Spencer on The Americans and The Americans on Herbert Spencer, edited by Edward L. Youmans, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1883, P. 60)

"From this point of view—that of atheism, thinly disguised. Carnegie thinks, as agnostics he pronounced Spencer "the great manufacturer of raw material for superstition." I knew, on the contrary, that the material my teacher supplied destroyed the superstitions of theology and produced in me purer, nobler, more reverent religious feelings than I ever could reach before." The statement attributed to Ingersoll is difficult to reconcile with other statements (q.v.) made by Ingersoll about Spencer. Also, no such statement appears in Ingersoll's Collected Works (12 Vols.) (Andrew Carnegie, Miscellaneous Writings of Andrew Carnegie, edited by Burton J. Hendrick, 2 Vols., Doubleday, Doran & Company, Inc., Garden City, N.Y., 1933. Vol. 2, p. 303)

"The theorist has unavowedly made an abstraction of religion which represents no known body of religious belief whatever, and which is the reverse of what is either tacitly or explicitly alleged by nearly every body of religious doctrine in the past.... we find that religious creeds, churches, communities, documents, always claim to give us a knowledge of the Power "behind the universe." Christians expressly claim that God has "revealed Himself." Every world-religion save Buddhism ... has professed to give information about God or the Gods. Greek and Roman and Semitic and Asiatic and African and Polynesian polytheisms alike proffer endless false information about the powers behind the universe. That was their very ground and function. To say that a million such proffers of information are all logically or virtually reducible to the proposition that no such knowledge is possible is a strange pronouncement. Spencer has presented as the abstraction of Religion the one doctrine that no creed ever contained ... and that most creeds explicitly and implicitly deny." (J. M. Robertson, Modern Humanists Reconsidered, Watts & Co., London, 1927. P. 177)
"The English school tend to repudiate, with growing intensity, that materialism which is accepted on the Continent and pronounce it gross and dangerous. They refuse to go further at present than Agnosticism, though many of them show themselves to be impatient of camping out permanently on that ground. The ablest thinker of them all, and the ablest man that has appeared for centuries, Herbert Spencer, seems to me to have passed the winter solstice, and to be in a dawning spring and summer. Should his life be spared, I should not wonder at finding him the ablest defender of the essential elements of a rightly interpreted Christianity that has arisen. Not that I regard every part of his system with like favor; not that I should regard every station which he has established and position which he maintains as true or safe. Not that.--And yet, when by and by the bounds of knowledge are widened, and the interior more perfectly surveyed and settled, I think that Herbert Spencer will be found to have given to the world more truth in one lifetime than any other man that has lived in the schools of philosophy in this world." (Henry Ward Beecher, Sermon: "Evolution and the Church," Sunday Morning, July 5, 1885, Plymouth Church, in Evolution and Religion, Fords, Howard, & Hulbert, New York, 1885. Pp. 125-126)

"The religious world, though perhaps a little too trusting and a little dull of thought, has very acute feelings, and a fine sagacity in apprehending the religious drift of a system of philosophy. It began to have suspicions, [that Spencer was a positivist] but it was, nevertheless, anxious to see the truths of science reconciled with those of religion, and so it has continued to listen to Mr. Spencer." (Chauncey Wright, "The Philosophy of Herbert Spencer," in Philosophical Discussions, pp. 43-96, Henry Holt and Company, New York, 1877. P. 91. First appeared in The North American Review, April, 1865)

"Herbert Spencer noted long ago the influence of dreams in forming a belief in immortality, but, being very rational himself, he extended to primitive man a quite alien quality of rationality. Herbert Spencer argued that when a savage has a dream he seeks to account for it, and in so doing invents a spirit world. The mistake here lies in the "seeks to account for it." Man is at first too busy living to have any time for disinterested thinking. He dreams a dream, and it is real for him. He does not seek to account for it any more than for his hands and feet. He cannot distinguish between a conception and a perception--that is all." (Jane Ellen Harrison, Alpha and Omega, Sidgwick & Jackson Ltd., London, 1915. P. 157)

"Herbert Spencer comes, in good faith, from what has been so long a hostile camp, bringing a flag of truce and proposing terms of agreement meant to be honorable to both parties. Let us give him a candid hearing, and perhaps the terms he offers, though we may not accept them in their first and full form, may lead to a better understanding, and open the way to a final adjustment." (Anonymous, C. C. Everett, "Spencer's Reconciliation of Science and Religion," a review of First Principles, Nos. I-IV, 1860-61/, The Christian Examiner, Vol. 72, pp. 337-352, 1862. P. 340. Everett was Dean of Harvard Divinity School 1878-1900)
"Do you know Herbert Spencer's book, First Principles? He is a Comtian with a difference. I am not very practiced in such reading, but what I have read of his seemed very clear and candid and masterly. He seems to me quite wrong in his general result, which, as I understand it, hardly admits of a Theistic interpretation; though I understand that he does not feel himself that it is inconsistent with such a view. But as I said he is a very original and remarkable writer, and should be read ...." (Letter from Alexander Macmillan to Rev. Professor Salmon, Trinity College, Dublin, dated December 15, 1862. Quoted in George A. Macmillan, editor, Letters of Alexander Macmillan, Printed for Private Circulation University Press, Glasgow, 1908. P. 126)

"The philosopher has long observed that in proportion as knowledge, science, and intelligence spread among men, the strong religious spirit disappears. Some have argued that this tendency must eventually eradicate the religious sentiment from mankind, since already many of the truly greatest and best men have nearly or quite wholly renounced all attachment for, or belief in, any religious system. This idea was fast gaining acceptance until Mr. Spencer came forward with his famous "reconciliation," which showed that there is a limit at which this differentiation must stop, while the apparently innate sentiment of worship will ever possess an object in the Absolute, the Unconditioned, the Unknowable." (Lester F. Ward, Dynamic Sociology, 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. Vol. 1, p. 196)

"The theory here sketched [the ghost theory of religion], and which is elaborated with great care and skill by Mr. Spencer, is remarkable in a number of respects. In the first place, it is the first attempt ever made to trace the real history of religion to its original source in the phenomena of nature and the laws of thought. If true, it constitutes the genesis of religion, and explains all the most difficult facts connected with its existence and diffusion among men. In the second place, this effort is remarkable from the manner of its presentation. It is no mere theory elaborated out of the web of logic in the author's brain. In every particular he has allowed himself to drift with the current of accumulating facts. The great bulk of the volume is made up of citations of simple facts as gathered together from every available source." (Lester F. Ward, Dynamic Sociology, 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. Vol. 1, p. 206)

"If, moreover, the tendency undoubtedly exhibited in the previous course of philosophical inquiry can indicate anything with reference to the future, we may infer that the Spencerian system of evolution, with all its extensive appropriations from the physical sciences, will, without losing any valuable material, be enlarged and corrected by the introduction of spiritualistic elements, and by the adoption of teleological and theistic modes of interpretation. The exalted views of Kant with reference to the fundamental consistency between law and design are sufficient to dispel any conceived opposition between natural order and divine supervision." (William C. Morey, "Herbert Spencer in the Light of History," Baptist Quarterly Review, Vol. 5, pp. 279-309, 1883. P. 308)
Mark Pattison (1813-1884), Rector of Lincoln College, Oxford, said, in connection with the depersonalization and spiritualization of the conception of god that took place in the latter half of the 19th century, and presumably including that attenuation of it into the Unknowable of Herbert Spencer, that the idea of deity has now been "defecated to a pure transparency." (Quoted by Frederic Harrison in "The Ghost of Religion," The Nineteenth Century, Vol. 15, n.s., pp. 494-506, 1884. Pp. 496-497)

"Spencer's true role among mid-Victorian scientists was not as an evolutionary thinker at all, but as a religious leader." (Mark Francis, "Herbert Spencer and the mid-Victorian Scientists," Metascience, Vol. 4, pp. 2-21, 1986. P. )

"The Reverend Chan / cellor of the University of New York is reported to have declared that, if the works of Herbert Spencer should be introduced into the institution over which he presides, he would resign his position." (Edward L. Youmans, "Sociology and Theology at Yale College," The Popular Science Monthly, Vol. 17, pp. 265-269, 1880. Pp. 268-269)

"Now, a God who has no intelligence, and no moral character, is no God at all. Hence, Spencer was not a Theist. It will scarcely do to say he was an Atheist, since he did not expressly deny the existence of a God, though the Unknowable would not seem to leave room for another being, especially a being superior to itself. Neither was Spencer an Agnostic. The Agnostic says he does not know whether the principle of the universe is a being or a quality or attribute of matter. But Mr. Spencer says he knows it to be a being, and that this knowledge is the most certain of all." (C. B. Waite, "Herbert Spencer," Liberal Review, Vol. 1, pp. 16-17, 1904-. P. 17)

Spencer "... has succeeded in making theology conscious of the fact that there is much about the Infinite that theology does not yet know; in fact through Spencer's influence, theology has about come to acknowledge that what it knows about God is a very small fraction of what there is to know. Theology has, then, become more humble and teachable." (William Ivey Cranford [Professor of Philosophy at Trinity College], "Herbert Spencer and His Work," The South Atlantic Quarterly, Vol. 3, pp. 123-136, 1904. P. 132)

"... the religion of amity and the religion of enmity ...." (Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1891. P. 295)

"... a religious system is a normal and essential factor in every evolving society ...." (Herbert Spencer, *The Study of Sociology*, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1891. P. 313)


"... while yet others (as I have repeatedly noticed in converse with those whom I have met during my lecturing tours in this country, America, and Australasia) appear to regard Mr. Spencer as chief among the opponents of religion." (Richard A. Proctor, "Herbert Spencer's Philosophy," *The Gentleman's Magazine*, Vol. 254, pp. 73-88, 1883. P. 73)


"I see that Herbert Spencer is muddling away among books, instead of understanding men; and I perceive that a religion without divinity is no religion at all, whatever else it may be." (Letter from Alfred Lyall to Mrs. Mrs. Sybillia Lyall Holland, his sister, dated ?, 1873. Quoted in Sir Mortimer Durand, *Life of the Right Hon. Sir Alfred Comyn Lyall*, William Blackwood and Sons, Edinburgh, 1913. P. 171)

"... Mr. Alderman W. Winter, ... opposed in the Town Council a resolution of honour in memory of Spencer, who had given Derby its great distinction, because his views contradicted the antediluvian Scriptural account of the Creation ...." (George Jacob Holyoake, *Byzones Worth Remembering*, 2 Vols., T. Fisher Unwin, London, 1905. Vol. 2, p. 24)

"It would be hard to over-estimate the influence of this great man /Spencer/. From an immense intellectual elevation he has surveyed the world of thought. He has rendered absurd the idea of Special Providence, born of the egotism of savagery." (Robert G. Ingersoll, *Introduction to Modern Thinkers*, *Principally Upon Social Science: What They Think and Why*, 1880. P. xvii)
"... Spencer's metaphysical logic is made incoherent and fallacious by his purpose of effecting his futile "reconciliation" between Religion and Science ...." (J. M. Robertson, A History of Freethought in the Nineteenth Century, Watts & Co., London, 1929, P. 217)

"... the supercilious disdain with which he passes over all the cosmogonies of the men who like him have sought to construct a theory of the world's development, ...." (Noah Porter, "Herbert Spencer's Theory of Sociology: A Critical Essay," The Princeton Review, Vol. 56 (6 n.s.), pp. 268-296, 1880. P. 292)

"... great ... are the evils to which the undiscriminating devotees of Spencer are exposed in the weakening of their traditional faith in Christian theism and Christian ethics, ...." (Noah Porter, "Herbert Spencer's Theory of Sociology: A Critical Essay," The Princeton Review, Vol. 56 (6 n.s.), pp. 268-296, 1880. P. 292)


""I was never a Christian," he said to me once; "from my childhood I wanted to investigate everything."" (Grant Allen, "Personal Reminiscences of Herbert Spencer," The Forum, Vol. 35, pp. 610-628, 1904. P. 620)

"In the works of Spencer we have the rudiments of a positive theology ...." (Anonymous /C. C. Everett/, "Spencer's Reconciliation of Science and Religion," A review of First Principles, Nos. I-IV, 1860-617, The Christian Examiner, Vol. 72, pp. 337-352, 1862. P.337) (Everett was Dean of Harvard Divinity School 1878-1900)

"The many volumes of the "Synthetic System of Philosophy," which follow the "First Principles," constitute a very elaborate attempt to give such an account of the Evolution of the Cosmos as shall dispense with the domination of the process by Infinite Intelligence and Will." (James Drummond /himself/, editor, The Life and Letters of James Martineau, 2 Vols., Dodd, Mead and Company, New York, 1902. Vol. 2, p. 363)

"Mr. Minot Savage had high hopes of evolving a "new religion" in terms of Spencerism, and his enthusiasm moved Spencer to write a letter looking forward to "something like a body of definite adherents who will become the germ of an organization." (Letter of Jan. 9, 1883, cited by Goblet d'Alviella, p. 220.). (J. M. Robertson, A History of Freethought in the Nineteenth Century, Watts & Co., London, 1929. Pp. 308-309)

"In recognition of an inscrutable power or energy, Spencer fancied he had found a basis for the reconciliation of science and religion. The terms proposed have been likened to those proposed by a husband to his wife, as the basis of domestic harmony, that he should take the inside of the house and she the outside." (Anonymous, "The Philosophy of Herbert Spencer," The Edinburgh Review, Vol. 199, pp. 352-373, 1904. P. 359)

Although apparently never a Christian, Spencer did at one time believe in God, and in Social Statics there are occasional references to Him. But during the 1850's Spencer abandoned the notion of God, or perhaps one might almost say that for Spencer the idea of God became much more remote and abstract, becoming finally the notion of the Unknowable, and "Infinite and Eternal Energy, from which all things proceed." --RLC

"A flood of light is thrown upon Spencer's treatment of religion by a remark he once made to the present writer, that he had never experienced the spiritual troubles of some of his contemporaries. He never rejected Christianity, he said, because he never accepted it. Christianity lay altogether outside of his mind." (Anonymous, "The Philosophy of Herbert Spencer," The Edinburgh Review, Vol. 199, pp. 352-373, 1904. P. 354)

"The progress of liberal thought is remarkable. Everybody is asking for explanations. The clergy are in a flutter. McCosh told them not to worry, as whatever might be discovered he would find design in it and put God behind it." (Letter from Edward L. Youmans to Herbert Spencer dated April 21, 1871. Quoted in John Fiske, Edward Youmans, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. P. 266)

"And we would commend to our readers this author [Spencer], too little known among us, as at once one of the clearest of teachers and one of the wigest and most honorable of opponents." (Anonymous [C. C. Everett], "Spencer's Reconciliation of Science and Religion," [a review of First Principles, Nos. I-IV, 1860-61], The Christian Examiner, Vol. 72, pp. 337-352, 1862. P. 352. Everett was Dean of Harvard Divinity School 1878-1900)
"There is in Mr. Spencer (as it appears to me) too marked that theological tendency, which he himself so well condemns, to confound belief with evidence, and mistake the desire for a truth as a proof of the truth itself." (Henry Sewall, "Herbert Spencer As a Biologist," University of Michigan, Philosophical Papers, First Series, No. 4, pp. 1-13. P. 12. Sewall was Professor of Physiology at the University of Michigan)

"I am a cordial Christian evolutionist. I would not agree by any means with all of Spencer, nor all of Huxley, Tyndall and their school. They are agnostic. I am not-emphatically. But I am an evolutionist and that strikes at the root of all medieval and orthodox modern theology," he wrote Dr. Kennard in 1883. (Paxton Hibben, Henry Ward Beecher: An American Portrait, George H. Doran Company, New York, 1927. P. 340)

"Latitudinarian ministers of religion, panting, after the manner of their kind, to keep "abreast of modern thought," and never stopping to think, made haste to translate the sublime precepts of the Gospel into the barbarous jargon of a bogus science ...." /i.e., Spencer's brand of science/. (Unsigned, "The Exploded Quack," Blackwood's Magazine, Vol. 201, pp. 717-727, 1917. P. 726)

"There is a phase of thought bearing the name "evolution" which cannot by any possibility be reconciled with religion. It is subversive not only of theology, but equally of every high belief." (Rev. Francis H. Johnson, "Mechanical Evolution," The Andover Review, Vol. 1, pp. 631-649, 1884. P. 631)

"Mr. Spencer's attitude towards religion, again, is slightly paradoxical. Few men have paid it more sincere, explicit respect; and the part called "The Unknowable" of his "First Principles" celebrates the ultimate mysteriousness of things, and the existence of a Supreme Reality behind the veil, in terms whose emphatic character it is hard elsewhere to match." (William James, "Herbert Spencer," The Critic, Vol. 44, pp. 21-24, 1904. P. 22)

"In fact, his [Spencer's] philosophy of religion is an illogical blend of reason and faith, which, as such, finds its proper place among the various schemes of compromise and conciliation characteristically put forward by English thought when the religious revolution had entered on its acute phase." (Alfred William Benn, The History of English Rationalism in the Nineteenth Century, 2 Vols. Longmans, Green, and Co., London, 1906. Vol. 2, p. 204)

Spencer's father was not a-religious, however. His letters, written to Spencer around 1840 "called my attention to religious questions and appealed to religious feelings--seeking for some response." (Auto., I, 150)
"He [Spencer] settled the territorial dispute between science and religion, and if the struggle between them still continues it is only because his award has not been universally accepted. This award, it is practically certain, will ultimately prevail, not, of course, because he made it, but because the facts of the case render it inevitable." (Arthur M. Lewis, An Introduction to Sociology, Charles H. Kerr & Company, Chicago, 1913. P. 73)

"... have you not saddled the Bostonians with a sin that does not belong to them? That God is an unrelated being, and cannot therefore be known to men, is taught by Herbert Spencer, but I have never heard it from the Boston oracles." (Letter from Gail Hamilton /Mary Abigail Dodge/ to George Wood /"Peter Schlemihl"/ dated November 21, 1864. Quoted in Gail Hamilton's Life in Letters, edited by H. Augusta Dodge, 2 Vols., Lee and Shepard, Boston, 1901. Vol. 1, p. 466)

"The Greatest philosopher of modern times, the master and teacher of all who shall study the process of evolution for many a day to come, holds that the conscious soul is not the product of a collocation of material particles, but is in the deepest sense a divine effluence. According to Mr. Spencer the divine energy which is manifested throughout the knowable universe is the same energy that wells up in us as consciousness." (John Fiske, Destiny of Man, p. 117)

"If, therefore, the religious world persists in refusing to be limited to Spencer’s "unknowable," and in clinging to the knowable unknown, there can be no cessation of "The Conflict Between Science and Religion" until science has added victory to victory and religion, reaping defeat upon defeat, is finally driven from the field." (Arthur M. Lewis, An Introduction to Sociology, Charles H. Kerr & Company, Chicago, 1913. P. 58)

"Anthropomorphism is an inevitable result of the laws of thought. We cannot take a step towards constructing an idea of God; we cannot even speak of a divine will without the ascription of human attributes, for we know nothing of volition, save as a property of our own minds." (Herbert Spencer, "The Use of Anthropomorphism," The Leader, Vol. 4, No. 189, pp. 1076-1077, November 5, 1853. P. 1076)

"They [Spencer's views] none the less replaced the personal and conscious God of the traditional theology by a Being deaf, blind, and indifferent to human misery, or at least so far removed from man that no direct relation could any longer be conceived to exist between the two terms of the religious equation; and thus there seemed to disappear that sentiment of a direct communication between the soul and its Author, which forms not only the central principle of Protestantism, but also the essential basis of Theism." (Count Goblet d'Alviella, The Contemporary Evolution of Religious Thought in England, America and India, translated by J. Moden, G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1886. P. 45)
"The philosopher has long observed that in proportion as knowledge, science, and intelligence spread among men, the strong religious spirit disappears. Some have argued that this tendency must eventually eradicate the religious sentiment from mankind, since already many of the truly greatest and best men have nearly or quite wholly renounced all attachment for, or belief in, any religious system. This idea was fast gaining acceptance until Mr. Spencer came forward with his famous "reconciliation," which showed that there is a limit at which this differentiation must stop, while the apparently innate sentiment of worship will ever possess and object in the Absolute, the Unconditioned, the Unknowable." (Lester Frank Ward, Dynamic Sociology, 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1883. Vol. 1, p. 196)

Maintaining that Spencer's occasional reference to "the naturally revealed end towards which the Power manifested throughout Evolution works," betrayed a suggestion of teleology, Everett said: "If a teleological element in the universe were admitted, it would remove one of the chief difficulties that many find in accepting the Synthetic Philosophy. If it were nowhere recognized, it would take from it one of the attractions which it has for many minds." (C. C. Everett, "The Data of Ethics," The Unitarian Review and Religious Magazine, Vol. 13, pp. 43-59, 1880. P. 50)

"... the next philosophy will be a reconciliation of the physical truths advocated by materialists and the rational truths held by idealists--a system which will ignore neither the laws of thought nor the laws of things. No fragmentary theories built upon the discovery of mere physical laws and forces can satisfy the highest reason of man, which must see in the progressive organization of the world the evidence of a supreme co-ordinating thought." (William C. Morey, "Herbert Spencer in the Light of History," Baptist Quarterly Review, Vol. 5, pp. 279-309, 1883. P. 309)

"This imposing positivistic edifice might have been totally unacceptable in America, had it not also been bound up with an important concession to religion in the form of Spencer's doctrine of the Unknowable. The great question of the day / was whether religion and science could be reconciled. Spencer gave not only the desired affirmative answer, but also an assurance for all future ages that, whatever science might learn about the world, the true sphere of religion--worship of the Unknowable--is by its very nature inviolable." (Richard Hofstadter, Social Darwinism in American Thought, revised edition, The Beacon Press, Boston, 1955. Pp. 37-38)

"No one is more humble before the mystery of the Infinite Power of Nature, or more convinced that we have no warrant for dogmatizing upon the secrets of life than Herbert Spencer. If all his disciples were loyal to his spirit, they would stand in a constant attitude of expectant wonder; ready to receive ever fresh and more surprising revelations of the purpose of Nature." (Richard Heber Newton, Philistinism: Plain Words Concerning Certain Forms of Modern Scepticism, G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1886. P. 306. Newton was an Episcopal minister in New York who accepted evolution.)
"I am glad to see you still busy with your pen, and it seems to me with unflagging vigour. Judging from what I have seen in the notices (for I have not seen the book itself, which indeed I should not be able to read), you have done an important service by your Life of [Thomas] Paine alike in clearing his reputation and showing his merits, as also by re-emphasizing some of his views." (Letter from Herbert Spencer to Moncure D. Conway dated December 12, 1893. Quoted in Moncure Daniel Conway, Autobiography, Memories and Experiences, 2 Vols., Houghton, Mifflin and Company, Boston, 1904. Vol. 2, pp. 434-435)

"Even in these liberal circles [Unitarians and other liberal theologians in the United States] Spencer's philosophy was, of course, criticized and condemned as too materialistic and agnostic. But it was nevertheless taken seriously, and in the modified form preached by Fiske, the Spencerian conception of evolution was readily detached from his materialism, hedonism, and agnosticism, and was adapted to liberal theology and to the transcendentalist heritage." (Herbert W. Schneider, "The Influence of Darwin and Spencer on American Philosophical Theology," Journal of the History of Ideas, Vol. 6, pp. 3-18, 1945. P.)

"We might suggest in conclusion that with such a philosophy--the philosophy of Christian theism--Sociology may possibly become a far simpler science than is possible on the theory .... of antitheistical materialism which Spencer presents/. The province of Sociology in the service of Christian faith would be comparatively simple, for in all its inductions it would be guided by faith in the guidance of an instructing Providence and the inspiration of the living God." (Noah Porter, "Herbert Spencer's Theory of Sociology: A Critical Essay," The Princeton Review, Vol. 56 (6 n.s.), pp. 268-296, 1880. P. 296)

"This, then, is the conclusion in which the greatest authorities confirm the common sense of mankind. We are still in the presence of an awful mystery, infinite, eternal, sifting all knowledge in ignorance, rimming all light with darkness; a mystery before which the mind and heart of man must, of necessity, continue ever to yield the worship of awe; ...." (Richard Heber Newton, Philistinism: Plain Words Concerning Certain Forms of Modern Scepticism, G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1886. P. 152. Newton was an episcopal minister in New York who accepted evolution.)

James Martineau said he was made to "wonder at the weakened faith so evident and so pathetic in the present day. I have faith that a happy reaction is sure to come. Already, in America, the leading exponent of Spencer, Professor Fiske of Harvard, has avowed his return, in spite of Evolution, to his belief in personal immortality. Depend upon it, the nobler minds cannot live on the resources contained within the penfold of this life, and will reclaim their birthright." (Letter from James Martineau to Thomas R. Russell dated October 11, 1885. Quoted in The Life and Letters of James Martineau, edited by James Drummond, 2 Vols., Dodd, Mead and Company, New York, 1902. Vol. 2, p. 447)
"About this time I began to study Darwin's theory of zoologi-
cal development, and absorbed, so far as suited me, from him and
Herbert Spencer, the philosophy of evolution. With the metaphysical
idea of that philosophy I was sufficiently acquainted through my
readings in the works of the Greek sages, Bruno, Spinoza, Goethe,
lastly Hegel. But I perceived at once how the latest aspect of the
theory and the partial proof of it squared with my religion and gave
it substance. I derived, as I suppose all men must do, only so much
from these teachers as might feed a self-forged faith." (John Addin-
son Symonds, A Biography; Compiled from His Papers and Corre-
spondence)

Here is the religious effect of Spencer's First Principles on
the British geologist, Edward Greenly: "On the shelves of the great
reading-dome of the British Museum, early in 1885, I came upon Spen-
cer's First Principles. I had heard much of Herbert Spencer, but
had not read any of his works. The title, however, attracted me:
"The principles of things in general: I should like to know what
those are." So I read the famous first five chapters, and they gave
me a new view of things. Now his doctrines of the Unknowable can,
according to the nature of a reader, be assimilated in two quite
different ways. Be the reader's bent materialistic, it leads him
into Atheism. Be his bent of a spiritual kind, it leads him into
Pantheism. My Nature was religious, so that was the effect on me."
(Edward Greenly, A Hand Through Time, 2 Vols., Thomas Murby & Co.,

When G. W. Foote and William Ramsey, former "lieutenants" of
Charles Bradlaugh, were convicted of blasphemy for their writings
in their weekly journal, the Freethinker, "a memorial asking the
Home Secretary to mitigate Foote's and Ramsey's sentences was
signed by such men as T. H. Huxley, Herbert Spencer, Leslie Ste-
phen, and Frederic Harrison." (Walter L. Arnstein, The Bradlaugh

"I am sure it will be generally acknowledged that our great
teacher's services to religion have been no less sig-
nal than his services to science, unparalleled as these have been
in all the history of the world." (Speech of John Fiske at the
Spencer Farewell Dinner, pp. 50-58. In Herbert Spencer on The
Americans on Herbert Spencer, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1883. P. 58)

"Mr. Spencer has done immense harm. I don't believe that there
is an active, thoughtful minister in the United States that has not
been put in a peck of troubles, and a great deal more than that, by
the intrusion of his views, and the comparison of them with the old
views. I can not for the life of me reconcile his notions with those
of St. Augustine. I can't get along with Calvin and Spencer both.
Sometimes one of them is uppermost, and sometimes the other, and I
have often been disposed to let them fight it out themselves, and
not take any hand in the scrape." (Rev. Henry Ward Beecher's Remarks
at the Spencer Farewell Dinner, pp. 58-59. In Herbert Spencer on The
"... the philosopher whose authority is now invoked to deny to the masses any right to the physical basis of life in this world [a reference to Spencer's change of mind on land nationalization] is also the philosopher whose authority darkens to many all hope of life hereafter ...." (Henry George, A Perplexed Philosopher, Robert Schalkenbach Foundation, New York, 1965. P. xv)

"It is its protest against materialism, its assertion of the supremacy of the moral law, its declaration of God-given rights that are above all human enactments, that despite whatever it may contain of crudity and inconsistency make "Social Statics" a noble book, and in the deepest sense a religiously minded book." (Henry George, A Perplexed Philosopher, Robert Schalkenbach Foundation, New York, 1965. P. 114)

"This scheme of "Synthetic Philosophy" is the most pretentious that ever mortal man undertook, since it embraces no less than an explanation of mankind, without recourse to the hypothesis of Originating Intelligence ...." (Henry George, A Perplexed Philosopher, Robert Schalkenbach Foundation, New York, 1965. P. 110)

"And I have not named the fact, sufficiently manifest to all who are acquainted with my later works, that such teleological implications as are contained in the chapter of "The Divine Idea," in the 1850 edition of Social Statics, and reprinted in the 1877 edition I no longer abide by." (Herbert Spencer, Preface to the new edition of Social Statics, dated January 17, 1877. D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1883. P. xiv)

"The attempt to make so real and material a thing as Science rest on so transcendental a basis as Religion, gave rise, in the case of Mr. Spencer, ... to the most ingenious exhibition of intellectual sleight-of-hand that has been known in modern philosophy." (John Beattie Crozier, Civilization and Progress, Outlines of a New System, 3rd edition, Longmans, Green, & Co., London, 1893. P. 209)

"Nowhere is the strength of the alliance between "scientific inquiry" and "the primal theistic impulse" better exemplified than in the philosophy of Herbert Spencer ...." (Andrew C. Armstrong, Transitional Eras in Thought, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1904. Pp. 120-121) (Armstrong was Professor of Philosophy at Wesleyan University)

Lyman Abbott quoted with approval Spencer's statement that "nothing is more certain than this, that we are ever in the presence of an Infinite and Eternal Energy from which all things proceed." To which he added, "It is an Energy that thinks, and creation is the expression of the thought of this / Infinite and Eternal Energy." (Lyman Abbott, The Evolution of Christianity, Houghton, Mifflin and Company, Boston, 1900. Pp. 245-246)

Strong speaks of the "... moral decadence under the influence of the general philosophical spirit of our day--a spirit of which Mr. Spencer's system is the most conspicuous and typical example." (Augustus Hopkins Strong, D.D., Philosophy and Religion, A. C. Armstrong and Son, New York, 1888. P. 56. This passage was written in 1878)

"The latter's [Spencer's] way of reconciling science and religion is, moreover, too absurdly naif. Find, he says, a fundamental abstract truth on which they can agree, and that will reconcile them. Such a truth, he thinks, is that there is a mystery. The trouble is that it is over just such common truths that quarrels begin. .... Religion claims that the "mystery" is interpretable by human reason; "Science," speaking through Spencer, insists that it is not. The admission of the mystery is the very signal for the quarrel. Moreover, for nine hundred and ninety-nine men out of a thousand and the sense of mystery is the sense of more-to-be-known, not the sense of a More, not to be known." (William James, Memories and Studies, Longmans, Green, and Co., New York, 1911. P. 129)

"He [Spencer] was putting in the forefront of a philosophic system which rejected all theistic hypotheses, a prolixion which sought to placate theists by assuring them that he was not an Atheist. He was one in any natural sense of the term; and no professed Atheists of his time, so far as literature shows, stood on any other ground than his. His assumption that they professed to "explain" the Infinite Universe was wholly astray; and he was poorly misrepresenting them. At the same time, he was as materialistic as any other modern thinker; yet he seeks to repudiate Materialism in general at the expense of writers whom he does not name." (J. M. Robertson, Modern Humanists Reconsidered, Watts & Co., London, 1927. P. 178)

"I have read with much interest your clearly reasoned and eloquent exposition of the religious and ethical bearings of the evolution doctrines. I rejoice very much to see that those doctrines are coming to the front. It is high time that something should be done towards making the people see that there remains for them, not a mere negation of their previous ethical and religious beliefs, which, as you say, have a definite scientific and unshakeable foundation. I hope that your teachings will initiate something like a body of definite adherents who will become the germ of an organization. I have been long looking forward to the time when something of this kind might be done, and it seems to me you are the man to do it." (Letter from Herbert Spencer to Minot J. Savage, apparently quoted in The Christian Register, March 29, 1883. Quoted in Count Goblet d'Alviella, The Contemporary Evolution of Religious Thought in England, America and India, translated by J. Moden, G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1886. P. 220)
"Gradually as the limits of possible cognition are estab-
ish, the causes of conflict between Religion and Science will dimin-
ish. And a permanent peace will be reached when Science becomes
fully convinced that its explanations are proximate and relative;
while Religion becomes fully convinced that the mystery it contem-

"But I had not been many days at sea (en route to England from
Canada, where he was born) before a cloud scarcely larger than a
man's hand appeared on the horizon of my dreams, and gradually, over-
spreading the sky, deepened and darkened until it settled at last
into absolute night; and behind it for a time all the ideals in which
I lived, all the aims and ambitions which I held most dear, wasted
as in a disastrous eclipse. This strange and to me most unexpected
result arose on the perusal of Spencer's 'Principles of Psychology'
--the fourth volume in his System of Philosophy--which I had begun
before leaving home (probably shortly before 1872) and now just fin-
ished, especially of those portions where he explains the precise
relation he conceives to exist between Mind and Brain, and between
both and the great general laws of Matter, Motion, and Force." (John
Beattie Crozier, My Inner Life, Being a Chapter in Personal Evolution

For a clear statement of Spencer's 'crypto-religious' belief
in the Unknowable see Herbert Spencer, "Religion: A Retrospect and
Prospect," The Nineteenth Century, Vol. 15, n.s., pp. 1-12, Jan.,
1884, and for a brilliant reply to this article see Frederic Har-
(Excellent material for quotation is to be found in both articles.)
The controversy continued: James Fitzjames Stephen, "The Unknowable
and The Unknown," Vol. 15, pp. 905-919, June, 1884; H. Spencer,
"Retrogressive Religion," Vol. 16, pp. 3-26, July, 1884; Frederic
H. Spencer, "Last Words about Agnosticism and the Religion of Hu-
manity," Vol. 16, pp. 826-839, Nov., 1884. (This seems to end the
debate. For brilliant and trenchant intellectual swordsmanship,
with sparks flying from highly tempered steel, I know nothing like
it.)

"In this age we have had two men of powerful intellect, who
have sought to construct the universe without calling in God, an
independent moral law, or the immortality of the soul. The one of
these, J. S. Mill, I had the courage to oppose when his reputation
was at its greatest height. His influence has diminished and is now
chiefly in the spheres of Induction and Political Economy, on both
of which he has thrown considerable light. The other (Herbert Spen-
cer) has not so clear or acute a mind, but he is a more powerful
speculator, and is more thoroughly conversant with biology, the
promising science of the day. I place the two together in order to
remark, that they both have brought thinking to a very blank is-
sue." (p. 70) "I am sure that neither (Mill nor Spencer) meets the
demands of our intellect, nor the cravings of our heart." (p. 71)
(James McCosh, Herbert Spencer's Philosophy as Culminated in His
Ethics, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1885)
"There has been published here a book entitled Can the Old Faith live with the New? by the Rev. George Matheson, D.D., evidently a Scotch Presbyterian, for he dates from Annellan, on the Frith of Clyde. It is really a very clever attempt to show that the evolution doctrine is not irreconcilable with the current creed. Accepting evolution in its widest extent as no longer to be gainsaid, and accepting also the metaphysics accompanying it--taking these, indeed, as established--the aim is, as I say, to show that the old faith may live with the new. It will, I think, therefore be an admirable means of introducing evolution doctrines into the ordinary mind. When you get back, pray get hold of it and see whether something cannot be done with it as a reprint. I should think Beecher would rejoice over it and take its doctrines as texts." (Letter from Herbert Spencer to Edward L. Youmans dated March 23, 1885. Quoted in John Fiske, Edward Livingston Youmans, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. P. 386)

In objecting to Spencer's attempt to reconcile religion and science by assigning each its "proper" sphere, J. M. Robertson says: "His final consolation to the religious people is that there is only one of all their notions that is valid, and this solitary notion is one that turns out to be at bottom strictly scientific--the notion, namely, that the Universe is finally incomprehensible.... The one thing left to it is identification of itself with the final negative proposition of Science. That is to say, the "reconciliation" of Religion and Science consists in Religion, as such, disappearing: the "permanent peace" is attained when one combatant has eaten the other up, leaving not even the tail. All that ever constituted concrete or affirmative Religion has been consumed, while concrete or affirmative Science goes on continuously extending its limits. I do not know whether many people continue to call themselves religious who take satisfaction in that singular reconciliation." (John M. Robertson, Modern Humanists, Swan Sonnenschein & Co., London, 1891. P. 226)

"C. C. Everett added the prestige of his deanship of the Harvard Divinity School (1878-1900) to his sponsoring Spencer and the use of scientific ethics in literature. He sees Hegel and Spencer as boring from different sides into the same mountain of truth. Everett's article on "Spencer's Reconciliation of Science and Religion" sees his work as making proper allowances for the "mystery" of "true religion" and making "an immense step toward the perfection of the science of psychology" (Christian Examiner, LXXII, 337-52, May, 1862; See also his "Spencer's Data of Ethics." Unitarian Review, XII, 43ff.) Having "spent a number of terms at the Bowdoin Medical College," Everett said that "if I honor anything in the present age, it is the spirit of scientific investigation. I accept with delight its revelation," as long as it does not deny the soul." (Harry Hayden Clark, "The Influence of Science on American Literary Criticism, 1860-1910, Including the Vogue of Taine," Transactions of the Wisconsin Academy of Sciences, Arts and Letters, Vol. 44, pp. 109-164, 1955. P. 115)
"Now, although Spencer explicitly rejects Pantheism equally with Theism and Atheism, his "indeterminate" conception of an "Absolute Reality," such that all the phenomena of nature are but its manifestation or veil, ends none the less, however little we may translate it into metaphysical terms, in a Pantheistic conception of the universe. It is true he drops the name of God and substitutes for it the term Unknowable, which affords him the double advantage of not being compromised by metaphysical associations and of constantly reminding him of the incomprehensible character of the Supreme Reality. But in rigidly refusing to define this Unknowable, he treats it as Being and as Power; he ascribes to it immanence, unity, omnipresence, and unlimited persistence in time and space; he assigns to it the laws of nature as modes of action; and, finally, with respect to both external and internal phenomena, he regards it as sustaining the relation of substance to manifestation, and even of cause to effect. If, therefore, Spencer deviates from pure and simple Pantheism, it is merely in so far as this confounds God with the universe, while our philosopher sees in the Unknowable not only the substance of the world and the immanent cause of all its phenomena, but, over and above this, a transcendent Power which surpasses all definition." (Count Goblet d'Alviella, The Contemporary Evolution of Religious Thought in England, America and India, translated by J. Moden, G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1886. Pp. 43-44)

"Theologians rejected his "reconciliation" of Science and Religion." (pp. 210-211) "The Christian view of the world assumes that God is, and that God may be known." (p. 208) "We have no interest in an absolute, the infinite, the unconditioned. We have no interest in an absolute out of all relation, in an infinite which is the negation of the finite, or in an unconditioned which has no reference to conditions. We leave them all to Mr. Spencer to make of them what he pleases. For the God we seek to know is the God who has revealed and still reveals Himself in the universe, the Author of its being and its glory, the Preserver of its eternal order. The God of infinite purity and holiness we may know, and with this we are content. The living God we may know, and we do not care to think of Him as being out of all relations, or apart from all conditions. But we may think of Him as the Maker of heaven and of earth, and as the source and goal of all creation." (p. 209) (James Iverach, Christianity and Evolution, third edition, Hodder and Stoughton, London, 1900. Iverach was Professor of Apologetics and Exegesis of the Gospels in the Free Church College, Aberdeen)

Spencer never had any religious beliefs: "The acquisition of scientific knowledge, especially physical, had cooperated with the natural tendency thus shown a dislike of authority and ritual; and had practically excluded the ordinary idea of the supernatural. A breach in the course of causation had come to be, if not an impossible thought, yet a thought never entertained. Necessarily, therefore, the current creed became more and more alien to the set of convictions gradually formed in me, and slowly dropped away unawares. When the change took place it is impossible to say, for it was a change having no marked stages." (Auto. I, 153-3)
"Spirits and demons, as I have shown in the last essay, are only projections of man's own emotional impulses. He turns his emotional cathexis into persons, he peoples the world with them and meets his internal mental processes again outside himself ...." (p. 92) "If we may venture to exploit our hypothesis still further, we may inquire which essential part of our psychological structure is reflected and reproduced in the projective creation of souls and spirits. It could scarcely be disputed that the primitive conception of a soul, however much it may differ from the later, purely immaterial soul, is nevertheless intrinsically the same; that is to say, it assumes that both persons and things are of a double nature and that their known attributes and modifications are distributed between their two component portions. This original duality, to borrow an expression from Herbert Spencer (1893) /The Principles of Sociology, Vol. 1/, is identical with the dualism proclaimed by our current distinction between soul and body and by such ineradicable linguistic expressions of it as the use of phrases like 'beside himself' or 'coming to himself' in relation to fits of rage or fainting (ibid., 144) /The Principles of Sociology, Vol. 1, 3rd edition, p. 144/." (Sigmund Freud, Totem and Taboo, translated by James Strachey, W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., New York, 1952. Pp. 92, 93)
"What is the Biological Sociology of Mr. Herbert Spencer but the application of Natural Law to the Social World?" (Henry Drummond, Natural Law in the Spiritual World, James Pott & Co., Publishers, New York, 1887. P. xiii)

... many clear heads and trusting hearts felt a certain unacknowledged terror in the presence of that philosophy of science generally, and evolution in particular which seemed to be sweeping away what was dearest to their faith ...." (Anonymous, C. C. Everett, "Spencer's Reconciliation of Science and Religion," a review of First Principles, Nos. I-IV, 1860-61, The Christian Examiner, Vol. 72, pp. 337-352, 1862. P. 337. Everett was Dean of Harvard Divinity School 1878-1900)

"So, the day is past, in our judgment, when thoughtful men can believe that there was a creative fiat of God at the introduction of every variety of vegetable and animal life. God may work by means, and a law of variation and of natural selection may have been and probably was the method in which his great design in the vast majority of living forms was carried out." (p. 45) "So we add to the truth of Creation, which ensures God's independence and sovereignty, the other truth of Superintendence, which is inseparable from his omnipresence and control. He is in the universe while he is above it,—immanent while he is transcendent,—able to work upon occasion by direct exercise of will, while his ordinary method of working is through natural law." (p. 46) (Augustus Hopkins Strong, D.D., Philosophy and Religion, A. C. Armstrong and Son, New York, 1888. This was written in 1878)

"Herbert Spencer is now, very properly, being seen, once more, as a well-respected and instructive critic (especially in his essays) of almost everything going on in his day." (M. J. S. Hodge, "England, Bibliographical Essay," in Thomas F. Glick ed., The Comparative Reception of Darwinism, pp. 75-80, University of Texas Press, Austin, 1974. P. 79)
"Justus Buchler: " ... the surprising thing is that we keep burying Herbert Spencer today; and one becomes rather suspicious why we have to bury him so often."

"Lyman Bryson: "He won't stay down!" /

"Buchler: "He won't stay down. Just as every philosopher casts a net into the sea, Spencer casts his net into a very deep sea, and, while his net was not very subtle, it caught the big fish." (Justus Buchler, Mason Gross, and Lyman Bryson, discussion of Herbert Spencer's First Principles; Invitation to Learning, Vol. 1, No. 4 pp. 402-409, 1951-52. Pp. 408-409)

" ... evolution has been revived in a strikingly Spencerian form ...." (J. D. Y. Peel, Herbert Spencer on Social Evolution, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1972. P. x)

"The definitive criticism of Spencer will come after Spencer is assimilated, not before ...." (J. M. Robertson, Explorations, Watts & Co., London, n.d. [ca. 1923] P. 117)

Perhaps quote from Steve Tobias' letter to show how heavily indebted the Harvard seminar on cultural evolution was.


"In many ways, then, the contemporaneity of Spencer, like his achievement, is astounding." (Philip Abrams, The Origins of British Sociology: 1834-1914, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1968. P. 72)

"There are many welcome signs that thoughtful men are beginning to open his Spencer's books again in the search for social and political guidance in these difficult and anxious days." (F. J. C. Hearnshaw, "Herbert Spencer and the Individualists," in The Social & Political Ideas of Some Representative Thinkers of the Victorian Age, ed. by F. J. C. Hearnshaw, pp. 53-83, George G. Harrap & Co., London, 1933. P. 55)

" ... until a few years ago we should have been tempted to describe it Spencer's philosophy as ... out of date in content. Evidently it is not. Spencer's greatest contribution to philosophy was his Theory of General Evolution, and in recent years his ideas have come back to life, or been propped upright again, in the work of men as far apart as Julian Huxley and Father Teilhard de Chardin, to say nothing of the revival of evolutionary sociology and social anthropology." (Peter B. Medawar, The Art of the Soluble, Methuen & Co Ltd, London, 1967. P. 40)
"Certainly Robinson's general background and thought (the stuff of which he may have pulled out of the cultural atmosphere, rather than from textbooks) were in terms of New England transcendentalism, especially as formulated by Emerson. Against this he projected his concepts of materialism—more nearly Spencer's theory of evolution than Darwin's. The implications of materialism troubled him greatly, for this materialism negated Emerson's thought." (Estelle Kaplan, Philosophy in the Poetry of Edwin Arlington Robinson, Columbia University Press, New York, 1940. P. 31)

"Edwin Arlington Robinson was almost as loyal to the synthetic philosopher. He said in a letter written in 1898 to one of his Harvard friends: 'Professor James' book is entertaining and full of good things; but his attitude toward Spencer makes me think of a dream my father once had. He dreamed he met a dog. The dog annoyed him, so he struck him with a stick. Then the dog doubled in size and my father struck him again with the same result. So the thing went on till the universe was pretty much all dog. When my father awoke, he was, or rather had been, halfway down the dog's throat.'" (Malcolm Cowley, "Naturalism in American Literature," In Evolutionary Thought in America, edited by Stow Persons, pp. 300-333. George Braziller, Inc. New York, 1956. [Yale University Press. New Haven, 1950. P. 304.)

"Of course, in a general way I quite understand and agree with that Spencer has done but little service to science. But I believe that he has done great service to thinking, and all the mathematicians in the world would not convince me to the contrary, even though they should all deliver their judgment with the magnificent authority of a ." (Letter from George J. Romanes to Charles Darwin, dated February 6, 1880. Mrs. E. Romanes, The Life and Letters of George John Romanes, Longmans, Green, and Co., London, 1896. P. 96)

"I only got your note at Hereford--on my way home here,-- and I was so furious at your praising Herbert Spencer that I couldn't speak ...." (Letter from John Ruskin to Frederic Harrison dated March 26, 1884. Quoted in E. T. Cook and Alexander Wedderburn, editors, The Works of John Ruskin, Vol. 37, The Letters of John Ruskin, 1870-1889, George Allen, London, 1909. P. 479)

"... a hasty generalisation, such as Spencer's generalisation of evolution, is none the less hasty because what is generalised is the latest scientific theory." (Bertrand Russell, Our Knowledge of the External World, W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., New York, 1929. P. 256)

"Evolutionism, as I shall try to show, is not a truly scientific philosophy, either in its method or in the problems it considers. The true scientific philosophy is something more arduous and more aloof, appealing to less mundane hopes, and requiring a severer discipline for its successful practice." (Bertrand Russell, Our Knowledge of the External World, W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., New York, 1929. P. 12)

"... evolutionism must be reckoned as having had Herbert Spencer for its first philosophical representative; but in recent times it has become, chiefly through William James and M. Bergson, far bolder and far more searching in its innovations than it was in the hands of Herbert Spencer." (Bertrand Russell, Our Knowledge of the External World, W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., New York, 1929. P. 4)

"The typical Protestant freethinker has not the slightest desire to do anything of which his neighbors disapprove apart from the advocacy of heretical opinions. Home Life with Herbert Spencer, by Two (one of the most delightful books in existence), mentions the common opinion of that philosopher [that is, what was thought about Spencer] / to the effect that "there is nothing to be said for him but that he has a good moral character." It would not have occurred to Herbert Spencer, to Bentham, to the Mills, or to any of the other British freethinkers who maintained in their works that pleasure is the end of life--it would not have occurred. I say, to any of these men to seek pleasure themselves ...." (Bertrand Russell, Why I Am Not a Christian, Simon and Schuster, New York, 1957. Pp. 124-125)
"There was much in both the thought and personality of Herbert Spencer to commend him to the radical intelligentsia of late 19th-century Russia. A nonconformist and an iconoclast, Spencer expressed a view which Nicholas Mikhailovsky heartily endorsed that:

"To the true reformer no institution is sacred, no belief above criticism. Everything shall conform to equity and reason. Nothing shall be saved by its prestige."


"Only two volumes of publisher Nicholas Tiblen's projected seven-volume translation of Spencer's works appeared in Russia, because of Tiblen's flight abroad after the bankruptcy of the Contemporary Review. Spencer was amazed at the reception he received in Russia (see his Autobiography, London, 1926, ii. 126, 288, and esp. 308-9), and was apparently convinced by Tiblen that the latter's flight abroad was the result of charges of treason by the Russian authorities for distributing his (Spencer's) book:


"But I want to read Spencer--Herbert Spencer. I have never been able to get his works." [Said by [no first name given] Nazarenko, "the peasant deputy [to the Russian Duma, ca. 1906] for Karkoff," "... far the most remarkable of the peasant deputies."


"Spencer's works were introduced into Russia in 1866, when the first of a projected seven-volume translation of Spencer's works was published in St. Petersburg. Nicholas Mikhailovsky systematically studied this latest prophet from the West in the early months of his forced withdrawal from St. Petersburg; two articles on Spencer, which appeared in July 1867, mark the beginning of this new interest." "Literary Review," in Glasny Sud, Vol. X, pp. 425-442, July 1 and 20, 1867. (James H. Billington, Mikhailovsky and Russian Populism, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1958. P. 30)

"Nicholas Mikhailovsky also saw in Spencer a man who sensed danger in the growing power of all authorities, especially that of the state." (James H. Billington, Mikhailovsky and Russian Populism, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1958. P. 30)

"In Russia the theory [Spencer's laissez faire principle] appealed because it emphasized freedom, and in those days Russia was struggling for freedom." (Nicholas S. Timasheff, Sociological Theory: Its Nature and Growth, third edition, Random House, New York, 1967. P. 44)
"... his [I. M. Sechenov, the "father of Russian physiology"] desire to understand and explain psychical life on the basis of Spencer's general principles of organic evolution, by means of the "disintegration" and "integration" of characteristics." (Y. P. Frolov, Pavlov and His School, translated from the Russian by C. P. Dutt, Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co. Ltd., London, 1938. P. 9)

"We [Masters and Victor Yarros, a Russian Jew he met in Chicago] talked Kant and Schopenhauer; and he told me about the conditions in Russia, from which and from the police he had escaped after they had raided a meeting of young men where Spencer's System of Synthetic Philosophy was being read and discussed." (Edgar Lee Masters, Across Spoon River; An Autobiography, Octagon Books, New York, 1969. P. 184)


A Russian edition of the Epitome of the Synthetic Philosophy of Herbert Spencer, by F. Howard Collins, was published in 1892. (So indicated on the page facing the title page of The Epitome of the Synthetic Philosophy of Herbert Spencer, 4th edition, Williams and Norgate, London, 1897.)

In articulating his sociological theory, Mikhailovskii relied heavily on a minute criticism of two dominant currents in Western sociological thought: Comtian positivism and Spencerian evolutionism. He fully accepted Comte's interpretation of social progress in terms of the evolution of thought and secularization of wisdom, but he rejected Comte's unfavorable attitude toward the individualism of the eighteenth century philosophers. He endorsed Spencer's interpretation of universal evolution as a process leading to the increased diversification of nature and society, but he rejected the English philosopher's organismic model of society. (Alexander Vucinich, Social Thought in Tsarist Russia, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976, p. 29)

Mikhailovskii criticized "the unscientific and crude habit" of transferring "simple truths of the natural sciences to the complex phenomena of culture and social life", a habit which was popular among the intelligentsia of the 1860s. He was largely responsible for a noticeable decline in Russia of the popularity of Spencer's "organic theory", which invited a treatment of human society as an organism and of various institutions as specific organs, and which made sociology a mere extension of biology. (Alexander Vucinich, Social Thought in Tsarist Russia, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976, p. 29)
Petr Tkachev, the revolutionary Populist, was looking for a definition of happiness. Walicki writes:

"Looking for such a definition, Tkachev made use of the "excellent and universal", "scientific and objective" definition of life he had found in Spencer's *Principles of Biology*. This indicates, he concluded, that happiness consists in the reconciliation of harmonious balance of man's needs and the means he has at his disposal to satisfy them. The problem, as Tkachev saw it, was that human needs were very diverse and that some could only be satisfied at the expense of others. The artificial needs of the "highly developed individualities" of the privileged minority were satisfied at the expense of the working masses, who were denied even the bare necessities of life". (A. Walicki, *A History of Russian Thought from the Enlightenment to Marxism* (Stanford University Press: California, 1979)

Herbert Spencer accepted Kovalevskii's views on the emergence of private property in land as a result of successive partitions of land originally owned by individual clans. (A. Vucinich, *Social Thought in Tsarist Russia*, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1976, p. 154)

Kareev argued that the Russian "subjective sociology" and Durkheim's "objective sociology" are not mutually exclusive. Both are united in their opposition to Spencer's insistence on keeping value judgements outside the realm of sociology. (A. Vucinich, *Social Thought in Tsarist Russia*, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1976, p. 52)

In other, mostly theoretical, studies, Kovalevskii viewed the comparative method as the scientific tool for comparing institutions or communities existing in different societies but representing the same phases of universal evolution. He thought that Spencer erred in applying an organismic model to the study of human society but was absolutely correct in emphasizing the great scientific potential of the comparative method, the safest path to a scientific explanation of "the origin and development of human society". The basic weakness of the comparative method, as employed by both Spencer and Kovalevskii, was that it used "empirical evidence" exclusively as illustrative material for a priori abstractions and that it relied heavily on an uncritical use of social and cultural "survivals". (A. Vucinich, *Social Thought in Tsarist Russia* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1976, p. 160)

"There was much in both the thought and personality of Herbert Spencer to commend him to the radical intelligentsia [of 19th century Russia]. A nonconformist and an iconoclast, Spencer expressed a view which Mikhailovsky heartily endorsed that: "To the true reformer no institution is sacred, no belief above criticism. Everything shall conform to equity and reason. Nothing shall be saved by its prestige." Spencer's faith in the individual personality as an end in itself and more than a mere economic entity appealed to Mikhailovsky's Proudhonist sentiments. Mikhailovsky also saw in Spencer a man who sensed danger in the growing power of all authorities, especially that of the state. Most important, Spencer's concept of progress as a continual process of dissociation from accepted norms, in a progression 'from homogenous to the heterogeneous', offered a convenient 'scientific' formula for a position already held by Mikhailovsky's associates." (James Billington, Mikhailovsky and Russian Populism, Oxford University Press, New York, 1958. P. 30)

"Your kind invitation to deliver the Herbert Spencer Lecture of this year, apart from the honour and pleasure it brings me, enables me to perform a small act of piety. On the whole, with qualifications which will appear presently, I belong to Herbert Spencer's camp; and I am glad of so favourable an opportunity to offer a grain of propitiatory incense to his shade, which I feel to be wandering in our midst somewhat reproachfully." (George Santayana, "The Unknowable," The Herbert Spencer Lecture for 1923, The Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1923. P. 3)
"Olive met Herbert Spencer, too, in London. Ever since making acquaintance with his writings in Basutoland, when "Waldo's Stranger" lent her First Principles, she had eagerly desired to meet him. She used to give a somewhat humorous description of the great man whom she so revered and to whom she was under such great an intellectual debt. She said he was tall and lank, and walked about saying scornfully (apropos of some occurrence or remark), What was a lord to him: he cared nothing for lords! Olive's comment was that of course lords were nothing to him. How could they be anything to so great a man? It was unnecessary for him to say so, much less to say so defiantly. Something had no doubt irritated the sensitive organization of the great man. He talked to her a little and asked her if she played bowls, which he said (in philosophical language, no doubt!) was a pretty good game. She came to the conclusion she had no wish to see him again or any other great person under such circumstances." (S. C. Cronwright-Schreiner, The Life of Olive Schreiner, Little, Brown, and Company, Boston, 1923. Pp. 190-191)

"You ask me whether Spencer? (Near the end of Spencer's last illness, a friend of his read Olive's allegory, "The Hunter," to him as he lay very ill in bed.) is to me what he was. If one has a broken leg and the doctor sets it, when once it is set one may be said to have no more need of the doctor, nevertheless one always walks on his leg. I think that is how it is with regard to myself and Herbert Spencer. I have read all his works since, some three of four times, now I read him no more. He helped me to believe in a unity underlying all nature; that was a great thing. But he has nothing else to give me now." (Letter from Olive Schreiner to Havelock Ellis dated April 8, 1884. Quoted in S. C. Cronwright-Schreiner, The Life of Olive Schreiner, Little, Brown, and Company, Boston, 1923. P. 82)

"The book that the Stranger gives to Waldo [In The Story of an African Farm] was intended to be Spencer's First Principles. When I was up in Basutoland [at the mission station of Hermon in June, 1871] with an old aunt and cousin, one stormy, rainy night, there was a knock at the door; they were afraid to go and open it, so I went. There was a stranger there like Waldo's Stranger exactly. There was no house within fifty miles, so he slept there; the next morning he talked with me for a little while and after that I saw him twice for half an hour; and then I never saw him again. [The stranger was a man named Willie Bertram, who died in 1878.] He lent me Spencer's First Principles. I always think that when Christianity burst on the dark Roman world it was what that book was to me. I was in such complete, blank atheism. [In about 1884, Havelock] Ellis took down the following statement from Olive; it seems to qualify parts of the letter: "When Olive met Bertram, who was completely atheistic, she was still theistic though freethinking, and he rather shocked her." I did not even believe in my own nature, in any right or wrong, or certainty. I can still feel myself lying before the fire to read it. I had only three days." (She was 16 years, 3 months at the time.) (S. C. Cronwright-Schreiner, The Life of Olive Schreiner, Little, Brown, and Company, Boston, 1923. Letter from Olive Schreiner to Havelock Ellis dated March 28, 1884. Pp. 81-82, 82n.)
"Early in January [1901] a number of friends in England, Herbert Spencer among them (also Dr. John Brown, whom I suspect to have been a prime mover), subscribed and sent her a sum of money (over £ 150, I think)." (S. C. Cronwright-Schreiner, The Life of Olive Schreiner, Little, Brown, and Company, Boston, 1927. P. 325)

Carl Schurz suggested that the Civil War might have been averted if the South had been familiar with his Social Statics; ..." (Richard Hofstadter, Social Darwinism in American Thought, revised edition, The Beacon Press, Boston, 1955. P. no reference to source given.)

"Nineteen years ago, after the battle of Missionary Ridge and an expedition to Knoxville for the relief of Burnside, I was with my command in a winter camp near Chattanooga, where, for some time, our horses suffered so much from want of food that many of them died, and where we had, at times, not salt enough to make our meat and crackers palatable. But I had Herbert Spencer's "Social Statics" with me, which, in the long winter nights in my tent, I read by the light of a tallow-candle, and in which I found at least an abundance of mental salt to make up for the painful absence of the material article." (Edward L. Youmans, editor, Herbert Spencer on The Americans and The Americans on Herbert Spencer, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1883. P. 41) (Remarks of Mr. Carl Schurz, pp. 40-45)

Schurz called Spencer " ... a hero of thought, devoting his powers and his life to the vindication of the divine right of science against the intolerant authority of traditional belief ...." (Remarks of Mr. Carl Schurz, pp. 40-45, in Edward L. Youmans, editor, Herbert Spencer on The Americans and The Americans on Herbert Spencer, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1883. P. 45)
"Herbert Spencer was not a social scientist, he was a social philosopher." (David W. Noble, The Paradox of Progressive Thought, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 1958. P. 80)

"Spencer was not a bad scientist; he was not a scientist at all." (A. O. J. Cockshut, The Unbelievers, Collins, London, 1964. P. 79)

"Spencer was not really a scientist at all, and devoted all his strength to a doomed effort to make a system of universal knowledge." (A. O. J. Cockshut, The Unbelievers, Collins, London, 1964. P. 10)

"First, Mr. Spencer had not a speculative genius, properly so-called, but he had in a remarkable degree a genius for generalisation and a power for expressing abstract ideas in concrete terms. It was by virtue of these qualities that he rendered conspicuous service to scientific speculation. He related and co-ordinated ideas that had grown up separately and had been allowed to dwell in separation." (A. M. Fairbairn, "Herbert Spencer," The Contemporary Review, Vol. 85, pp. 1-11, 1904. P. 10)

Spencer was remarkable for grasping the general properties of things and for gaining insights by comparing and contrasting broad ranges of phenomena.

"Now, the first characteristic mark of the Spencerian philosophy is that its vast superstructure is reared not independently of science, still less in spite of science, but out of the very materials that science itself has furnished." (William Henry Hudson, An Introduction to the Philosophy of Herbert Spencer, revised edition, Watts & Co., London, 1906. P. 44)

"But no one now supposes Spencer to have been a scientist. He was a salesman of ideas, and we no longer like his goods." (p. 239) (Crane Brinton--English Political Thought in the Nineteenth Century. Ernest Benn Limited. London, 1933)

Spencer looked forward to the unification of knowledge, to "one science, which has for its object-matter the continuous transformation which the universe undergoes." (Quoted by J. Arthur Thomson in Herbert Spencer. J. M. Dent & Co. London, 1906, p. 212).
"No thinker surpasses him in the power of linking and coordinating ideas, and zeal for logical system." (Gabriel Compayré, Herbert Spencer and Scientific Education, translated from the French by Maria E. Findlayson, Thomas Y. Crowell & Co., New York, 1907. P. 15)

"The system of Herbert Spencer, the greatest exponent of the philosophy of evolution, is based wholly on the results of scientific investigation. It consists of a series of more or less broad and more or less probable deductions from the facts and laws already known." (David Starr Jordan, Foot-Notes to Evolution. D. Appleton and Company. New York, 1898. P. 66.)

"A friend who possesses extensive botanical knowledge, once remarked to that, had I known as much about the details of plant-structure as botanists do, I never should have reached those generalizations concerning plant-morphology which I had reached." (Auto. I, 336)

"Spencer's philosophy of the known was monistic, cleansing, and destructive. It rested on a profound scepticism. It dismissed from knowledge the lady of the dreams of all the philosophers from Plato to Kant, whether they believed that the human mind had some intuitive grasp of truth, or whether, with Wordsworth, that it had fleeting memories of the immortal sea which brought us hither. But in the everyday world, Spencer held, the world of experiment and observation, there was an ever-growing body of relative but consistent truth, a body always comprehending more and more discrete facts in an orderly hierarchy of Causes, Effects, and Laws. It was a rational and determined system with no place in it for the undetermined and lawless." (Sir Peter Chalmers Mitchell, Materialism and Vitalism in Biology, The Herbert Spencer Lecture for 1930, The Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1930. P. 5.)

"... the failure of historians of science seriously to consider Spencer at all. Their books are symptomatic of the mutual isolation between the study of the history of science and the study of social theory, while their subject is someone who never made that distinction." (Robert M. Young, Darwin's Metaphor, Nature's Place in Victorian Culture, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1985. P. 185)

p. 17 "Spencer belonged in the tradition of empirical science rather than that of speculative philosophy." Somehow, I balk at this assertion. I would not want to classify Spencer with "speculative" philosophy--like, say, some of Plato's writings on society. But it seems to me that, if Spencer may properly be called a scientist, he was quite a different (kind?) of scientist than Darwin was. The Origin of Species and Principles of Sociology seem to me to be sufficiently different from the standpoint of science and philosophy that this difference should be stated. L. A. White
“Oddly enough, Spencer, who was no more a practicing scientist than [Samuel] Butler and who was in truth a far more deductive, a priori, unscientific mind, was gravely attended to by the official Darwinians.” (Jacques Barzun, Darwin, Marx, Wagner; Critique of a Heritage. Revised second edition. Doubleday & Company, Inc. Garden City, N.Y., 1958. P. 110.)

“All along I have looked at things through my own eyes and not through the eyes of others. I believe that it is in some measure because I have gone direct to Nature, and have escaped the warping/ influences of traditional beliefs, that I have reached the views I have reached...” (Letter to Sr Leslie Stephen, July 2, 1899. Quoted in David Duncan, The Life and Letters of Herbert Spencer. Methuen & Co. London, 1908. pp. 418-419)

“He did a little amateur work in biology, but he never grasped scientific method. His scientific ideas are often derived from secondary sources without empirical verification. He generalizes laws without proof, draws facts haphazardly from his own experience, and is fond of asserting his beliefs as 'obvious'.” (Ann Low-Beer, Herbert Spencer, Education Thinkers Series, The Macmillan Company, London, 1969. P. 10)

It is no doubt significant in accounting for Spencer's contributions to science that, although familiar with data from many sciences, he was not encumbered with the overwhelming details of any one. Spencer did not fail to perceive and comment on this advantage: "A friend who possesses extensive botanical knowledge, once remarked to me that, had I known as much about the details of plant-structures as botanists do, I never should have reached those generalizations concerning plant-morphology which I had reached.”

Yet Spencer was much more of a scientist than Darwin in that he dealt with many more fields of science and was much more concerned with the philosophy of science and scientific method. And Spencer was much more of a sociologist than Marx in encompassing more human societies, in many more aspects, and societies over a much longer period of development.
"When Herbert Spencer in his later days expunged from his Social Statics the irresistible arguments for Land Nationalization by which he anticipated Henry George, we could not admit that the old Spencer had any right to do this violence to the young Spencer, or was less bound either to confute his position or admit it than if the two had been strangers to one another. Having had this lesson, we do not feel free to alter even those passages which no longer represent our latest conclusions." [Shaw wrote this in 1908 about essays being then reprinted but first published in 1889.] ([George] Bernard Shaw, Essays in Fabian Socialism, Constable and Company, Limited, London, 1962. P. 298)

"In reading this one is reminded of Mr Herbert Spencer's habit of assuming that whatever is not white must be black." ([George] Bernard Shaw, Essays in Fabian Socialism, Constable and Company Limited, London, 1932. P. 87)

"In the days when Herbert Spencer's brightest pupils, from Mrs. Sidney Webb to Grant Allen, turned from him to the Socialism in which he could see nothing but "the coming slavery," we could respect him whilst confuting him. Today we neither respect our opponents nor confute them. We simply, like Mrs Stetson Gillman's prejudice slayer, "walk through them as if they were not there."" ([George] Bernard Shaw, Essays in Fabian Socialism, Constable and Company Limited, London, 1932. Pp. 293-294)

"Herbert Spencer quite naturally and unaffectedly lived the life of a great man, and played the great game all through; and whoever does not see this and take off his hat to him, does not know a gentleman when he meets one. When Mr Havelock Ellis [Shaw appears to mean Hugh Elliot/] faces an ungrateful and ungenerous posterity, and calls for three cheers for Herbert Spencer, I cannot believe that any decent soul will refuse to hail his name with three times three if he really knows what Spencer did and how much the world owed to it in his time." (George Bernard Shaw, "Has Herbert Spencer Really Triumphant?", Review of Herbert Spencer by Hugh Elliot /from The Nation, March 17, 1917/, in The Works of Bernard Shaw, Vol. 29, Pen Portraits and Reviews, pp. 259-267, Constable & Co Ltd, London, 1931. Pp. 259-260)

"Next moment Mr Chesterton is himself Calvinistically scorning me for advocating Herbert Spencer's notion of teaching by experience, and asks, with one of his great Thor-hammer strokes, whether a precipice can be taught by experience, to which I reply, in view of the new railway up the Jungfrau, that I should rather think it can." (George Bernard Shaw, "Chesterton on Shaw," review of George Bernard Shaw by Gilbert K. Chesterton, /from The Nation, August 25, 1909/, in The Works of Bernard Shaw, Vol. 29, Pen Portraits and Reviews, Constable & Co Ltd, London, 1931. Pp. 91-92)
Shaw says that Spencer "... would have been lynched if the common Englishman of his day had been intelligent or erudite enough to find out what he really believed and disbelieved—especially what he disbelieved." (George Bernard Shaw, "Has Herbert Spencer Really Triumphed?", Review of Hugh Elliot's Herbert Spencer (from The Nation, March 17, 1917), in The Works of Bernard Shaw, Vol. 29, Pen Portraits and Reviews, pp. 259-267, Constable & Co Ltd, London, 1931. P. 260)

"Even those who take no interest in his philosophy will feel a quaint affection for the man who, when he was not faithfully straightening out the tangled thought of his century, was inspiring himself with Meyerbeer's music; giving up his horse because, on its discovery of his intense dislike to coerce any living creature, it went slower than he walked, and finally grazed by the roadside without respect for the philosopher's pressing appointments; refusing the proffered affection of George Eliot because she was not as beautiful as the Venus of Milo; and, when his landlady objected to his describing her in the census paper as "the lady with whom Mr Herbert Spencer lives," pondered on her unaccountable recalcitrance for an hour, and then altered the entry to "the lady who lives with Mr Herbert Spencer." Speculative criticism may yet conjecture that he must have been the original of Wagner's Parsifal, "der reine Thor durch Mitleid wissend." All the horses in paradise are probably now struggling for the honor of carrying him at full gallop to whatever destination he may be seeking uncoercively." (George Bernard Shaw, "Has Herbert Spencer Really Triumphed?", Review of Herbert Spencer by Hugh Elliot (from The Nation, March 17, 1917), in The Works of Bernard Shaw, Vol. 29, Pen Portraits and Reviews, pp. 259-267, Constable & Co Ltd, London, 1931. P. 260)
"Obediently following Spencer, whom he never names, he [Georg Simmel] brings into line, one after another, the characteristic Spencerian concepts of differentiation and integration, individuation and environment, without which his metaphysical sociology would not exist ...." (James Collier, "Natural Selection in Sociology," The American Journal of Sociology, Vol. 14, pp. 352-370, 1908. P. 352)

"He [W. Robertson Smith] spent a month in Cairo, again under the hospitable roof of Dr. Sandilands Grant, and diligently read Arabic with the friendly sheikh of the previous winter. At every turn "totem facts" crowded in upon him, "crying aloud to be registered." Though studying as hard as ever, he entered even more than before into the social life of the place, and saw something of many of the European visitors, including Mr. Herbert Spencer, whom we regret to learn he regarded as a very tedious person." (John Sutherland Black and George Chrystal, The Life of William Robertson Smith, Adam and Charles Black, London, 1912. P. 333)

"I am working at the development theory for my homily [a thesis he was preparing in one of his theology courses in New College, Edinburgh/... In Spencer's book [undoubtedly First Principles] the fallacies are very obvious. The manner in which he contrives really to assume the materiality of the soul in particular (which of course is the foundation of the whole doctrine) is very ingenious, but contains an egregious petitio principii. Of course the doctrine of the correlation of physical forces forms a great feature in the argument. I think, however, / that I can show that the doctrine is not understood by the development school, and that the doctrine of the dissipation of energy directly disproves the theory of evolution. From this point of view I think I might bring into my homily something different from the common arguments...." (William Robertson Smith, quoted in John Sutherland Black and George Chrystal, The Life of William Robertson Smith, Adam and Charles Black, London, 1912. Pp. 80-81)
"But despite his reputation as a generalizer of natural selection, Spencer's conception of struggle was different from that of most Social Darwinists; and he continued to oppose the sanctification of colonial wars, although he had given war a great role in the past formation of society ...." (J. D. Y. Peel, Herbert Spencer on Social Evolution, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1972. P. xxxviii)

"Between 1870 and 1890 his Spencer's brand of Social Darwinism reigned supreme over many of the best minds of the American Right, and certainly no foreign philosopher ever had a more visible effect on American thought." (Clinton Rossiter, Conservatism in America, 2nd edition, Vintage Books, New York, 1962. P. 151)

"Spencer was alive and active throughout this period, and so was his cosmic conception of evolution. A rival view was that of the social Darwinists who turned from the process of differentiation (basic in Spencer's thought) to stress the mechanisms of natural selection and survival of the fittest, whether individuals, groups, or social norms." (Nicholas S. Timasheff, Sociological Theory: Its Nature and Growth, 3rd edition, Random House, New York, 1967. P. 127)

"We raise questions of conduct in this matter Eugenics very different from those raised by Mr. Herbert Spencer and the other first hasty generalizers about evolution, who seemed to suggest that if shopkeepers were encouraged to compete for business and clergymen for congregations, a process of the "survival of the fittest" would automatically set in, which would rapidly improve the race ...." (Note Wallas' narrow conception of Spencer's evolutionism.) (Graham Wallas, Men and Ideas, George Allen & Unwin Ltd, London, 1940. P. 90)

In a review of George Eliot, a Biography, by Gordon S. Haight, the anonymous reviewer in Time Magazine refers to Herbert Spencer as: "The notorious apostle of ethical Darwinism ...." (Time, October 11, 1968, pp. 108, 110. P. 108)

"Fostering the good-for-nothing at the expense of the good, is an extreme cruelty. It is a deliberate stirring-up of miseries for future generations. There is no greater curse to posterity than that of bequeathing to them an increasing population of imbeciles and idlers and criminals." This aspect of Spencer's thought was to provide a basis for the most vigorous branch of applied sociology in Britain in the first twenty years of the next century--Eugenics." (Philip Abrams, The Origins of British Sociology: 1834-1914, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1968. P. 74)

In Social Statics came Spencer's first full statement of that position which later became known as 'Social Darwinism,' but which with much greater justification should have been known as 'Social Spencerism.' (p. 322 of Social Statics).
"Fostering the good-for-nothing at the expense of the good, is an extreme cruelty. It is a deliberate storing-up of miseries for future generations. There is no greater curse to posterity than that of bequeathing them an increasing population of imbeciles and idlers and criminals." (Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1891. Pp. 344-345)

"The proper application of the principle of natural selection to societies is to see a competition of societal forms for survival, but what Spencer sees is a competition for survival of the members of any society. Spencer sees society as properly a proving ground in which the "breed" is to be improved by the elimination of those members of society who fail in the competitive activities traditionalized in the society. "Social Darwinism," then, has nothing directly to do with societal evolution. It has to do with the continuing biological evolution of the human species, with "improving the breed," in which the proper function of society is to increase the selective pressure." (Gerlgd Weiss, letter of May 4, 1966).

"If we wish to father "social Darwinism" on any single figure of the time, a better choice by far than Darwin would be Herbert Spencer." (Krishan Kumar, "Sociological Darwinism," Biology and Human Affairs, Vol. 40, pp. 71-76, 1975. P. 73)

"When, at the close of the nineteenth century, the national aspirations were breaking upon foreign shores, John Fiske and others could invoke Spencerian formulas about the survival of the fittest to put the stamp of the cosmos upon the advance of the Anglo-Americans to world dominion over lesser breeds." (Donald Fleming, "Social Darwinism," in Paths of American Thought, ed. by Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., and Morton White, pp. 123-146, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1963. Pp. 126-127)

"... Eugenics, was foreshadowed by Spencer ...." (Victor Branford, Interpretations and Forecasts, Mitchell Kennerley, New York, 1914. P. 3)

"There is even some justification for the view that Spencer was more responsible than Darwin himself for the "social Darwinism" ...." (George Nasmyth, Social Progress and the Darwinian Theory, G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1916. P. 29)

It is necessary to distinguish between the operation of natural selection on societies and "Social Darwinism," the belief that is best not to relieve the condition of the poor and the suffering, since their rapid elimination will assist the process of social evolution. The former is a scientific principle, the latter a political doctrine. Spencer's advocacy of the second can be decried without it in any way affecting the validity of the first.
Those few social scientists who have taken the trouble to read Spencer have themselves been partisans of a social philosophy opposed to Spencer's, that they have been too concerned in refuting Spencer's philosophy of politics, than in separating from it and evaluating independently, his social science. Thus partisanship on the opposite side has been responsible for much of Spencer's contemporary oblivion. (RLC)


"... the once-universal, and still-general, belief that societies arise by manufacture, instead of arising, as they do, by evolution." (Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1891. P. 122)

"... a major tenet of Spencer's evolutionism--that the desirable is also inevitable--is utterly repudiated, and any theory of social change today must admit a large element of sheer contingency about the future." (J. D. Y. Peel, Herbert Spencer on Social Evolution, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1972. P. xliii)

"... for every society, and for each stage in its evolution, there is an appropriate mode of feeling and thinking; and ... no mode of feeling and thinking not adapted to its degree of evolution, and to its surroundings, can be permanently established. Though not exactly, still approximately, the average opinion in any age and country, is a function of the social structure in that age and country." (Study, p. 356)

"And yet as, for the carrying-on of social life, the old must continue so long as the new is not ready, this perpetual compromise is an indispensable accompaniment of a normal development." (Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1891. P. 396)

"Is it not a truism that without divergence from that which exists, whether it be in politics, religion, manners, or anything else, there can be no progress? And is it not an obvious corollary that the temporary ills accompanying the divergence, are out-balanced by the eventual good?" (Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1891. Pp. 238-239)
Radcliffe-Brown described himself as "one who has all his life accepted the hypothesis of social evolution as formulated by Spencer as a useful working hypothesis in the study of human society." ("Social Evolution," in Method in Social Anthropology; Selected Essays by A. R. Radcliffe-Brown, ed. by M. N. Srinivas, pp. 178-189, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1958. P. 189.)

"In conformity with the law of evolution of all organised bodies, that general functions are gradually separated into the special functions constituting them, there have grown up in the social organism for the better performance of the governmental office, an apparatus of law-courts, judges, and barristers; a national church, with its bishops and priests; and a system of caste, titles, and ceremonies, administered by society at large." (Herbert Spencer, "On Manners and Fashion," Westminster Review, Vol. 2, pp. 178-179, April, 1854. Reprinted in Essays on Education, Etc., pp. 198-238, J. M. Dent & Sons Ltd. London, 1911. P. 238)


"... out of the properties of man, intellectual and emotional, there inevitably arise certain laws of social processes ...." (Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1891. P. 152)


"... there is no way from the lower forms of social life to the higher, but one passing through small successive modifications." (Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1891. P. 402)

"For development is far from inevitable; and we need a theory which foresees the search for universal mechanisms and concentrates instead on detailed analysis of historical situations." (J. D. Y. Peel, "Spencer and the Neo-Evolutionists," Sociology, Vol. 3, pp. 173-191, 1969. P. 188)
"... no teaching or policy can advance ... [social evolution] beyond a certain normal rate, which is limited by the rate of organic modification in human beings ...." (Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1891. P. 401)

"Spencer's theory of social evolution is one of the most securely based generalizations of sociology; and the disdain in which it is held by all those who never took the trouble to read it well shows how widespread is the addiction to fads in the study of society. Spencer conceived evolution as the general movement of human societies towards increasing differentiation and integration, and the concomitant increase in size. There can be no doubt about the existence of such a trend in the history of mankind; and as far as prehistory is concerned we have now archaeological proofs, whereas Spencer had to rely on deductions from the rudimentary ethnography of his day. Nor did Spencer ever maintain that all societies must pass through the same stages—the notion which was later baptized as the doctrine of unilinear evolution. On the contrary, the mechanism of evolution operates, according to him, through destruction and absorption of the simpler by the more complex entities." (Stanislav Andreski, The Uses of Comparative Sociology, University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1969. Pp. 73-74)

"It is possible that Spencer might have gone some way to tackling new forms of industrialism if he had developed his neglected notion of integration, which was to accompany differentiation. But the integration he refers to is the growing internal cohesion of each differentiated part, not any higher integration or control of the whole system." (J. D. Y. Peel, Herbert Spencer on Social Evolution, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1972. P. xxxvi)

"Social evolution was a product of the infancy of sociology. It is much to be hoped that its attempted revival is not the symptom of a second childhood." (J. D. Y. Peel, "Spencer and the Neo-Evolutionists," Sociology, Vol. 3, pp. 173-191, 1969. P. 188)

"The grand intellectual sweep of Spencer's philosophy, which linked inorganic, organic, and superorganic (social) evolution, tended to be lost in the reaction to overgeneralization and in the special concerns of different scientific disciplines. Yet modern astrophysicists, and particularly the works of scientifically orient- ed cosmologists, have made authoritative the conception of an "evolving universe."" (Wilbert E. Moore, Social Change. Prentice-Hall, Inc., Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1963. P. 117)

"But it ["the evolutionary style of social theory"] is profoundly anti-historical, for it aims to show us universal mechanisms of change, rather than the individual historical configurations out of which change comes about." [Of course, the latter are exemplifications of general mechanisms of change.--RIC] (J. D. Y. Peel, "Spencer and the Neo-Evolutionists," Sociology, Vol. 3, pp. 173-191, 1969. P. 183)

"Once more, we are liable to be led away by superficial, trivial facts, from the deep-seated and really-important facts they indicate. Always the details of social life, the interesting events, the curious things which serve for gossip, will, if we allow them, hide from us the vital connexion and the vital actions underneath. Every social phenomenon results from an immense aggregate of general and special causes; and we may either take the phenomenon itself as intrinsically momentous, or may take it along with other phenomena, as indicating some inconspicuous truth of real significance." (Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1891. P. 96)

"... Spencer declared that he demurred "entirely to the supposition, which is implied in the book [Henry George's Progress and Poverty], that by any possible social arrangement whatever, the distress that humanity has had to suffer in the course of civilization could have been prevented. The whole process, with all its horrors and tyrannies, and slaveries and wars, and abominations of all kinds, has been an inevitable one accompanying the survival and spread of the strongest, and the consolidation of small tribes into larger societies; ...."" (Martin Fichman, An Elusive Victorian; The Evolution of Alfred Russel Wallace. University of Chicago Press. Chicago, 2004. P. 221)

"Spencer's unsuccessful attempt to provide a theory of evolution (i.e., the mechanism of change by adaptation and the inheritance of acquired characteristics) has shown us how such a theory is impossible; Bellah and Parsons have revived some of the terminology without the determinacy which made Spencer's theory, in its time, a good one. Fundamentally a theory of social evolution is impossible because, whereas all determinate sociological theories include a tacit clause saying 'other things being equal' (thereby allowing continual modification), there are no 'other things' in a cosmic theory like that of evolution. The theory must either be a completely all-inclusive and correct 'theory of things,' or it is, as theory, worthless." (J. D. Y. Peel, "Spencer and the Neo-Evolutionists," Sociology, Vol. 3, pp. 173-191, 1969. P. 179)

"Nevertheless, if social evolution means anything definite, it means not only that things change but that they change in a definite direction, and Spencer is the only one who has tried to formulate that direction as one from the simple to the complex, from the homogeneous to the heterogeneous. The philosophic test of this is to ask, "What is inherently simple? Shall we deny that legal procedure today is simpler than in the barbarian codes, with their very elaborate and complicated rules? Shall we say that English syntax today is more complex than that of inflected Anglo-Saxon?" To ask these questions is to show the vagueness, if not the falsity, of the Spencerian formula. In the end, the adherents of the evolutionary philosophy of history justify themselves by saying that they mean only that everything in human affairs has a cause. But if this is so, what philosophy of history is not evolutionary?" (Morris Raphael Cohen, American Thought: A Critical Sketch, Collier Books, New York, 1962. P. 78 [first published by Free Press, 1954])

"Our culture is an outgrowth of trial, error, and accident, controlled by broad evolutionary processes. Man has faced nature under widely different circumstances. His efforts to perpetuate life in all sorts of environments have impelled him to attack the problems of existence in a variety of ways. The result has been an impressive diversity of human institutions and folkways. In the conflicts of communities, nations, and races, these competing institutions and ideas have been subjected to the struggle for existence. Those relatively best adapted to a given people, time, and place have tended to survive. The others have perished, or they linger on in remote or protected areas where superior institutions did not penetrate thoroughly. All our so-called sacred human institutions are thus the naturalistic product of man's age-old struggle with nature to perpetuate his kind, and to protect them against suffering or extinction. It is, of course recognized that even races with the most credible institutions and beliefs have preserved a vast baggage of archaic and often worthless convictions and folkways, which clutter up the social scene, produce inertia, and retard the progress of human well-being. The writer to whom we are indebted more than any other for the forceful statement of this thesis is Herbert Spencer." (Harry Elmer Barnes, Society in Transition, Prentice-Hall, Inc., New York, 1939. P. 53)
"... the value of the possible conclusions [of the science of sociology that Spencer proposes] becomes greatly impaired by their greatly increased generality." (Alexander Gibson, review of Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology. The Academy, Vol. 6, pp. 44-46, July 11, 1874. P. 46)

"As to Spencer; we admit he is the King of the Social Scientists; ...." (Robert J. Wright, Principia or Basis of Social Science, J. B. Lippincott & Co., Philadelphia, 1875. P. v)

"As will be seen, and indeed has already appeared, the following [critical] remarks have been conceived from the point of view of one who fully accepts the possibility of a social science, and who, to a large extent, concurs in Mr. Spencer's conception of the nature of that inquiry." (J. E. Cairnes, "Mr. Spencer on Social Evolution," The Fortnightly Review, Vol. 17, n.s., pp. 63-82, 1875. P. 63)

In his Cours de Philosophie Positive (1839-1842) Comte argued for the existence of a science of society, patterned after the science of physics. Social relations were to be thought of as phenomena. John Stuart Mill, the leading English Comtist, also argued for a social science in the 6th part of his System of Logic (1843). In the section, "The Logic of the Moral Sciences," he dealt with such basic questions as "Are human actions subject to the laws of causality?" This same issue was raised and discussed by Tylor in the Preface of his Primitive Culture (1871) and by Spencer in his The Study of Sociology (1873).

"There are those who deny that Sociological Science is possible, but the reasons for such denial are not satisfactory. Wherever there are phenomena that can be observed, or facts that can be distinguished and compared, or definite relations of coexistence and succession, or effects that are traceable to causes, or uniformities that result from the operation of natural laws, there is science--actual or possible. Human society is a sphere of facts and relations that are just as amenable, both to inductive and deductive study, as the other phenomena of Nature." (Edward L. Youmans, Preface to the American Edition, pp. v-vi, Descriptive Sociology. Vol. 1: English, Classified and Arranged by Herbert Spencer, D. Appleton and Company, New York, [1877]. P. v)

Even a critic of some aspects of Spencer's sociology found himself forced to admit: "Never before has the conception of a social science been put forth with equal distinctness and clearness; and never has its claim to take rank as a recognised branch of scientific investigation been placed upon surer grounds, or asserted with more just emphasis." (J. E. Cairnes, "Mr. Spencer on Social Evolution," The Fortnightly Review, Vol. 23, pp. 63-82, 200-213, 1875. P. 63)
"And now for the application of this general truth to our subject. The conceptions with which sociological science is concerned, are complex beyond all others." (Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, D. Appleton and Company, New York, P. 128)

"It is the aim of SOCIOLOGY, or SOCIAL SCIENCE, to collect and organize the facts of social phenomena, and trace out the principles or laws by which they are governed. Much has passed under the name of Social Science to which it is wholly inapplicable. It is commonly used to cover all kinds of schemes and devices for the improvement of society, and it is often confounded with socialism, whereas its sole office is to give us knowledge, reduced to system, concerning the social state, in all its forms and stages. Sociology treats of the natural laws by which communities are governed, and is the science of which politics and philanthropic enterprise may be regarded as the dependent arts; but as tanning is not chemistry, so measures for the mitigation of evil in society are not Social Science. Projects of public improvement and reform, and social reconstruction, are not examples of Sociology, but belong, rather, to the province of social invention, which may or may not be guided by scientific principles." (Edward L. Youmans, Preface to the American Edition, pp. v-vi, Descriptive Sociology, Classified and Arranged by Herbert Spencer, Vol. 1: English. D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1872. P. v)

"... no English philosopher before him /Spencer/ has ever so forcibly insisted on the supreme place held in the intellectual synthesis by social science." (Frederic Harrison, The Philosophy of Common Sense, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1907. P. 263)

"There can be no complete acceptance of Sociology as a science, so long as the belief in a social order not conforming to natural law, survives." (Study, p. 360)

"... Ecclesiastical Institutions and hierarchies, to whose structures and functions he /Spencer/ is the first to apply scientific treatment." (Grant Allen, "The Gospel According to Herbert Spencer," Part II, The Pall Mall Gazette, April 28, 1890, p. 3. P. 3)

J. E. Cairnes, a distinguished political economist of the day, while disagreeing with certain of Spencer's assertions in The Study of Sociology, observed of the work as a whole: "Never before has the conception of a social science been put forth with equal distinctness and clearness; and never has its claim to take rank as a recognised branch of scientific investigation been placed upon surer grounds, or asserted with more just emphasis." (J. E. Cairnes, "Mr. Spencer on Social Evolution," The Fortnightly Review, Vol. 17, n.s., pp. 63-82, 1875. P. 63)

"... Spencer's views upon public questions are not primarily the direct consequence of his evolutionary theories of the world and man. On the contrary, they represent a "set" of his mind established early in life." (Walter Greenwood Beach, The Growth of Social Thought, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1939. P. 117)

"If such coexistences and sequences as those of Biology and Sociology are not yet reduced to law, the presumption is, not that they are irreducible to law, but that their laws elude our present means of exploration. Having long ago proved uniformity throughout all the lower classes of relations, and having been step by step proving uniformity throughout classes of relations successively higher and higher, if we have not yet succeeded with the highest classes, it may be fairly concluded that our powers are at fault, rather than that the uniformity does not exist. And unless we make the absurd assumption that the process of generalization, now going on with unexampled rapidity, has reached its limit, and will suddenly cease, we must infer that ultimately mankind will discover a constant order even among the most involved and obscure phenomena." (Herbert Spencer, "On Laws in General, and the Order of Their Discovery," in Essays: Scientific, Political, & Speculative, 3 Vols., Williams and Norgate, London, 1891. Vol. 2, pp. 159-160)
"I think you once remarked to me that certain of your views had been considerably modified since the publication of Social Statics; but as you intimated that the change consisted in a divergence from the democratic views there expressed, the volume may be more acceptable to us in its present form than it would be after your revision. You will hence see the propriety of a republication here, when you might not choose to have it reissued in England. I think it is especially the book we need at the present time, and may do important service." (Letter from Edward L. Youmans to Herbert Spencer dated April 12, 1864. Quoted in John Fiske, Edward Livingston Youmans, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. P. 176)

"It is also a comparatively small matter that Mr[Edward] Clodd should speak of the "Social Statics" as if that were a "lasting contribution" to sociology as against the "Introduction" [to the History of Civilisation in England, by Buckle], when in point of fact it is in strict truth a series of tours de force, vitiated by deism, and so indefensible in some of its main positions, so irreconcilable in large part with its author's later teachings, that he long allowed it to remain out of print, and only republished it with qualifications." (John Mackinnon Robertson, Buckle and His Critics, Swan Sonnenschein & Co., London, 1895. P. 30)

"Nine years before The Origin of Species was published, Herbert Spencer, in the concluding chapters of Social Statics, had offered an explanation of society in terms of a progressive human nature, adapting itself to changing conditions of life. These chapters are the germ of that inclusive conception and theory of evolution which were elaborated in the ten volumes of the Synthetic Philosophy" (Franklin H. Giddings, Studies in the Theory of Human Society, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1926. P. 3)

"... anyone who glances at its contents will see that the aims of the work [Social Statics] are primarily ethical." (Auto. I, 358)

"Respecting Social Statics, I gave you a somewhat wrong impression if you gathered from me that I had receded from any of its main principles. The parts which I had in view when I spoke of having modified my opinions on some points were chiefly the chapters on the rights of women and children. I should probably also somewhat qualify the theological form of expression used in some of the earlier chapters. But the essentials of the book would remain as they are. When you come to the reprinting of Social Statics, should that project be preserved in, I should like to put a brief prefatory note stating my present attitude toward it." (Letter from Herbert Spencer to Edward L. Youmans dated May 18, 1864. Quoted in John Fiske, Edward Livingston Youmans, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. Pp. 180-181)
"... Social Statics challenges comparison to an extent that perhaps no other writing does, with both The Republic of Plato and The Politics of Aristotle. It propounds the same problems which they discuss, and it offers solutions which, though not identical with theirs, are closely parallel to them. The object of human effort for Spencer is happiness; and as he conceives of happiness, it does not greatly differ from the joy of rational activity which was the "good life" for Plato. Happiness depends upon external conditions, which are, namely, liberty and justice. Justice, however, for Mr. Spencer, is that limitation of liberty which equalizes it among men, whereas for Plato it was that specialization of work and opportunity which enables every man to do what he can do best, and to be what he can be perfectly. Both writers agree that to establish justice is the proximate purpose, or function, of society." (Franklin H. Giddings, Studies in the Theory of Human Society, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1926. P. 111)

"Spencer's Social Statics ..., 1850, had been out nearly a year. In the Leader, 22 February 1851, p. 178, Lewes said: "We remember no work on ethics since that of Spinoza to be compared with it," and he devoted three articles to reviewing it: 15, 22 March and 12 April 1851." (Gordon S. Haight, The George Eliot Letters, 7 Vols., Yale University Press, New Haven, 1954. Vol. 1, p. 364n.)

"... in his [Spencer's] Social Statics when he denied the right of private ownership in land, and thus unintentionally committed himself to pure socialism so far as land is concerned. To his surprise and mortification a generation later he found himself claimed by socialists as great authority for their doctrine, quoting the ninth chapter of Social Statics as the unanswerable statement of their case. This was so conclusive, and yet so contrary to his real intention, that he felt compelled to suppress his first edition of Social Statics, and tried to modify his position in a subsequent volume. * Appendix B, Principles of Ethics (Justice) 1895." (Unsigned, probably by George Gunton himself, "Spencer's Last Book," Gunton's Magazine, Vol. 12, pp. 291-304, 1897. P. 298, 298n.)

"We remember no work on ethics since that of Spinoza to be compared with it [Spencer's Social Statics] in the simplicity of its premises, and the logical rigour with which a complete system of scientific ethics is evolved from them. This is high praise; but we give it deliberately." (Anonymous [George Henry Lewes, "Literature," The Leader, Vol. 2, p. 178, No. 48, February 22, 1851. P. 178)

"Soberly, the original volume has with this year been withdrawn from publication, to give place to a new "Social Statics," dated January, 1892, and published in February. This volume, which is, of course, now to pass in the publisher's lists as "Social Statics," has for full title, "Social Statics, abridged and revised, together with 'The Man versus the State.'" It consists of disjointed fragments of the old "Social Statics," which, in order to make some approach to the bulk of the original, is padded out with the magazine articles before referred to.... The "First Principle" Chapter VI, which enunciates: "Every man has freedom to do all that he wills, provided he infringes not the equal freedom of any other man." is left, but everything large or small relating to land is omitted. The only allusion to land is in the caviling at Locke, which is retained, and that what was originally Section 3, Chapter X., now converted into a chapter, headed "Socialism," is left by careless editing to begin, as in the original: ...." (Henry George, A Perplexed Philosopher, Robert Schalkenbach Foundation, New York, 1965. P. 106)

Spencer objected that a reviewer in the British Quarterly Review (Vol. 63, pp. 1-20, January, 1876) "... had represented Social Statics, which simply contains an ethical doctrine with political corollaries, as embodying my sociological views--deliberately ignoring the published programme of the Principles of Sociology ...." (Herbert Spencer, Preface to the 1877 edition of Social Statics. D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1883. Pp. xv-xvi)

"The work referred to--"Social Statics"--was intended to be a system of political ethics--absolute political ethics, or that which ought to be, as distinguished from relative political ethics, or that which is at present the nearest practicable approach to it." (Herbert Spencer, Letter to The Times of London, November 7, 1889. Quoted in Henry George, A Perplexed Philosopher, Robert Schalkenbach Foundation, New York, 1965. P. 74)

"Spencer's Social Statics was written to illustrate the conditions essential to human happiness. We do not think that we are asserting too much when we say, that, from this Work, will date modern Social Science; as it holds the same relation to the indefinite speculations that were called Social Science anterior to its publication, that Adam Smith's "Wealth of Nations" holds to that which was called Political Economy, prior to 1776." (Unsigned /Probably Alexander Delmar or Simon Stern/, "Herbert Spencer," The New York Social Science Review, Vol. 1, pp. 67-82, 1965. P. 70)

(George Henry Lewes devoted three review articles (after an initial notice in the issue of February 22, 1851 in a "Literature" column) to Herbert Spencer's Social Statics. The title was "Spencer's Social Statics," and they appeared in The Leader, Vol. 2, No. 51, pp. 248-250, March 15, 1851; No. 52, pp. 274-275, March 22, 1851; and No. 55, pp. 347-348, April 12, 1851. Lewes quoted very extensively from Social Statics; in fact, the greater part of the review articles consisted of quoted passages.)
Spencer notes that his first book, *Social Statics*, "as more extensively, as well as more favourably, noticed, than any one of my later books," adding, wryly, "a fact well illustrating the worth of current criticism." (Auto, I, 365)


"It is implied [in a pamphlet of the Land Restoration League] that I, at present, advocate resumption of direct ownership of the land by the community, whereas it is perfectly well known by those who have issued this leaflet that I have, in a considerable measure, changed my opinion. I originally thought that, after due compensation had been made to existing landowners, the community would benefit by taking the land into its own hands; whereas I have since then concluded that the transaction would be a losing one for the community. If due compensation were made, there would not be a balance of gain but a balance of loss." (Herbert Spencer, letter to the London Daily Chronicle, August 20, 1894. Reprinted in "Mr. Herbert Spencer and the Land Restoration League," Land Restoration Tract, No. 1, Office of the English Land Restoration League, London, December, 1894. P. 3)

"Comte used the term "social statics" in a merely rhetorical way, as a name for social order, and "social dynamics" as a name for progress. Mr. Spencer, more scientific, adheres to precise physical notions. Social statics is for him an account of social forces in equilibrium. Perfect equilibrium is never reached in fact, because of disturbing changes, themselves a consequence of an equilibration of energy between society and its environment. Actually, however, the static and the kinetic tendencies are themselves balanced, and the result, in society, as in the solar system and in the living body, is a moving equilibrium. All this, obviously, is a physical explanation of social forms and metamorphoses, and Spencerian sociology in general, whether formulated by Mr. Spencer, or by other writers under the influence of his thought, is to a large extent a physical philosophy of society, notwithstanding its liberal use of biological and psychological data." (Franklin H. Giddings, *The Principles of Sociology*, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1911. P. 9)


"Regarded thus, civilization no longer appears to be a regular unfolding after a specific plan; but seems rather a development of man's latent capabilities under the action of favourable circumstances; ...." (Herbert Spencer, Social Statics, John Chapman, London, 1851. P. 415)
"Increase in the bulk of a society inevitably leads to changes of structure ...." (Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1891. P. 347)

"He [Spencer] called the functions which certain parts of the population of a society perform, and which are considered essential for the existence of the society, institutions. This term is still widely used. Spencer listed six institutions which he found in all societies: two of them, ceremonial and professional, are now usually left out, but the other four—domestic, industrial, political, and ecclesiastical—are listed in most present textbooks, though under somewhat different names." (Florian Znaniecki, Social Relations and Social Roles, Chandler Publishing Company, San Francisco, 1965. P. 10)

"'Social structure' is one of the central concepts of sociology, but it is not employed consistently or unambiguously. Herbert Spencer, who was one of the first writers to use the term, was too much fascinated by his biological analogies (organic structure and evolution) to make clear what he meant by the structure of a society." (T. B. Bottomore, Sociology, George Allen & Unwin Ltd, London, 1962. P. 109)

"Tout récemment, M. Gurvitch a fait une autre "découverte" qu'il se dit "impatient de communiquer aux lecteurs des Cahiers, en guise de postface à notre [son] étude sur le Concept de structure sociale:" c'est que Spencer serait "une source oubliée des concepts de "structure sociale," "fonction / sociale" et "institution"." (Cahiers internationaux de sociologie, vol. 23, cahiers double, 1957, pp. 111-121). Mais, à l'exception de M. Gurvitch lui-même, on ne voit pas qui a "oublié" Spencer et la paternité, qui lui revient, de ces notions; certainement pas, en tout cas, les modernes utilisateurs de la notion de structure, qui n'ont jamais manqué à ce point de mémoire." [Lévi-Strauss then refers to passages in Binney, Evans-Pritchard, and Radcliffe-Brown which refer to Spencer.] (Claude Lévi-Strauss, Anthropologie Structurale, Librairie Plon, Paris, 1958. Pp. 353n.-354n.)
"Spencer introduced even the term social system, which he used interchangeably with social organism in his Principles of Sociology." (Pitirim A. Sorokin, Sociological Theories of Today, Harper & Row, Publishers, New York, 1966. P. 156n.)

Spencer was always interested in social systems. The specific fact was always used as an illustration of a general principle.

"We have called such an organized combination of actions of cooperating agents a social system. This term was introduced by Spencer who considered society as a whole to be a system." (Florian Znaniecki, Social Relations and Social Roles, Chandler Publishing Company, San Francisco, 1965. P. 18)

"To Spencer evolutionism and the notion that societies are systems, or to use his own terms, analogous to organisms, were inseparable." (J. W. Burrow, Evolution and Society, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1966. P. 193)
"... if Mr. Herbert Spencer desires to have his philosophical merits uncontested, let him keep from meddling with scientific Socialism and social questions, let him confine himself to the compiling of confused, ponderous and unreadable books, surcharged with unimportant facts, ill-studied and selected without discrimination." (Paul Lafargue, "A Few Words with Mr. Herbert Spencer," To-day, Vol. 1, pp. 416-427, 1884. P. 427)

"In his "The Coming Slavery" Mr. Spencer gives an excellent example of his shopkeeper-like evolutionism, which, let it be said in passing, is the only kind of evolutionism known and practiced by a large number of Darwinian evolutionists." (p. 421) "The great philosopher piles up his facts in evolutive series, much like a shopkeeper piles up his goods upon the shelves of his shop, according to their most obvious qualities; he puts pants with pants, socks with socks, shirts with shirts, etc., never caring one straw to know what materials his goods are made of, and how and where they were manufactured." (p. 421) (Paul Lafargue, "A Few Words with Mr. Herbert Spencer," To-day, Vol. 1, pp. 416-427, 1884)

"We are on the highway to communism, and I see no likelihood that the movement in that direction will be arrested. Contrariwise, it seems to me that every new step makes more difficult any reversal, since the reactive portion of the public seems likely to become weaker and weaker." (Letter from Herbert Spencer to Edward L. Youmans dated October 3, 1883. Quoted in John Fiske, Edward Livingston Youmans, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. Pp. 360-381)

Grant Allen, who was in sympathy with almost all of Spencer's political beliefs, once wrote to him: "... I sometimes feel as though in political matters you must almost be discouraged; almost be wearied of your task as a voice crying in the wilderness ...." (Letter from Grant Allen to Herbert Spencer dated April 17, 1882. Quoted in Edward Clodd, Grant Allen, A Memoir, London, 1900. P. 120)

Acute thinkers like George Bernard Shaw and H. G. Wells, who were enthusiastic supporters of socialism, saw in Herbert Spencer only the towering champion of individualism and laissez faire, and therefore as an enemy and a fit object for attack. Seeing him as the author of Social Statics and The Man vs. The State, they did not regard him as a social scientist, and therefore left largely or entirely unread his Study of Sociology and Principles of Sociology. Being activists, if not revolutionaries, they had little interest in Spencer's slow, long range social evolution, which had brought present conditions into being out of past ones. They were instead concerned with what they deemed to be social and economic inequalities in England, and how they could be changed.

Spencer wrote of "the drift towards Socialism, now becoming irresistible ..." (Auto. 1, 221)
"Spencer predicted The Coming Slavery; it is here, and we are not even aware of it." (Crane Brinton, "Spencer's Horrid Vision," Foreign Affairs, Vol. 15, pp. 695-706, 1937. P. 705)

"Before very long, however, the book [The Man versus the State] became a sort of rallying-center for resistance to socialism. Conservatives who once had thought of Spencer as a shocking, godless reformer were delighted to discover through him that Science and Evolution were agreed that socialism not only was undesirable but was also in the long run impossible." (Crane Brinton, "Spencer's Horrid Vision," Foreign Affairs, Vol. 15, pp. 695-706, 1937. P. 701)

"All careful students of the works of the "Synthetic" philosopher, eventually recognize the dual personality of Mr. Spencer; the "Dr. Jekyll" of evolution, and the "Mr. Hyde" of Individualism." (Arthur M. Lewis, Evolution, Social and Organic, Charles H. Kerr & Company, Chicago, 1908. P. 150)


Does Spencer ever take note of Karl Marx or of any of the specific events in the radical, revolutionary labor movement of his day? The Paris Commune?

Spencer speaks of "... my horror at the increasingly rapid drift towards Socialism." (Letter from Herbert Spencer to John Piske dated January 3, 1884. Henry E. Huntington Library Cat. No. HM 13745. Unpublished)

Speaking of the slight progress the socialist movement was making in England, Morris commented: "I think we must ... / console ourselves for the slowness with which things move by listening to the wails of Herbert Spencer on the advance of Socialism." (Letter from William Morris to William Allingham dated November 26, 1884 or 1885. Quoted in H. Allingham and E. Baumer Williams, editors, Letters to William Allingham, Longmans, Green and Co., London, 1911. Pp. 235-236)

"These leaders of the socialist movement in England, like Ruskin, William Morris, Bernard Shaw, Annie Besant, Graham Wallas and Sidney Webb were generally ignorant of scientific philosophy and they had been misled by Herbert Spencer's Individualism into a belief that biological science was anti-socialist." (H. G. Wells, Experiment in Autobiography, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1934. P. 192)
"In the days when Herbert Spencer's Brightest pupils, from Mrs Sidney Webb to Grant Allen, turned from him to the Socialism in which he could see nothing but "the coming slavery," we could respect him whilst confuting him. Today we neither respect our opponents nor confute them. We simply, like Mrs Stetson Gillman's prejudice slayer, "walk through them as if they were not there." (George Bernard Shaw, "Fabian Essays Twenty Years Later," (Preface to the 1908 edition), in The Collected Works of Bernard Shaw, Vol. 30, Essays in Fabian Socialism, pp. 299-311, Wm. H. Wise & Company, New York, 1932. P. 306)

"When Herbert Spencer in his later days expunged from his Social Statics the irresistible arguments for Land Nationalization by which he anticipated Henry George, we could not admit that the old Spencer had any right to do this violence to the young Spencer ...." (George Bernard Shaw, "Fabian Essays Twenty Years Later," (Preface to the 1908 edition), in The Collected Works of Bernard Shaw, Vol. 30, Essays in Fabian Socialism, pp. 299-311, Wm. H. Wise & Company, New York, 1932. P. 311)

"... my faith in free institutions, originally strong (though always joined with the belief that the maintenance and success of them is a question of popular character), has in these later years been greatly decreased by the conviction that the fit character is not possessed by any people, nor is likely to be possessed for ages to come. A nation of which the legislators vote as they are bid, and of which the workers surrender their rights of selling their labour as they please, has neither the ideas nor the sentiments needed for the maintenance of liberty. Lacking them, we are on the way back to the rule of the strong hand in the shape of the bureaucratic despotism of a socialist organisation, and then of the military despotism which must follow it; if, indeed, some social crash does not bring this last upon us more quickly." (Herbert Spencer, "The Late Professor Tyndall," The Fortnightly Review, Vol. 61, pp. 141-148, 1894. P. 145)
"Society has nothing to do with protection. It is simply the gregarious condition of the human race, endued with their natural passions and affections." (p. 219, Vol. 2) "Civilized man is undoubtedly a social being, but this quality has been the result of a long and severe experience by which a great change has been produced in his constitution. Not only so, but he is utterly incapable of social existence in a native state, unless protected in his life, his liberty, and his property by an artificial system of government." (Vol. 2, p. 221) (Lester F. Ward, Dynamic Sociology, 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894)

"... the very possibility of a society depends on a certain emotional property in the individual." (Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1891. P. 52)

"And since the resistances to be overcome in satisfying the totality of their /Individuals/ desires when living separately, are greater than the resistances to be overcome in satisfying the totality of their desires when living together, there is a residual force that prevents separation." (Herbert Spencer, First Principles, 6th edition, Thinker's Library edition, Watts & Co., London, 1937. P. 460)

"Creatures whose conditions of existence in relation to food or shelter or enemies are such as make it conducive to their preservation that they should live more or less constantly and closely in presence of one another, inevitably acquire through inherited habit, aided by survival of the fittest, a sociality that increases up to that point at which some counteracting disadvantage checks it." (Herbert Spencer, The Principles of Psychology, 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1883. Vol. 2, p. 575)

"A little consideration show us, for instance, that the very existence of society, implies some natural affinity in its members for such a union." (Herbert Spencer, Social Statics, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1883. P. 28)

"Evidently the aboriginal man must have a constitution adapted to the work he has to perform, joined with a dormant capability of developing into the ultimate man when the conditions of existence permit. To the end that he may prepare the earth for its future inhabitants—his descendants, he must possess a character fitting him to clear it of races endangering his life, and races occupying the space required by mankind. Hence he must have a desire to kill, for it is / the universal law of life that to every needful act must attach a gratification, the desire for which may serve as a stimulus (p. 19) [this page ref. in original]17. He must further be devoid of sympathy, or must have but the germ of it, for he would otherwise be incapacitated for his destructive office. In other words, he must be what we call a savage, and must be left to acquire fitness for social life as fast as the conquest of the earth renders social life possible." (Herbert Spencer, Social Statics, John Chapman, London, 1851. Pp. 410-411)
"That there is a real analogy between an individual organism and a social organism, becomes undeniable when certain necessities determining structure are seen to govern them in common." (Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1891. P. 330)

"In using the terms morphology and physiology, I may seem to be returning to the analogy between society and organism which was popular with medieval philosophers, was taken over and often misused by nineteenth century sociologists, and is completely rejected by many modern writers. But analogies, properly used, are important aids to scientific thinking and there is a real and significant analogy between organic structure and social structure." (A. R. Radcliffe-Brown, Structure and Function in Primitive Society, Oxford University Press, London, 1952. P. 195)

"The principles of organization are the same; and the differences are simply differences of application." (Herbert Spencer, "The Social Organism." The Westminster Review, Vol. 73, pp. 90-121, 1860. P. 99.)

"The leading facts insisted upon in Social Statics were, that a social organism is like an individual organism in these essential traits:—that it grows; that while growing it becomes more complex; that while becoming complex its parts acquire increasing mutual dependence; and that its life is immense in length compared with the lives of its component units. It was pointed out that in both cases there is increasing integration accompanied by increasing heterogeneity; to which I might have added increasing definiteness, had my ideas at that time been fully matured." (Auguste Comte, System of Positive Polity, 4 Vols., translated by John Henry Bridges, Longmans, Green and Co., London, 1875. Vol. 2, p. 239)

"We have thus established a true correspondence between the Statical Analysis of the Social Organism in Sociology, and that of the Individual Organism in Biology. But this analogy must not be pushed too far; for the former is capable of being resolved into its component parts, whilst the latter is not. The elements of social life are not destroyed by being separated: those of individual life are." (Auguste Comte, System of Positive Polity, 4 Vols., translated by John Henry Bridges, Longmans, Green and Co., London, 1875. Vol. 2, p. 239)

"The attempt, for example, very current at one time through the influence of Spencer to interpret social organization by strict analogy with the physical organism, is now discredited." (James Mark Baldwin, Darwin and the Humanities, Review Publishing Co., Baltimore, 1909. P. 40)
Here is the great contradiction. Spencer, the great biologist, says the brain is to the animal what the Government is to a society. (1) The more effectively and completely the brain controls the members composing the animal body, the higher its place in the organic scale. (2) The less effectively and completely the Government controls the members of the body politic the better will be the society." (Arthur M. Lewis, Evolution, Social and Organic, Charles H. Kerr & Company, Chicago, 1908. P. 159)

"In the chapters of Spencer's "Sociology," treating of "Social Structures," "Social Functions," "Systems of Organs," etc. (Part II), the phenomena of organic life are always presented first, then those from social life are described. But the two sorts are kept distinct. There is no confusion. If the reader should omit the biological similes, the presentation of the sociological phenomena would be all the clearer. (Ludwig Gumplowicz, The Outlines of Sociology, Translated by Frederick W. Moore, American Academy of Political and Social Science, Philadelphia, 1899. P. 30n.)

Spencer succumbed "... to the temptation to render the biological analogy in terms of specific (and quite incomparable) structures." (Marvin Harris, The Rise of Anthropological Theory, Thomas Y. Crowell Company, New York, 1968. P. 63)

"In short, in accepting and developing the dogma of the organic nature of society, Spencer, while he put the crown upon his system of synthetic philosophy, cut the ground from under the feet of his political individualism." (F. J. C. Hearnshaw, "Herbert Spencer and the Individualists," in The Social & Political Ideas OF Some Representative Thinkers of the Victorian Age, ed. by F. J. C. Hearnshaw, pp. 53-83, George G. Harrap & Co. Ltd., London, 1933. P. 82)

"The more we should try to follow out the admirable attempt which Herbert Spencer has made in this direction of employing the organicist view as a working hypothesis, the more we should become convinced that our real insight into the lines along which social evolution branch is more hampered than promoted by that method of biological analogies." (Ferdinand Tönnies, "The Present Problems of Social Structure," The American Journal of Sociology, Vol. 10, pp. 569-588, 1905. P. 584)

"It has indeed become a reproach against Spencer [In which Branford evidently concurs] that he led sociologists into a blind alley—always the narrowest and most perplexing kind of wilderness—by the elaboration of his "organic analogy."" (Victor Branford, Interpretations and Forecasts, Mitchell Kennerly, New York, 1914. Pp. 399-400)
"A still more remarkable fulfilment of this analogy is to be found in the fact, that the different kinds of organization which society takes on, in progressing from its lowest to its highest phase of development, are essentially similar to the different kinds of animal organization. Creatures of inferior type are little more than aggregations of numerous like parts—are moulded on what Professor Owen terms the principle of vegetative repetition; and in tracing the forms assumed by successive grades above these, we find a gradual diminution in the number of like parts, and a multiplication of unlike sorts of ones. In the one extreme there are but few functions, and many similar agents to each function; in the other, there are many functions, and few similar agents to each function."

(Herbert Spencer, Social Statics, John Chapman, London, 1851. P.451)

"Spencer uses biological principles only to a very limited extent in investigating sociological laws. Social facts and phenomena keep reminding him of similar biological facts, as is proper; but he always connects the two distinct species by a plan "similarly it happens," without identifying them at all. It is this quiet objectivity which makes him so superior to other sociologists. Schaeffle and Lilienfeld, for example, took these analogies seriously. They followed these will-o'-the-wisps over treacherous ground. But Spencer does not confuse the nature of social and organic phenomena for an instant, notwithstanding anything which the title "Society is an Organism" might imply. Every fact presented as common to both classes of phenomena is so general that we may concede it without detracting from the lucidity of the thought." (Ludwig Gumplowicz, The Outlines of Sociology, Translated by Frederick W. Moore, American Academy of Political and Social Science, Philadelphia, 1899. Pp. 29-30)

"If real isomorphism can be traced between the functioning of living organisms and of political systems (e.g., self-maintenance, growth, evolution) then the comparison is more than allegorical. It carries elements of real "homologies" quite as the analogy between an engine burning fuel and an organism digesting food." (Anatol Rapoport, "Some System Approaches to Political Theory," in Varieties of Political Theory, ed. by David Easton, pp. Prentice-Hall, Inc., Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1966. P. 139)

"Of course, I do not say that the parallel between an individual organism and a social organism is so close, that the distinction to be clearly drawn in the one case may be drawn with like clearness in the other. The structures and functions of the social organism are obviously less specific, far more modifiable, far more dependent on conditions that are variable and never twice alike." (Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1891. P. 58)

"... he [Spencer] was very definitely taken prisoner by the ghost he had invoked [the organic analogy]." (Nicholas S. Timasheff, Sociological Theory: Its Nature and Growth, third edition, Random House, New York, 1967. P. 39)
"... Spencer can not in justice be accused of having overdrawn the analogy, for he has always remained cognizant of the fact that in one essential particular at least, there was a fundamental contrast between the two kinds of organism." (Alexander A. Goldenweiser, "Spencerian Philosophy in 1920," The Freeman, Vol. 1, pp. 228-230, May 19, 1920. P. 228)

"Leviathan is a masterpiece, but it suffers from many grave logical defects the most important of which is the assumption that the analogy between the State and a living creature can be taken quite literally. Most of the stock fallacies of sociological reasoning derive from this mistake ...." (Edmund Leach, "Ignoble Savages," The New York Review of Books, Vol. 11, No. 6, pp. 24-29, October 10, 1968. P. 29)

"The truth is that the conception of society as an organism cannot be made to accord with the radical laissez-faire individualism of Spencer." (F. J. C. Hearnshaw, "Herbert Spencer and the Individualists," in The Social & Political Ideas of Some Representative Thinkers of the Victorian Age, ed. by F. J. C. Hearnshaw, pp. 53-83, George G. Harrap & Co. Ltd., London, 1933. P. 81)

"As we have seen, Spencer carries the analogy between the living society and the living individual very far. But he stops short at a point which makes his whole analogy a mere metaphor.... But if the organic theory is only a metaphor, it can hardly pretend to be a theory. All the toil and trouble of evolution has but produced a figure of speech. The fact is that, like Bentham, Spencer was a determined nominalist. He could never bring himself to admit that the individual is merged by his emotions, his intellect, and his imagination with a group possessing a life of its own." (Crane Brinton, English Political Thought in the Nineteenth Century, Ernest Benn, Ltd., London, 1933. P. 237)

"... Spencer's whole system of social science was built up from his laws of evolution in general .... This is incomparably more important in Spencer's sociology than his development of the organic analogy, though most critics of his sociology have dwelt almost exclusively upon the latter." (Harry Elmer Barnes, "Some Typical Contributions of English Sociology to Political Theory," The American Journal of Sociology, Vol. 27, pp. 289-324, 1921. P. 296)

"The fact that, in developing the organic interpretation of society, biological terms are often used in a figurative sense, must not conceal the fact that there are certain relationships precisely parallel, as such, with certain relationships in animal bodies. In the working portion of this manual, a large number of illustrations will be cited." (Book III of this volume is entitled "Social Anatomy," and Ch. 3 of this section is entitled "Social Aggregates and Organs ..." and Ch. 4 is subtitled "The Social Nervous System.") (Albion W. Small and George E. Vincent, An Introduction to the Study of Society, American Book Company, New York, 1894. P. 92)

"Hence we are warranted in considering the body as a commonwealth of monads, each of which has independent powers of life, growth, and reproduction; each of which unites with a number of others to perform some function needful for supporting itself and all the rest; and each of which absorbs its share of nutriment from the blood. And when thus regarded, the analogy between an individual being and a human society, in which each man, whilst helping to subserve some public want, absorbs a portion of the circulating stock of commodities brought to his door, is palpable enough." (Herbert Spencer, Social Statics, John Chapman, London, 1851. P. 451)

"At least his scientific instincts have preserved him from such obvious exaggerations as others have made in consequence of false analogies between biology and sociology. Although he even affirmed such analogies in principle, he never based anything essential upon them, he never went so far but that the core of his sociology remained sound. Whenever he used biological terms, he treated them as similes rather than as analogies." (Ludwig Gumplowicz, The Outlines of Sociology, Translated by Frederick W. Moore, American Academy of Political and Social Science, Philadelphia, 1899. P. 29)

"This analogy of the social organism was by no means original with Spencer, as it is to be found in Plato, Aristotle, St. Paul, and many of the early Christian Fathers; it was common throughout the Middle Ages (see Gierke, Political Theories of the Middle Ages (trans. by Maitland), pp. 22-30, and notes 66-100), and has been considerably elaborated among others by Comte, Krause, and Ahrens. It was reserved for Spencer, however, to present the first systematic development of the theory." (Harry Elmer Barnes, "Some Typical Contributions of English Sociology to Political Theory," The American Journal of Sociology, Vol. 27, pp. 289-324, 1921. P. 298)

"Herbert Spencer's Principles of Sociology, and Schaeffle's four volumes on the structure and life of society (Bau und Leben des socialen Körpers) /1875-76; 2nd ed., 2 Vols., 1896/ were attempts to state objective facts of human experience in terms of physiological analogies. They were ridiculed by a hundred academic men to every one who was willing to consider them seriously. For several years my lectures were elaborations of Schaeffle, with one eye constantly on Spencer and Ward. This is a deliberate confession that during those years these writers about social phenomena got between me and reality itself." (Albion W. Small, "Fifty Years of Sociology in the United States," The American Journal of Sociology, Vol. 21, pp. 721-864, 1916. P. 773)

"A sociocultural system is like a biological organism in many respects. Both are thermodynamic systems; both maintain themselves by harnessing free (available) energy. Biological evolution and the evolution of sociocultural systems proceed by increasing the concentration of energy incorporated within their respective systems. Both processes of evolution are characterized by progressive diversification of structure and specialization of function. And both develop structural means of coordinating parts and functions and of regulating (controlling) the behavior of the whole; both move toward higher levels of integration." (Leslie A. White, "Nations as Sociocultural Systems," Ingron (Ann Arbor, Michigan), Vol. 5, pp. 5-7, 14-18, Autumn, 1968. P. 15)

Speaking of the organic analogy: "... we are not here dealing with a figurative resemblance, but with a fundamental parallelism in principles of structure." (Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1891. Pp. 332-333)

But Spencer does not merely assert an analogy between biological organisms and human societies, he demonstrates it.

"Herbert Spencer—to take the most famous exponent of this approach—explicitly stated that although he conceived his sociological theories by contemplating this analogy, he upheld them solely on the basis of inductive confirmation. It cannot be denied that the organicist point of view led to some valuable insights: it taught sociologists to view society as a system of finely balanced interdependent parts, which function or undergo transformations only under certain specific conditions; it also introduced the idea of function." (Stanislay Andreski, The Uses of Comparative Sociology, University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1969. P. 23)
"... if the resemblance between the body physiological and the body politic, are any indication, ... the real force of the analogy [Spencer's organic analogy] is totally opposed to the negative view of State function." (Thomas Henry Huxley, "Administrative Nihilism," The Fortnightly Review, Vol. 16, pp. 525-543, 1871. P. 534)

"I have used the analogies elaborated, but as a scaffolding to help in building up a coherent body of sociological inductions. Let us take away the scaffolding: the inductions stand by themselves." (Principles, Vol. I, p. 614. 3rd ed. N.Y., 1878)

During his lifetime Spencer was attacked on numerous occasions for allegedly maintaining that society was an organism. Spencer felt the need and took the pains to defend himself against this accusation, by pointing out that the relationship of a society to an organism was a useful analogy only--but an analogy that had many terms. The countless examples of analogous structures, functions, and developments that Spencer brought forth in his Principles of Sociology certainly bears this out. One may weary of them, but he cannot say that they are not relevant and illuminating.

"Here let it once more be pointed out that there exist no analogies between the body politic and a living body, save those necessitated by that mutual dependence of parts which they display in common. Though, in foregoing chapters, comparisons of social structures and functions to structures and functions in the human body, have in many cases been made, they have been made only because structures and functions in the human body furnish the most familiar illustrations of structures and functions in general." (Principles, Vol. I, p. 613. 3rd ed. N.Y., 1910)

"To speak with Mr. Spencer of social atoms and organs, of organic processes and centres, of nerves of primary and secondary order, etc., after analogy with the physiological organism, is nothing short of violence to the nature of the material of social science. What can be done with such critical phenomena in social theory as imitation, generalization, invention, tradition, social and pedagogical sanction, on such a crude analogy as that? To force these things into biological moulds is simply to deform them." (James Mark Baldwin, Social and Ethical Interpretations in Mental Development, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1906. P. 549)

Spencer makes it clear that the concept of an organism differentiated and specialized in its parts, but with its actions coordinated and integrated, was arrived at by analogy from the concept of the division of labor coming from political economy. (The Study of Sociology, Ann Arbor edition, p. 305)
"... Spencer, who became so enamored of the analogy between organism and society that he came almost to believe it an identity." (Albert Galloway Keller, "Societal Evolution," in The Evolution of Man, ed. by George Alfred Baitsell, pp. 126-151, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1922. P. 129)


"Of course these analogies between the phenomena presented in a physically coherent aggregate forming an individual, and the phenomena presented in a physically incoherent aggregate of individuals distributed over a wide area, cannot be analogies of a visible or sensible kind; but can only be analogies between the systems, or methods, of organization. Such analogies as exist result from the one unquestionable community between the two organizations: there is in both a mutual dependence of parts. This is the origin of all organization; and determines what similarities there are between an individual organism and a social organism. Of course the similarities thus determined, are accompanied by transcendent differences, determined, as above said, by the un likenesses of the aggregates." (Herbert Spencer, "Specialized Administration." The Fortnightly Review, Vol. 16, pp. 627-654, 1871. P. 634.)
Spencer was one of the first social scientists to explicitly set forth the doctrine that it is the prevailing cultural forces rather than great individuals as such which bring about social change.

"The most general conclusion [to be reached about the preservation and prosperity of a species] is that, in order of obligation, the preservation of the species takes precedence of the preservation of the individual. It is true that the species has no existence save as an aggregate of individuals; and it is true that, therefore, the welfare of the species is an end to be subserved only as subserving the welfares of individuals. But since disappearance of the species, implying disappearance of all individuals, involves absolute failure in achieving the end, whereas disappearance of individuals, though carried to a great extent, may leave outstanding such number as can, by the continuance of the species, make subsequent fulfilment of the end possible; the preservation of the individual must, in a variable degree according to circumstances, be subordinated to the preservation of the species, where the two conflict." (Herbert Spencer, The Principles of Ethics, Vol. 2, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1904. P. 6)
"As written, the Principles of Sociology suffer from a number of defects. In the first place Spencer stressed too much what is now called cultural anthropology, which is only a division of general sociology. Secondly, Spencer was far too interested in the origin of institutions, primitive habits and the survival of ancient customs, to give much attention to the actual working of institutions and their functional character in modern society." (Jay Rumney, Herbert Spencer's Sociology, An Atheling Book, Atherton Press, New York, 1966, P. 22)

"He knew next to nothing of modern industrial society. His anthropological bias (anthropology was then accepted method of approach to sociology) circumscribed his social viewpoint to the barbarian cultures." (L. L. Bernard, "Herbert Spencer: The Man and His Age," The South Atlantic Quarterly, Vol. 21, pp. 241-251, 1922. P. 248)


"Evidently Spencer's use of the term "sociology" in his titles reassures many anthropologists that Spencer can safely be ignored by a discipline that emphasizes primitive and peasant sociocultural systems as opposed to modern Euro-American societies. What then are we to make of the complaint by J. Rumney (1934:22), Spencer's scientific executor, that Principles of Sociology was too much involved with primitive ethnography to qualify as sociology?" (Marvin Harris, The Rise of Anthropological Theory, Thomas Y. Crowell Company, New York, 1968. P. 161)

(Hornell Hart, "The History of Social Thought: A Consensus of American Opinion," Social Forces, Vol. 6, pp. 190-196, 1927. Hart devised an index of relative importance to the development of social thought of more than 100 sociologists and thinkers, based on the number of times their works were cited in certain selected sociology texts and taught in certain university courses in sociology. On the basis of this index, Spencer finished first with an index of 27, Comte was second with 25, and Lester Ward third with 24. The index scores of another hundred or so thinkers are given.)

"Evidently Spencer's use of the term "sociology" in his titles reassures many anthropologists that Spencer can safely be ignored by a discipline that emphasizes primitive and peasant sociocultural systems as opposed to modern Euro-American societies." (Marvin Harris, The Rise of Anthropological Theory, Thomas Y. Crowell, New York, 1968. P. 161)
"Does the rest of the world agree with the British school in regarding psychological and subjective elements as fundamental in religious history? Of course no one in their senses—not even a theorist defending a thesis—would deny that subjective elements are there to be taken stock of, or that, when taken stock of, they have a certain value in revealing ultimate conditions. But a profound distrust of the subjective as providing altogether too shifting a base for the philosophy of the human sciences exists both here and abroad. Indeed, if British anthropologists (from amongst whom Spencer may for our present purpose be excluded as founder of a distinct school of his own) have acquiesced in purely psychological results, might not the reason be that, busy with their beloved facts, they not have troubled to look beyond the ends of their noses? Hence, both here amongst admirers of the Synthetic Philosophy, and abroad where system is more of a cult, determined efforts of all sorts have been made to reduce the psychological to its presumed non-psychological and objective conditions." (R. R. Marett, The Threshold of Religion, Methuen & Co. Ltd., London, 1914. Second revised edition. Pp. 124-125)

"... after occupying themselves with primitive arts and products, anthropologists have devoted their attention mainly to the physical characters of the human races ...." (Herbert Spencer, "The Comparative Psychology of Man." Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute, Vol. 5, pp. 301-316, 1875. P. 314.)

"Thus my acquaintance with Mr. Tylor and his great book [Primiti ve Culture] began thirty-five years ago [in 1872], when he, beside Sir John Lubbock, already towered above all British anthropologists, like Saul above his people.... If England possesses an unofficial school of anthropologists, despite the public indifference to man not fully 'up to date', she owes it to the examples of Mr. Tylor and Lord Avebury." (Andrew Lang, "Edward Burnett Tylor," in Anthropological Essays Presented to Edward Burnett Tylor, pp. 1-15, The Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1907. P. 1)

"Though, after occupying themselves with primitive arts and products, anthropologists have devoted their attention mainly to the physical characters of the human races ...." (Herbert Spencer, "The Comparative Psychology of Man," Vol. 1, pp. 351-370, Williams and Norgate, London, 1891. P. 369)

"He [E. B. Tylor] has never been a man of controversy; his discussion with Mr. Herbert Spencer (Mind, 1877) had a foredoomed end. With all respect to Mr. Spencer, he took up anthropology as a παρέπνυμ; he was less familiar with facts than fertile in conjectures, and much of his reading was done by proxy, an impossible method." (Andrew Lang, "Edward Burnett Tylor," In Anthropological Essays Presented to Edward Burnett Tylor, pp. 1-15. The Clarendon Press. Oxford, 1907) (p. 14)
"Anthropology is the term now applied to the general science of man. It, therefore, comprehends many things, and has, perhaps, not yet reached its full and final definition. It embraces men's physical, mental, and moral characteristics; their religious conceptions, mythology and traditions; their mental traits and development; their civil and political organizations and institutions; their language, literature, arts, and monuments; their customs and modes of life." (Edward L. Youmans, "Anthropology and Ethnology," The Popular Science Monthly, Vol. 1, pp. 498-500, 1872. Pp. 498-499)

"... the life's work of Herbert Spencer was essentially an anthropological work ...." (E. W. Brabrock, Obituary of Herbert Spencer, Man, Vol. 4, pp. 9-12, 1904. P. 9)

"In my ministry Theology was naturally replaced by Anthropology. This science had not in 1863 been recognized by the British Association; the facts with which it was concerned were brought out in other sections, and the society in London discussing the negro [this was the Anthropological Society] with an eye to America had not yet merited recognition. But my combat about the negro in that society was the means of giving me a place in the Anthropological Institute when it arose. The works of Tylor and Lubbock and the generalizations of Herbert Spencer concerning primitive man breathed on all the dry bones in the museums, and Anthropology presently leaped into the front tank of sciences." (Moncure Daniel Conway, Autobiography, Memories and Experiences, 2 Vols., Houghton, Mifflin and Company, Boston, 1904. Vol. 2, p. 333)

"The evolutionist explanation of the natural world as applied to sociology found its fullest exponent in Herbert Spencer (1820-1903), who studied the anatomy of the social frame. He derived the principles of sociology from those of psychology and of biology, and regarded social development as a super-organic evolution." (p. 126) (Alfred Haddon--History of Anthropology. The Thinker's Library, No. 42. Watts & Co. London, 1945)

"... Herbert Spencer ... has never been recognized to belong to the true tradition of British anthropology, simply because he uses his vast collections of facts to illustrate rather than to test his preformed opinions." (R. R. Marett, Tylor. John Wiley & Sons, Inc. New York, 1936. P. 69.)

SOCIOLGY

"If Herbert Spencer did not create sociology, he at least raised it into life and started it on its grand career." (Lester F. Ward, "Herbert Spencer's Sociology," The Independent, Vol. 56, pp. 730-734, 1904. P. 730)

"... I do not hesitate to say that Mr. Spencer should be regarded as the true founder of a scientific sociology, and I as its greatest constructive thinker." (Franklin H. Giddings, "The Greatness of Herbert Spencer," The Independent, Vol. 55, pp. 2959-2962, December 17, 1903. P. 2961)

"Except in his treatment of the family, where he could not think freely, Herbert Spencer made substantial contributions to our understanding of society, which have by no means been nullified by later thinkers. Indeed, it is surprising how the theories of the great sociologists of the past—who more often than not either ignored or rejected each other's views—dovetail if we sift them judiciously." (Stanislav Andreski, The Uses of Comparative Sociology, University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1969. P. 74)

Like no other writer on comparative sociology, Spencer was aware of the unity of culture, and selected his examples more broadly than any: from simple societies, medieval history, chiefdoms, kingdoms, early empires, Classical Antiquity, 14th century England, etc.
"The indirect influence of Mr. Spencer's Sociology must be large and lasting. He has set a high standard for the descriptive social sciences. He has taught the method of observation and generalization in brilliant examples. He has arranged known social facts in such order that they make further observation and arrangement easier. He has proposed conclusions, which may be uncertain, but a safer philosophical structure than Mr. Spencer's must use a large part of the foundation which he has laid." (Albion W. Small and George E. Vincent, An Introduction to the Study of Society, American Book Company, New York, 1894. Pp. 46-47)

"... even the elementary principles of this branch of inquiry have yet to be formulated." (J. E. Cairnes, "Mr. Spencer on Social Evolution," The Fortnightly Review, Vol. 23, pp. 63-82, 200-213, 1875. P. 63)

"Whether or not, then, Mr. Spencer has created a science of sociology, he has at least demonstrated that social phenomena can be studied with scientific seriousness, and that if we do not thereby establish positive laws of social causation we shall, at least, attain to broader and truer views of social organization ...." (Franklin H. Giddings, Review of Spencer's Principles of Sociology, Vol. 3, Science, n.s., Vol. 5, pp. 732-733, 1897. P. 733)

"Yet Mr. Spencer's sociology is of the past, not of the present. It has a permanent place in the development of sociological thought. Present sociology, however, is neither Spencerian nor is it dependent upon anything Spencerian." (Albion W. Small, Review of Spencer's The Principles of Sociology, Vol. 3; American Journal of Sociology, Vol. 2, pp. 741-742, 1897. P. 742)


"He has command of more material than any one save Bastian; and he is enough of a positivist to test its complicated mass objectively, calmly, without prejudice, drawing conclusions regardless of metaphysical prepossessions. This has made Spencer the real founder of sociology and he will long remain its most powerful champion." (Ludwig Gumplowicz, The Outlines of Sociology, Translated by Frederick W. Moore, American Academy of Political and Social Science, Philadelphia, 1899. P. 32)

"... the great sociological system put forth by a master mind (Spencer), to which all other modern systems of sociological thought, and all more special sociological studies, in one or another way are related." (Franklin H. Giddings, "Modern Sociology," The International Monthly, Vol. 2, pp. 536-554, 1900. P. 543)
"... if sociology is now in a fair way of reaching the scientific stage, to Herbert Spencer is due the main credit." (Anonymous, "The Philosophy of Herbert Spencer," The Edinburgh Review, Vol. 199, pp. 352-373, 1904. P. 372)

"Our thesis is that the central line in the path of methodological progress, from Spencer to Ratzenhofer, is marked by gradual shifting of effort from analogical representation of social structures to real analysis of social processes." (Albion W. Small, Preface, General Sociology, 1905) (check)

"The problem that presents itself to sociologists today cannot be expressed in terms that sufficed a generation ago. Our present demand is for a way of explaining what is taking place among people, with literal values for the different terms which we find concerned in human experience. We want an explanation, not of men's crystalline formations, not of their machineries, not of their institutional remains. We want an account of the intimate process of their lives, in terms that will assign their actual meaning and value to the chief and subordinate factors concerned in the process." (Albion W. Small, General Sociology, no page ref. given). Quoted in Arthur M. Lewis, An Introduction to Sociology, Charles H. Kerr & Company, Chicago, 1913. P. 65)

"I think you have evaluated Spencer's position in true historical perspective. Personally, too, I am quite of the opinion that by far the most important of his books was the Biology, and, indeed, when I ask myself what first rate contribution--contribution of a magisterial kind--he made to Sociology, I find it hard to reply." (Letter from Victor V. Branford, Honorary Secretary of the Sociological Society of London, to Lester F. Ward dated February 2, 1909. Quoted in Lester F. Ward, Glimpses of the Cosmos, Vol. 6, G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1918. P. 302)

"It is all very well to say that Spencer's sociology is out of date. That is only true in a little larger degree than would be the assertion that the astronomy of Copernicus, or the physics of Galileo, are out of date. Spencer's sociology is one of the rungs of the ladder by which his successors have been able to climb. As no science can be completely mastered apart from its history, the student of sociology must thoroughly study the works of its two greatest fore-runners--Comte and Spencer." (Arthur M. Lewis, An Introduction to Sociology, Charles H. Kerr & Company, Chicago, 1913. P. 88)

"If Herbert Spencer did not create sociology, he at least raised it into life and started it on its grand career. It required courage to do this and to embody it in a great scientific system on an equal footing with biology, psychology and ethics at a time when others passed it by and disdained to speak its name. This brave act will always be regarded as more than atoning for any shortcomings that the most critical will ever find in Herbert Spencer's sociology." (Lester F. Ward, "Herbert Spencer's Sociology," Glimpses of the Cosmos, Vol. 6, pp. 171-177, G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1918. P. 171)
"... viewed from the standpoint of the historical development of the subject, Spencer's contribution was the most far-reaching in its influence that has yet been made." (Harry Elmer Barnes, "Some Typical Contributions of English Sociology to Political Theory," The American Journal of Sociology, Vol. 27, pp. 289-324, 1921. P. 300)

"He must be viewed as the first great systematizer of concrete sociological data and, therefore, as the real founder of sociology. Comte gave the science its name; Spencer first gave it an enormous collection of systematically arranged data together with a broad and more or less consistent body of theory." (Frank Hamilton Hankins, "Sociology," in Harry Elmer Barnes, editor, The History and Prospects of the Social Sciences, pp. 255-332, Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1925. P. 302)

"Mr. Spencer organized sociology as a science, and he demonstrated principles which must always hold a central place in sociological theory, whatever its further development may be." (Franklin H. Giddings, Studies in the Theory of Human Society, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1926. P. 114)

"Spencer's demonstration of the validity of the evolutionary viewpoint as applied to the study of human society had a tremendous influence upon the subsequent development of sociology, yet his distinctively sociological contributions affected but little the growth of sociology in England." (Harry Elmer Barnes, "The Fate of Sociology in England," American Sociological Society, Papers and Proceedings, Vol. 21, pp. 26-46, 1926. P. 26)

"While there were many factors which account for this strange lack of influence of Spencer upon English social science, it would seem that the following are the most important: (1) the type of English mind which tended towards calm reflection and broad generalization in the field of social science was still under the spell of the arid a priori metaphysics of Thomas Hill Green and the Scotch dialecticians; (2) the specialists were too narrow or too absorbed professionally to interest themselves in Spencer's sweeping generalizations and dogmatic formulas; (3) the reformers and uplifters were repelled by Spencer's harsh, uncompromising, and mechanical individualism. Hence, Spencer remains a gargantuan, but nevertheless a loney and isolated figure in English social science." (Harry Elmer Barnes, "The Fate of Sociology in England," American Sociological Society, Papers and Proceedings, Vol. 21, pp. 26-46, 1926. P. 34)

"... one of the greatest was Herbert Spencer—a name for ever honourable, and one of the founders of sociology." (F. Müller-Lyer, The Family, translated from Die Familie, Munich, 1912, by F. W. Stella Browne, Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1931. P. 316)
"... en la Sociología propriamente dicha no surgió en Inglaterra la escuela spenceriana, e incluso declinó la Sociología como ciencia británica independiente, para lo que Spencer la había habilitado. América recogió la herencia y hoy nos hallamos en presencia del hecho extraño, y deplorado por los cultivadores de nuestra ciencia, de que carece Inglaterra en la actualidad de una Sociología viva y sistemática." (Leopold Von Wiese, Sociología, Colección Labor, Sección VIII, No. 323, Editorial Labor, Barcelona, 1932. Pp. 81-82)

"Herbert Spencer (1820-1903) was, for an older generation, simply the sociologist, and about the end of the nineteenth century any theory of society other than Spencer's seemed impossible. It need not be decided here whether those who call him the greatest philosopher of the Victorian age are correct; an any case, his bulky System of Synthetic Philosophy, to which his sociology belongs, is an intellectual achievement of the first rank." (Leopold von Wiese, Systematic Sociology on the Basis of the Beziehungslehre and Gebildelehre, adapted and amplified by Howard Becker, John Wiley & Sons, Inc., New York, 1932. P. 687)

"If the evolution of German sociology down to the present can be summed up in the phrase: "From encyclopedic to special social science," the same statement is valid even to a greater degree of American sociology. How little has survived of the "universal" pretensions of the Spencer-Ward school! No more than ten years after the appearance of Dynamic Sociology there began in America, too, the sceptical discussion of questions of method." (Leopold von Wiese, Systematic Sociology on the Basis of the Beziehungslehre and Gebildelehre, adapted and amplified by Howard Becker, John Wiley & Sons, Inc., New York, 1932. P. 691)


"Herbert Spencer emphasized social processes in his application of the general theory of evolution and dissolution to society, but the processes which he emphasized--integration, differentiation, dissipation (disintegration), aggregation (societal growth), and adaptation (adjustment to environment)--have in considerable measure dropped out of sociological terminology. They have a mathematical, physical, or biological rather than a sociological flavor." (Quincy Wright, A Study of War, 2 Vols., University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1942. Vol. 2, p. 1437n.)
"The clearly visible fact is that the prehistory of sociology— as represented, for example, in the speculations of a Comte or a Spencer, a Hobhouse or a Ratzenofer—is very far from cumulative." (Robert K. Merton, Social Theory and Social Structure, The Free Press, Glencoe, Illinois, 1949. P. 5)

"Spencer’s influence is today extinct. No intellectually respectable person would wish to be caught in the company of the ‘synthetic philosophy,’ or—since Professor Giddings and Professor Sumner, both men of great intellectual distinction, passed from the scene—in the company of the Spencerian sociology. It is true that there is still a social science which calls itself ‘sociology,’ but it is a very different affair from the Spencerian product. It is no longer greatly intrigued by the general notion of evolution. Indeed, it is often more than a little doubtful as to progress—at least, there is no progress without conscious and planned effort. It, therefore, studies specific situations, and is especially interested in questions of environment, ‘ecology,’ ‘demography,’ social statistics and the like. This sociology owes little to Spencer except the idea that society, or ‘social groupings,’ are something of a definite, tangible nature enough to be made subjects of ‘scientific’ investigation. In brief, sociology today owes most of its problems and procedures to Darwinian ideas rather than to Spencerian." (Edward S. Corwin, “The Impact of the Idea of Evolution on the American Political and Constitutional Tradition,” in Evolutionary Thought in America, ed. by Stow Persons, pp. 182-199, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1950. P. 187)


"It was types of societies, not the history of isolated institutions or culture traits, which interested him [Spencer]. In this sense he was a thorough sociologist, not a historian, and still less an antiquarian." (J. W. Burrow, Evolution and Society, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1966. P. 192)

"There is no need here to examine the logic of Spencer’s sociology. Much of it could, I think, be rescued from the criticisms usually made of it." (Philip Abrams, The Origins of British Sociology: 1834-1914, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1968. P. 73)

"Modern British sociology was built, more than anything else, as a defense against Spencer." (Philip Abrams, The Origins of British Sociology: 1834-1914, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1968. P. 67)
"The first effort to place sociology in the British university system had been made by Herbert Spencer in 1880. Martin White's success twenty years later had a great deal to do with the newness of the University of London and with the particular interests of the Webbs. But it is suggestive that of the available candidates it was Hobhouse, the philosopher, who was chosen." (Philip Abrams, The Origins of British Sociology: 1834-1914, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1968. P. 147)

"Spencer's scheme .... is not a system of speculative conceptions. It is an attempt to represent in language the literal facts of society in the relations in which they actually occur in real life." (In other words, Spencer does not deal in "ideal types" as German sociologists, like Max Weber, often did.) (Albion W. Small, General Sociology, p. 130) (Small is referring here to Spencer's Principles of Sociology.)

"Many of [George] Fitzhugh's articles for the Richmond Examiner were re-published in a book, Sociology for the South (1854) as the first American book to use the new word "sociology" in its title. Obviously, it was pure proslavery propaganda rather than social science, and in it Fitzhugh argued, as the selection shows, that the innate inferiority of the Negre required a slave system." (Harvey Wish, editor, Slavery in the South, Farrar, Straus and Company, New York, 1964. P. 273)

"Why does a writer of Mr. Spencer's eminence lend the sanction of his authority to the barbarous compound "Sociology" [sic] The word, we believe, was coined in jest, and was certainly not fitted to enter into our serious language." (Viscount Amberley, Review of Spencer's "The Study of Sociology," The Examiner, January 10, 1874, pp. 37-38. P. 37)

"... sociology in the barbarous name to tell the truth--..." (Emile Durkheim, Montesquieu and Rousseau, Forerunners of Sociology, The University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor, 1965. P. 1)

There were many doubters. For example, Parke Godwin wrote in a letter to the Editor of the Popular Science Monthly, "... I should be disposed to doubt whether they [biology, psychology, and sociology] are yet to be ranked as more than inchoate sciences." (p. 106) "As to Sociology, the name for which was invented only a few years since by Comte, it is still in a chaotic condition; and, unless Mr. Spencer, whose few introductory chapters are alone made public, succeeds in giving it consistency and form, it can hardly be called more than a hope." (Parke Godwin, "The Sphere and Limits of Science," The Popular Science Monthly, Vol. 3, pp. 105-111, May, 1873.)
"In one respect, however, Mr. Spencer's present volume, and we hope still more his larger work, will assist in dissipating prejudices against sociology. The public have been too much accustomed to associate the name of social science with isolated crotchets. They have been addressed in the name of science by writers who are soon detected as pamphleteers in a scientific skin, pressing for reconstruction and immediate legislation upon arguments which no one can perceive to be more scientific in their character than the average leading article." (Alexander Gibson, review of Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, The Academy, Vol. 6, pp. 44-46, July 11, 1874. P. 46)

Herbert Spencer "... was not just a sociologist but only came to sociology as wider ethical and philosophical concerns prompted him." (J. D. Y. Peel, Herbert Spencer on Social Evolution, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1972. P. vii)

"Herbert Spencer (1820-1903) was the first and probably remains the greatest, person to have written sociology, so-called, in the English language." (J. D. Y. Peel, Herbert Spencer on Social Evolution, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1972. P. vii)

"... Herbert Spencer, who is now acknowledged to be the foremost living expositor of pure scientific sociology." (Edward L. Youmans, "Editor's Table," The Popular Science Monthly, Vol. 2, pp. 240-243, December, 1972. P. 240)

"Spencer's voice is prominent among those who maintain that sociology can truly be, in all essentials, a science of society as there are sciences of nature." (J. D. Y. Peel, Herbert Spencer on Social Evolution, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1972. P. vii)

"There can be no complete acceptance of Sociology as a science, so long as the belief in a social order not conforming to natural law, survives." (Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1891. P. 394)

"For the Science of Society, the name "Sociology" was introduced by M. Comte. Partly because it was in possession of the field, and partly because no other name sufficiently comprehensive existed, I adopted it. Though repeatedly blamed by those who condemn the word as a "barbarism," I do not regret having done so." (Herbert Spencer, Preface to The Principles of Sociology, Vol. 1, 1st ed., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1878. P. v)

"The word Sociologie was first used by Comte in 1839 as an equivalent of the expression, social physics, previously in use, and was introduced, he said, to describe by a single term that part of natural philosophy which relates to the positive study of the fundamental laws of social phenomena." (Benjamin Kidd, "Sociology," Encyclopaedia Britannica, 11th ed., Vol. 25, pp. 322-331, 1911. P. 322)

"The heterogeneity of our speech is already so great that nearly every thought is expressed in words taken from two or three languages. Already, too, it has many words formed in irregular ways from heterogeneous roots. Seeing this, I accept without much reluctance, another such word: believing that the convencience and suggestiveness of our symbols are of more importance than the legitimacy of their derivation." (Herbert Spencer, Preface to The Principles of Sociology, Vol. 1, 1st ed., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1878. P. v)

"Hence the actions of man in society are the subject of a further kind of study, which is now commonly called Sociology. The word is offensive to scholars as being a barbarously formed hybrid; and although it is too late to quarrel with anybody for using it, I should prefer Economy as a general name for the study of men's common life short of specific reference to the State." (p. 7) "If such a Latin word could exist at all, it could only mean a science of partnerships or alliances. One must not push these objections too far, however. Suicide, as was once pointed out at Cambridge by the opponent of a Latin thesis, "Recte statuit Paleius de suicidis," could as a Latin word mean nothing but killing swine." (p. 7n.) (Frederick Pollock, An Introduction to the History of the Science of Politics, new and revised edition, Macmillan & Company, Ltd., London, 1911)

"Probably the name (sociology) must be accepted now, though barbarously formed and scarcely justified by necessity." (p. 217) "For the word "Sociology"—which, even if such hybrid formations were allowable, would not naturally convey the meaning it is intended to convey ...." (p. 217) (Anonymous, "Spencer's Descriptive Sociology," The Saturday Review of Politics, Literature, Science, and Art, Vol. 36, pp. 217-218, 1873)

"Spencer's title, 'Descriptive Sociology, killed the work to which it was applied.'[This because the word 'sociology' was a "popularly repulsive" term.] (Edward L. Youmans to Lester F. Ward, letter of March 18, 1886. In Preface to 2nd ed. of Lester F. Ward, Dynamic Sociology, 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1926. Vol. 1, p. v)
"This classification of societies (simple, compound, etc.) constitutes an important contribution to ethnography, as we have only to glance over the tables to determine the true social position of any given tribe or race." (Lester F. Ward, Dynamic Sociology, 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. Vol. I, p. 210)

As interested in the classification of societies in general as anthropologists have been, no one seems to have picked up and commented on Spencer's rather interesting and useful classification of societies on the basis of levels of integration. (Vol. I, pp. 551, 552, 554).

"The Spencerian classification (of autonomous political units) puts into one class such groups as ancient Mexico, the Assyrian Empire, the Egyptian Empire, Great Britain, France, Germany, and Russia. The absurdity of this speaks for itself." (Pitirim A. Sorokin, Sociological Theories of Today, Harper & Row, Publishers, New York, 1966. P. 575n.)

"Spencer ... considers societies organized as clans or villages as "simple societies" and those in which the clans or villages are organized into tribes as "compound societies." His "doubly compound societies" correspond to tribal federations and states, above which are the "trebly compound" modern (sic) nations and empires. Additional complications in respect to degree of stability of headship and sedentary or nomadic character are also introduced." (Quincy Wright, A Study of War, 2 Vols., The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1942. Vol. I, p. 66n.)

"Spencer proposed to distinguish four types of society: (i) simple societies, (ii) compound societies, (iii) doubly compound societies, and (iv) trebly compound societies. The types are distinguished primarily in terms of scale (or size), but also in terms of associated phenomena such as the more extensive division of labour, more elaborate political organization, developed ecclesiastical hierarchy, social stratification, etc. But the utility of the classification appears less when it is realized that the first three social types comprise only primitive societies, while all civilized (sic) societies are grouped together in the fourth class, which includes, according to Spencer, Ancient Mexico, the Assyrian Empire, the Roman Empire, Great Britain, France, Germany, Italy and Russia." (T. B. Bottomore, Sociology, George Allen & Unwin Ltd, London, 1962. P. 114)
"By the aggregation of some simple societies, compound societies arose; through further aggregation of compound societies, doubly compound societies arose; by aggregation of doubly compound societies, trebly compound societies arose. A simple society consists of families, a compound society of families unified into clans, a doubly compound society finds clans unified into tribes, and the trebly compound societies, such as our own, are those in which tribes have been brought together into nations or states." (Nicholas S. Timasheff, Sociological Theory: Its Nature and Growth, Random House, New York, 1967. Third edition. P. 40)

"But the utility of the classification [Spencer's classification of political types into simple, compound, etc.] appears less when it is realized that the first three social types comprise only primitive societies, while all civilized societies are grouped together in the fourth class, which includes, according to Spencer, Ancient Mexico, the Assyrian Empire, the Roman Empire, Great Britain, France, Germany, Italy and Russia." (T. B. Bottomore, Sociology, A Guide to Problems and Literature, 2nd ed., Pantheon Books, Random House, New York, 1971. P. 118)
"... he was peculiarly sensitive to the pitfalls to which the student of sociology is subject, taking the form of the several biases he devoted so much of the book to; in this respect he may be considered to be a more important forerunner of the field currently called the sociology of knowledge than he has generally been credited with being." (Talcott Parsons, Introduction to The Study of Sociology by Herbert Spencer, pp. v-x, The University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor, 1961. P. vi)


Yet this contribution of Spencer's is generally unrecognized. Thus, for example, in his article on the "Sociology of Knowledge" in the recently published International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences (Vol. 8, pp. 428-435), Lewis Coser makes no mention at all of Spencer's The Study of Sociology.

Sixty-five years after it was written, the distinguished historian Allen Nevins was still able to say: "The ablest treatment of bias in relation to historical evidence is still that given in Herbert Spencer's Study of Sociology." (Allen Nevins, The Gateway to History, D. C. Heath and Company, Boston, 1938. P. 199)

(For a recognition of Spencer's role in the sociology of knowledge, see Talcott Parsons' "Introduction," The Study of Sociology, Ann Arbor, p. vi.)

"When the Spencerians disbanded in 1882, after the death of Morgan had removed the respected arbiter of their discussions, most of those who were not already members of the Pundit Club determined to organize a new dinner club on that model, taking the name Fortnightly." (p. 322) "Most of the papers during the first two decades of the Fortnightly Club were devoted to the analysis of Spencer's doctrines and those of his followers or critics. It would be enlightening to know how he appraised the argument between Spencer and Lester F. Ward, whose Dynamic Sociology supplied the topic for [Robert] Mathews in 1884. Apparently several of the Fortnightly members were keenly interested in this new issue, for the titles of their papers approached this subject again and again. The natural sciences were attracting less interest, as in the Pundit Club, but the emerging social sciences, or at least many of the problems with which they dealt, received more attention here than from the Pundits." (Blake McKelvey, Rochester, The Flower City, 1855-1890, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1949)

Lewis H. Morgan's "... provocative volume [Ancient Society] ... attracted the special interest of the Spencer Club during its later sessions, many of them held in the aging scholar's own library, its shelves overflowing with nearly three thousand books." (Blake McKelvey, Rochester, The Flower City, 1855-1890, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1949. P. 320)
"... the three phases through which human opinion passes--the unanimity of the ignorant, the disagreement of the inquiring, and the unanimity of the wise ...." (Herbert Spencer, Education: Intellectual, Moral, and Physical, John A. Alden, Publisher, New York, 1885. P. 87)

Although he proposed a typology that amounted to stages, he was more interested in process than in stages.

Spencer was not much preoccupied with stages. He asserted that pastoralism was not a necessary precursor of agriculture. (See "Classical Evolution," p. 81)

Spencer's dislike for "stages" is shown in his rejection of the three Comtean stages in the development of any science, and the assertion that all sciences change in the direction of becoming more heterogeneous.

The origin of the State, he [Spencer] thinks, was the necessity of a centralized neural apparatus, to coordinate the military activities of the organism-society against other societies. The more plausible explanation, that it was required as the instrument of domination of one class over the other, does not occur to him. As the peasants correspond to endoderm, so the king's council correspond to the medulla." (Joseph Needham, "Integrative Levels; A Revaluation of the Idea of Progress," in Time: The Refreshing River, pp. 233-273, George Allen and Unwin, London, 1943. P. 249)

"In spite of his elaborate treatment of the origin and development of the different branches of political organization, Spencer nowhere gives a clear picture of the evolution of the state and sovereign power as a related whole, and this failure doubtless contributed to a large degree to make Spencer unable to grasp the real significance of the state." (Harry Elmer Barnes, "Some Typical Contributions of English Sociology to Political Theory," The American Journal of Sociology, Vol. 27, pp. 289-324, 1921. P. 309)
"The Pundits promptly turned a more searching eye on Spencer. Professor Morey, a new member, read a paper in May, 1878, on "Herbert Spencer and His Predecessors," in which he maintained that the evolutionary or developmental concepts were by no means new with Spencer and his associates. Morey concluded that Spencer, by returning to the materialistic philosophy of the ancients, had abandoned the truths discovered by the philosophers of the last thousand years, thus demonstrating his folly. /William C. Morey, "Herbert Spencer and His Predecessors," MS, University of Rochester.

Augustus H. Strong likewise read a paper that year on the "Philosophy of Herbert Spencer" in which he no doubt amplified his attack on Spencer as a Humist, an idealistic materialist, as he had recently expressed it in a lecture at Colby College. Dr. Edward Mott Moore, defender of Darwin, may have taken a more sympathetic view in his paper on "Biology, Spencer, and Haeckel," read before the club a year later." (Blake Mckelvey, Rochester, The Flower City, 1855-1890, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1949. P.319)


"Spencer's fulfillment of this task in the section of his Principles of Sociology dealing with "Political Institutions," and in numerous essays dealing with "Political Institutions," and in numerous essays and parts of other works, is doubtless among the most extensive treatments of political problems which any sociologist, with the possible exception of Gumplovicz and Ratzenhofer, has attempted." (Harry Elmer Barnes, "Some Typical Contributions of English Sociology to Political Theory." The American Journal of Sociology, Vol. 27, pp. 289-324, 1921. P. 302)

"Drawing vigor from raw facts of science, they tried to master them until the rapid increase of knowledge made their quest unrealistic. In 1860, therefore, the /Pundit/ Club laid plans to found an academy of science in Rochester, but the war interrupted the enterprise. They met again after the war, then to probe the theories of Darwin and Herbert Spencer, as well as to consider the increasingly impressive research of their own Lewis Morgan. By then the Club's reputation had grown beyond the city's limits. "There is a good deal of good thinking being done in Rochester," wrote Andrew D. White of Cornell. "They have the best social club for discussing literary, political and scientific questions that I know of in the United States."" (Carl Resek, Lewis Henry Morgan: American Scholar, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1960. P. 64)
"It would be difficult to overestimate the importance of the Academy of Science in its early years. Encouragement was given to individuals in all scientific fields, even to those who raised philosophical questions or battled doctrinaire traditions. Both Myron Adams and Newton Mann were honored by election as president, while Robert Mathews, who likewise held that post one year, devoted his annual address to an exposition of Spencer's philosophy. Yet the prevailing atmosphere was one of detached scientific investigation, rather than philosophical speculation or debate." (Blake McKelvey, Rochester, the Flower City, 1855-1890, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1949, P. 322)

Declining an invitation to either the Spencer Club, or the Fortnightly Club, which succeeded it in 1882, Spencer wrote to Robert Mathews: "I am moreover, obliged to limit the amount of serial excitement which I undergo—much conversation, especially late in the day, being fatal to my sleep, which under the best conditions is always more or less bad; & the avoidance of undue excitement is practically not possible when standing in the relation of guest." (Letter from Herbert Spencer to Robert Mathews dated March 11, 1882. As transcribed by Mina Aprill from a source unknown to me at Rush Rhees Library at the University of Rochester)
"R. L. S.'s father [Thomas] writes [to Sidney Colvin, ca. 1880] that worry about his son has brought a recurrence of an illness he had the preceding summer. He adds: It is very sore upon a man come to my time of life to have all this to put up with ... I lay all this at the door of Herbert Spencer. Unsettling a man's faith is indeed a very serious matter." (Edwin J. Beinecke, A Stevenson Library Catalogue, 4 Vols., Yale University Press, New Haven, 1958. Vol. 4, p. 1635)

"As his Robert Louis Stevenson's custom was, he specially established friendly relations with the natives of the Hawaiian Islands, where RLS arrived in 1889, in particular with Kalakaua, 'the last of the Hawaiian kings,' a picturesque, dusky vivaceur, with a good fund of common sense, more of human nature, and culture enough, notwithstanding his colour, to discuss Herbert Spencer intelligently." (J. A. Steuart, Robert Louis Stevenson, Man and Writer, 2 Vols., Sampson Low, Marston & Co., Ltd., London, 1924. Vol. 2, pp. 142-143)

"Close upon the back of my discovery of Whitman, I came under the influence of Herbert Spencer. No more persuasive rabbi exists, and few better. How much of his vast structure will bear the touch of time, how much is clay and how much brass, it were too curious to inquire. But his words, if dry, are always manly and honest; there dwells in his pages a spirit of highly abstract joy, plucked naked like an algebraic symbol, but still joyful; and the reader will find there a caput-mortuum of piety, with little indeed of its loveliness, but with most of its essentials; and these two qualities make him a wholesome, as his intellectual vigour makes him a bracing writer. I should be much of a hound if I lost my gratitude to Herbert Spencer." (Robert Louis Stevenson, "Books Which Have Influenced Me," First published in The British Weekly, in The Works of Robert Louis Stevenson, Vol. 16, pp. 272-278, Chatto and Windus, London, 1912. Pp. 274-275)


"One of these chapters [in Spencer's The Study of Sociology] was entitled "The Theological Bias," and we are informed that this was considered by some of the faculty so objectionable as to render the volume unfit to be put into the hands of the Yale seniors." (Edward L. Youmans, "Sociology and Theology at Yale College," The Popular Science Monthly, Vol. 17, pp. 265-269, 1880. P. 266)

"Its [The Study of Sociology's] aims were altogether social and political, and it never occurred to me that it might have any theological influence." (Letter from Herbert Spencer to W. A. H. C. Freemantle, dated October 29, 1890. Quoted in David Duncan, Life and Letters of Herbert Spencer, 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1908. Vol. Vol. 1, p. 397)

"Herbert Spencer's Study of Sociology ... is a book as suggestive, as thoughtful, and as entertaining as one could wish to read ... ." (Unsigned review of Herbert Spencer's The Study of Sociology, The Atlantic Monthly, Vol. 33, p. 238, 1874. P. 238)

"The Study of Sociology has passed through eleven English editions, and has proved nearly as popular as its author's Education." (John Fiske, Edward Livingston Youmans, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. P. 294)


"In nothing Spencer has written about human society is the principle of causation more clearly or more forcefully presented [than in The Study of Sociology]." (James P. Lichtenberger, Development of Social Theory, The Century Co., New York, 1923. P. 330)
"... it /The Study of Sociology/ also contains much that is surprisingly modern and relevant to our own time." (Talcott Parsons, Introduction to The Study of Sociology by Herbert Spencer, pp. v-x, The University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor, 1961. P. v)

"The Study of Sociology at 10s. 6d. had sold more than 20,000 copies /in England, no doubt/ by 1900, and the cheap edition of his /Spencer's/ tract on Education nearly 50,000 ...." (Peter B. Medawar, The Art of the Soluble, Methuen & Co. Ltd, London, 1967. P. 39)

"The views [expressed by Spencer in the installments of The Study of Sociology] have been reproduced and commented upon extensively by the press, who have generally recognized their importance ...." (Edward L. Youmans, "The Study of Sociology," The Popular Science Monthly, Vol. 4, pp. 242-244, 1873. P. 244)


"... its /The Study of Sociology/ chapters are so packed with observation and reflection, so stamped with ordering thought, that even the dissentient reader is forced to confess its comprehensive power." (J. M. Robertson, Explorations, Watts & Co., London, n.d. (ca. 1923). P. 124)

Franklin H. Giddings found Spencer's The Study of Sociology "... delightfully written ...." (Franklin H. Giddings, "Modern Sociology," The International Monthly, Vol. 2, pp. 536-554, 1900. P. 543)

Spencer stresses the necessity of avoiding becoming enamored of facts themselves, rather than looking for the meaning of facts. (The Study of Sociology, Ann Arbor, pp. 87, 90.)

"And yet that the properties of the units determine the properties of the whole they make up, evidently holds of societies as of other things." (Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1891. P. 51)
"THE STUDY OF SOCIOLOGY"

The chapter on "The Theological Bias" in The Study of Sociology is actually very moderate in tone, and fully as many pages are spent on confuting the anti-theological bias.

In The Study of Sociology, Spencer makes the obstacles to a social science seem overwhelming.

It cannot be denied that in The Study of Sociology Spencer's writing style rises to great heights of expressiveness and vigor. See, for example, pp. 177-183, Ann Arbor edition.

A lot of the content of The Study of Sociology seems to be plucked from the pages of the daily press. There is too much "grinding it out."

In The Study of Sociology, Spencer presents the organic analogy clearly, forcefully, and convincingly. (See pp. 301-305 of the Ann Arbor edition.)

In The Study of Sociology Spencer stresses the operation of causation in society, as elsewhere. (See, for example, p. 296 of the Ann Arbor edition.)

Spencer's arguments help us to understand why it is that certain contemporary (modern) sociologists have proclaimed that objective social science is impossible. What they are really saying is that their own commitment to social or political views is such not to allow them to be objective. (The Study of Sociology, Ann Arbor.)

Spencer's frequent use of very recent newspaper quotations shows he was writing the book ad hoc, rather than drawing on long accumulated material, following a master plan, as in the volumes of the Synthetic Philosophy. (That is, in The Study of Sociology.)

"THE STUDY OF SOCIOLOGY"

"The "Independent" says of the "Study of Sociology": "Theologically it is probably the most objectionable book Spencer has written, making no secret of its contempt for believers in the Christian religion, who are told that they must lay aside their faith if they wish to study sociology." (Edward L. Youmans, "Sociology and Theology at Yale College," The Popular Science Monthly, Vol. 17, pp. 265-269, 1880, p. 268)

"... when we mark his attempts to sweep away from our world all that ennobles human existence; when we notice his efforts to grasp all knowledge and impose his dicta on mankind, we cannot but think the Papacy of Materialism has transferred its throne to London." (Anonymous, Review of Herbert Spencer's The Study of Sociology, International Review, Vol. 1, pp. 407-413, 1874, p. 411)

"It [The Study of Sociology] is hence not to be regarded as a treatise upon sociological science, but rather an introduction to it." (Edward L. Youmans, "The Study of Sociology," The Popular Science Monthly, Vol. 4, pp. 242-244, 1873, p. 244)

"If we might use an expression which is a seeming contradiction, we would say that his book Spencer's The Study of Sociology was the forerunner of a Gospel of Atheism." (Anonymous /possibly the editor of the International Review, Review of The Study of Sociology, by Herbert Spencer, International Review, Vol. 1, pp. 407-413, 1874, p. 411)

"In fact, in such works as J. S. Mill's System of Logic and Herbert Spencer's brilliant and much neglected Study of Sociology, the problem of objective social knowledge has received forthright and comprehensive treatment." (Louis Wirth, Preface to Ideology and Utopia, by Karl Mannheim, pp. xiii-xxi, Harcourt, Brace and Company, New York, 1949, p. xix) (Indeed, The Study of Sociology can be considered the pioneer work in the sociology of knowledge.)

"Of this chapter on the "Theological Bias" we have only to say, as of many passages scattered through the volume, that it is difficult to determine whether it gives more decided evidence of ignorance, narrowness, conceit, or virulence." (Noah Porter, "Herbert Spencer's Theory of Sociology: A Critical Essay," The Princeton Review, Vol. 56 (6 n.s.), pp. 268-296, 1880, p. 291)

The Study of Sociology presents "... a theory of Sociology which to all intents and purposes is substantially atheistic. There are many who believe that bad as atheism may be in physics, it is immeasurably more dreaded in political and social science." (Noah Porter, "Herbert Spencer's Theory of Sociology: A Critical Essay," The Princeton Review, Vol. 56 (6 n.s.), pp. 268-296, 1880, p. 295)
"Chapter V [of The Study of Sociology] has just come, and it is splendid. This series is going to do a grand work; it hits us every time exactly where we live. The papers as they appear will be extensively read, and, although we are in the midst of a presidential convulsion, they are already attracting great attention. The volume cannot fail to do sharp execution. Have you any definite idea of its extent?" (Letter from Edward L. Youmans to Herbert Spencer, dated August 21, 1872. In John Fiske, Edward Livingston Youmans, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. P. 303)

"The Study of Sociology, with its treatment of social institutions as ossified social forces, of history as a process of mutual aggression and defense among forces and institutions, its coordination of structure and function, its analysis of the nature of social facts, its masterly working out of the flow of unanticipated consequences, its conception of functional differentiation as the defining attribute of modernity, its elaborate account of the intellectual hazards of sociological inquiry, is perhaps the most successful textbook of general sociology yet produced in Britain. But because it is also a sustained polemic against ameliorism it was virtually unusable in Britain for three-quarters of a century." (Philip Abrams, The Origins of British Sociology: 1834-1914, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1968. Pp. 72-73)

"No one escapes the lash. In The Study of Sociology all men are convicted of folly, until at last, when you end Mr. Spencer's interesting four hundred and odd pages, you are led to the conclusion that all men are fools ...." (Anonymous (A. V. Dicey), "Herbert Spencer's Polemics," The Nation, Vol. 18, pp. 63-64, 1874. P. 63. A review, of sorts, of The Study of Sociology)

After reading Spencer's The Study of Sociology, William Graham Sumner! "At once he formed a class for the reading and discussion of Spencer's book, which, he says, was probably the first course in sociology ever given in an American college." (Harris E. Starr, William Graham Sumner, Henry Holt and Company. New York, 1925. P. 387.)

"He is going very thoroughly through the Study of Sociology, revising it with a view to style, proposing to make it his most perfect work in this respect. It is funny that a volume which I bullied him into preparing should be chosen for this honour. It is interesting to look over the volume and see what thorough work he is making with it; every page is blackened with erasures and slashings." (Letter from Edward L. Youmans to William J. Youmans dated October 12, 1877. Quoted in John Fiske, Edward Livingston Youmans, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. P. 337)
The Study of Sociology, "... which I bullied him to write..." (Letter from Edward L. Youmans to his sister, Eliza A. Youmans, dated December 2, 1871. Quoted in John Fiske, Edward Livingston Youmans, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. P. 290) "This work has been written at the instigation of my American friend, Prof. Youmans." (Herbert Spencer, "Preface," The Study of Sociology.)

"Spencer's side projects on the Sociology /The Study of Sociology/ are amazingly interesting. He has been afraid of their being stolen and has kept them shady, but he will show them to me." (This was in connection with the International Scientific Series.) (Letter from Edward L. Youmans to his sister, Eliza A. Youmans, dated June 15, 1871. Quoted in John Fiske, Edward Livingston Youmans, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. P. 272)


"Spencer's "Study of Sociology" is to this day an unsurpassed gymnastic for all who are willing to think out the practical problems of the social life ..." (J. H. Robertson, Modern Humanists Reconsidered, Watts & Co., London, 1927. P. 188)

In The Study of Sociology, as elsewhere, Spencer stressed the continuity and gradualness of evolution, than any revolutions or discontinuities.

"He [Spencer] does not actually lay the foundations of that science here [in The Study of Sociology], but he invites his readers to assist him in clearing the ground on which those foundations may subsequently be laid." (Viscount Amberley, Review of Spencer's"The Study of Sociology," The Examiner, January 10, 1874, pp. 37-38. P. 37)

"If we have really succeeded in penetrating to the heart of the great enterprise contemplated by Mr. Spencer, we would say that its design is to develop a new Social Science from the theory of Evolution." (Anonymous, Review of Herbert Spencer's The Study of Sociology, International Review, Vol. 1, pp. 407-413, 1874. P. 408)

For Spencer's reasons for writing The Study of Sociology see his Autobiography, Vol. II, pp. 252-255. Here he discusses the distinction between history and sociology, and indicates how making this distinction was one of the objectives of his book.
"The freedom and unfairness with which it attacks every
Theistic Philosophy of society and of history, and the cool
and yet sarcastic effrontery with which he assumes that mat-
erial elements and laws are the only forces and laws which
any scientific man can recognize, seem to me to condemn the
book as a textbook for a miscellaneous class in an under-
graduate course." (P. 346) "... the use of it [Spencer's
The Study of Sociology] will inevitably and reasonably work
serious havoc to the reputation of the college." (P. 347)
(Letter from Noah Porter, President of Yale, to William
Graham Sumner, December 8, 1879. Quoted in Harris E. Starr,
William Graham Sumner. Henry Holt and Company. New York,
1925.)

"It was the publication in 1873 of Mr. Spencer's delightfully
written little book on "The Study of Sociology," which first awak-
ened in England, America, France, Italy, and Russia a wide general
interest in this subject. From that time on sociological study has
been pursued with great activity, and a great sociological litera-
ture has accumulated." (Franklin H. Giddings, "Modern Sociology,"
The International Monthly, Vol. 2, pp. 536-554, 1900. P. 543)

"We cannot but infer this universal wreck [the attempt to abo-
lish God ... to divest man of his ... immorality," etc.] to be his
aspiration, if not his expectation, and we are confident that most
disastrous would be the result to thousands of our people, if the
International Scientific Series should succeed in obtaining a wide
circulation for the works of Herbert Spencer alone." (Anonymous,
Review of The Study of by Herbert Spencer, International

"... the offences against good taste and decency [in Spence-
er's The Study of Sociology]... are almost unparalleled in mod-
ern controversial literature." (p. 270) "The twelfth chapter [of
The Study of Sociology], which follows, on the "Theological Bias,"
has attracted special public attention rather on account of its
offensive and contemptuous illustrations than because of any nov-
atility in the opinions expressed." (p. 287) (Noah Porter, "Herbert Spen-
Vol. 56 (6 n.s.), pp. 268-296, 1880)

"We may say in conclusion that never had atheism such an op-
portunity. Christian publishers give to the world its theories of
materialism. Christian booksellers vend them. Christian people
buy them. How generous and sublime this confidence in the truth!
The occupants of the citadel furnish the artillery for its over-
throw. That particular battery we have been examining consists
of guns which, under the flying colors of Popular Science, have
been during a year making their monthly discharges." (Anonymous,
Review of The Study of Sociology, by Herbert Spencer, International
"How Spencer's Study of Sociology came into my hands I cannot recollect, though it exercised a profound influence in suggesting that social institutions could rightly come within the ambit of interesting study. Possibly the knowledge that Spencer was himself born and reared in Derby [as was Hobson] stimulated my curiosity. For, as a boy in my early teens [Hobson was born in 1858], I used to meet Spencer walking into town with a man named Lott, a bank manager and a close friend of his. But while I had some slight acquaintance with Lott, I never exchanged a word with Spencer, though some quarter of a century later we interchanged letters upon the subject of the Boer War." (J. A. Hobson, Confessions of an Economic Heretic, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1938. P. 23)

"The truth is Mr. Spencer has attempted impossibilities, and seems amusingly ignorant of the immense difficulties of his task, and his own incompetency for its accomplishment. The work he contemplates is both a Cyclopaedia in the area of facts, and in the extent of its principles a Universal Philosophy. It embraces all history, all science, all theology. It comprehends man in every individual and social relation. It would set aside God, Creation, Providence, Christianity. It would formulate and tabulate every phenomenon of body and of spirit in equations of force and matters. It implies the mastery of all subjects, abstract and concrete, within the possible range of the human intelligence. The audacity which could conceive such a work is stupendous. The credulity which can glorify such a teacher is astounding." (Anonymous, Review of The Study of Sociology by Herbert Spencer, International Review, Vol. 1, pp. 407-413, 1874. Pp. 410-411)
"He [Havelock Ellis about the age of 197 was being deeply impressed by Spencer's Study of Sociology." (p. 99) (Houston Peterson, Havelock Ellis, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1928.)
Frank Lloyd Wright wrote that Louis Sullivan "venerated none except Adler [his partner], Herbert Spencer, Richard Wagner, Walt Whitman, John Edelman, and himself." (Frank Lloyd Wright, Genius and Mobocracy, Duell, Sloan & Pearce, New York, 1949. P. 54)

"But the practical effect of the bridges [ambitious new bridges then being built across the Mississippi and Kentucky rivers] was to turn Louis' mind from the immediate science of engineering toward science in general, and he set forth, with a new relish, upon a course of reading covering Spencer, Darwin, Huxley, Tyndall, and the Germans, and found a new, an enormous world opening before him, a world whose boundaries seemed destined to be limitless in scope, in content, in diversity. This course of reading was not completed in a month, or a year, or in many years; it still remains on the move." (Louis H. Sullivan, The Autobiography of an Idea, Dover Publications, Inc., New York, 1956 [originally published in 1924]. P. 249)

"In Darwin he [Sullivan himself] found much food. The Theory of Evolution seemed stupendous. Spencer's definition implying a progression from an unorganized simple, through stages of growth and differentiation to a highly organized complex, seemed to fit his own case, for he had begun with a simple unorganized idea of beneficent power, and was beginning to see the enormous complexity growing out of it, and enriching its meaning while insistently demanding room and nurture for further growth, until it should reach that stage of clarity through the depths of which the original idea might again be clearly seen, and its primal power more fully understood." (Louis H. Sullivan, The Autobiography of an Idea, Dover Publications, Inc., New York, 1956 [originally published in 1924]. Pp. 254-255)

"Charles Sumner was an admiring reader of your Social Statics, and boasts that he had the first copy in this country. He acknowledges large indebtedness to it, but his former bad health and the pressure of public duties, he regretted to say, had prevented him from following up your subsequent publications." (Letter from E.L. Youmans to Herbert Spencer dated November 23, 1863. Quoted in John Fiske, Edward Livingston Youmans, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. P. 163)
"I myself think Sumner the foremost student of the science of society who has yet lived. I think him much better informed and much sounder than Spencer, his nearest rival." (Albert G. Keller, Reminiscences of William Graham Sumner, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1933, P. 91)

"Although not a typical Spencerian product by virtue of its cautions concerning the biological transmission of cultural patterns, it is heavily committed to analogy with bio-evolution." (Marvin Harris, The Rise of Anthropological Theory, Thomas Y. Crowell Company, New York, 1968, P. 607)

"The rather widespread opinion that Sumner was a disciple of Herbert Spencer is more than half false. He neither owed as much to Spencer nor was in as close agreement with him as is generally assumed." (Harris E. Starr, William Graham Sumner, Henry Holt and Company, New York, 1925, P. 392.)

President Porter's first letter to Sumner objecting to the latter’s use of The Study of Sociology in class was dated December 6, 1879. (Harris E. Starr, p. 346)

"At any rate, he was not nearly as outspoken on religious matters as was Spencer, and his justification of himself for presuming to use Spencer's books against the opposition of Dr. Porter does not really join issue on religious grounds at all, unless championship of academic freedom can be so construed." (Albert G. Keller, Reminiscences of William Graham Sumner, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1933, P. 105)

"... Sumner voluntarily withdrew the offending textbook on the ground that, because of the agitation, its usefulness was gone." (Charles Schuchert and Clar Mae LeVene, O. C. Marsh: Pioneer in Paleontology, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1940, P. 245)

"The "Christian Intelligencer" says: "Herbert Spencer's Sociology has been introduced as a text-book. The faculty are divided in regard to the use of such a work. The President, it is said, opposes the study of a book essentially infidel. There should be no difference, no discussion among honest men upon such a matter. Yale College has been endowed by the gifts of Christian men almost exclusively. To use the foundation they have established for the propagation of skepticism is a breach of trust and is no better than burglary or forgery."" (Edward L. Youmans, "Sociology and Theology at Yale College," The Popular Science Monthly, Vol. 17, pp. 265-269, 1880, Pp. 267-268)
When the resolution of the corporation of Yale asserting the right of the President to veto use of any textbook was not presented, Sumner "voluntarily withdrew the book on the ground that because of the agitation its usefulness was gone, since the students were chiefly interested to find what was objectionable in it." (Cornelius Howard Patton and Walter Taylor Field, Eight O'Clock Chapel, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1927. P. 101)

"I got this morning the two copies of the New York Times, and read with amusement and satisfaction the account of the row at Yale College that has been produced by the introduction of the Study of Sociology as a textbook. Very probably this local fight will set going a general fight, which will be highly advantageous no doubt." (Letter from Herbert Spencer to Edward L. Youmans dated April 19, 1880. Quoted in John Fiske, Edward Livingston Youmans, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. P. 364)

"Spencer, he [Sumner] said, gave him his start in social science; that he was a great analytic mind. I said that his autobiography seemed to reveal him as a kind of old maid. "That's exactly what he was," Sumner confirmed. "We entertained him when he came over here. An old maid from the word go." I remarked how different Darwin was. "Yes," said Sumner, "he was a man, a great and good one. I must read that Life of him by his son again pretty soon." (Albert G. Keller, Reminiscences (Mainly Personal) of William Graham Sumner, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1933. P. 75)

"Probably it would not be too much to say that Sumner was the Moses who led the institution [Yale] out of that Egyptian darkness." (Henry Holt, Garrulities of an Octogenarian Editor, Houghton Mifflin, Boston, 1923. P. 87)

"While I was a tutor at Yale, beginning in the fall of 1866, I read Herbert Spencer's 'First Principles'—at least, the first part of it—but it made no impression upon me. The second part, as it dealt with evolution, did not then interest me. I also read his 'Social Statics' at that period. As I did not believe in natural rights, or in his 'fundamental principle,' this book had no effect on me." (William Graham Sumner, "Sketch of William Graham Sumner," The Popular Science Monthly, Vol. 35, pp. 257-268, 1889. p. 265.)

"The Yale College flurry is over, so far as exciting public criticism is concerned, but the antagonism is deep, and will quietly deepen still more." (Letter from Edward L. Youmans to Herbert Spencer, dated May 11, 1880. Quoted in John Fiske, Edward Livingston Youmans, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. P. 364)
"The thesis which is expounded in these two chapters is that the folkways are habits of the individual and customs of the society which arise from effort to satisfy needs; they are intertwined with goblinism and demonism and primitive notions of luck (sec. 6), and so they win traditional authority. Then they become regulative for succeeding generations and take on the character of a social force. They arise no one knows whence or how. They grow as if by the play of internal life energy. They can be modified, but only to a limited extent, by the purposeful efforts of men." (William Graham Sumner, *Folkways*, Ginn and Company, Boston, 1907. P. iv)

"It was Spencer's demonstration of the possibility of a science of society, his method and data, and not his particular conclusions, which commanded Sumner's respect." (Harris E. Starr, *William Graham Sumner*, Henry Holt and Company, New York, 1925. P. 345.)

"Unquestionably it is to the great philosophy which has now been established by such ample induction in the experimental sciences, and which offers to man such new command of all the relations of life, that we must look for the establishment of the guiding lines in the study of sociology. I can see no boundaries to the scope of the philosophy of evolution. That philosophy is sure to embrace all the interests of man on this earth. It will be one of its crowning triumphs to bring light and order into the social problems which are of universal bearing on all mankind. Mr. Spencer is breaking the path for us into this domain. We stand eager to follow him into it, and we look upon his work on sociology as a grand step in the history of science." (William Graham Sumner, "The Science of Sociology," Speech at the Farewell Banquet to Herbert Spencer at Delmonico's Restaurant, New York, November 9, 1882, in *The Forgotten Man and Other Essays*, edited by Albert Galloway Keller, pp. 401-405, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1918. Pp. 404-405)

"As a young man he was captivated by Herbert Spencer and felt that here at last was an intellectual emancipation and a satisfaction not before experienced. Filled with the zeal of the truth-disseminator, he prevailed at length against conservative opposition and began to teach social science or sociology of the Spencerian type, becoming the pioneer in America of sociological instruction." (pp. 832-33) "Briefly, he was of the school of Spencer; his great initial inspiration came from the Study of Sociology. With Spencer he reckoned Lippert as an influence of the highest significance in his sociological thinking; and at one time he added Ratzenhofer to these two, but later, I think, was inclined to rate him less highly, and to believe that Spencer and Lippert were the dominant influences upon his own work." (p. 834) (Albert G. Keller, "William Graham Sumner," *The American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 15, pp. 832-835, 1909-10)
"The "Christian at Work" remarks of William Graham Sumner:

"... We trust the accomplished Professor will himself see the wisdom of deferring to a very proper feeling which we believe unmistakably exists on the part of the Christian public, that nothing should be allowed, however otherwise excellent in itself, which will in the slightest degree unsettle the minds of the young by giving them a bias toward a pernicious, dangerous sociology ...." (Edward L. Youmans, "Sociology and Theology at Yale College," The Popular Science Monthly, Vol. 17, pp. 265-269, 1880. P. 268)

"I do not find Sumner, or Spencer either, deserving of all the epithets aimed at them by self-constituted champions of "progress." Each of these men was fighting all his life, and, what is more, studying and working, for the betterment of social conditions through the correct understanding of what they had been and were. I challenge anyone to name a prominent so-called advocate of laissez-faire who was not active against the abuses of his time. The instructed reformer ought to enshrine the memory of these traduced men of sense; an assault upon them merely indicates the kind of mind the attacked possesses. Spencer was something of an old maid and perhaps a little feline now and then; he may pall on one a little." (Albert G. Keller, Reminiscences (Mainly Personal) of William Graham Sumner, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1933. P. 55)

"That stanch exponent of the spirit of orthodoxy, the "New York Observer," makes up a sharp issue between Christianity and social science as follows: "The traditions of the college (Yale) are all in favor of the Christian religion, and the public may be assured that the faculty and trustees will never consent to have the atheism of Spencer offered to the students. They can find enough of that without going to college to find books in which Christianity is argued against and ridiculed. We are glad that President Porter stands firm, and we may also add that the resignation of any professor who has sympathies with Herbert Spencer will be a great advantage to the college." (Edward L. Youmans, "Sociology and Theology at Yale College," The Popular Science Monthly, Vol. 17, pp. 265-269, 1880. P. 267)
Spencer was the first to employ the term "superorganic," though with a different meaning from the one now current in anthropology. He didn't quite see—or at least failed to express—the categorical distinctiveness of culture. (Principles of Sociology, 2nd ed., Vol. 1, pp. 3-7).

"... whether society be conceived of as an organism, or as an aggregate which is better described by another phrase that Mr. Spencer has applied to it, / namely, super-organic ...." (Franklin H. Giddings, "Modern Sociology," The International Monthly, Vol. 2, pp. 536-554, 1900. Pp. 542-543)

"... super-organic structures .... being, as they are, objective products of subjective processes ...." (Herbert Spencer, First Principles, 6th ed., Watts & Co., London, 1937. P. 337)


"All organized results of social action—all super-organic structures, pass through parallel phases. Being, as they are, objective products of subjective processes, ...." (Herbert Spencer, First Principles, 4th edition, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1890. P. 374)

"While they [Folkways] are in vigor they very largely control individual and social undertakings, and they produce and nourish ideas of world philosophy and life policy. Yet they are not organic or material. They belong to a superorganic system of relations, conventions, and institutional arrangements. The study of them is called by their social character, by virtue of which they are leading factors in the science of society." (William Graham Sumner, Folkways, Ginn and Company, Boston, 1907. P. iv)
"... the tautology of "the survival of the fittest" ...."


"More general altruism [than that among parents and offspring] is probably a simple extension by reinforcement of the primary, selectively favorable altruism practiced on close relatives. Thus, we should not be taken in by Spencer's glib "survival of the fittest." In fact this phrase has no place in modern evolutionary theory. Selection favors those genotypes who leave more progeny in the remote future, no matter by what devious mechanism this is accomplished." (R. C. Lewontin, "Selection in and of Populations," in Ideas in Evolution and Behavior, edited by John A. Moore, pp. 297-311. The Natural History Press, Garden City, N.Y., 1970. Pp. 304-305)

"In politics-cum-sociology, Herbert Spencer proposed the origin of the State in violence and warfare. The nineteenth century believed it all. In biology and politics ... the doctrine of the survival of the fittest raised dog-eat-dog to the level of a scientific morality ...." (Paul Bohannan, Social Anthropology, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, New York, 1963. P. 203)

"The unlucky substitution of 'survival of the fittest' for 'natural selection' has done much harm in consequence of the ambiguity of 'fittest'--which many take to mean 'best' or 'highest'--whereas natural selection may work toward degradation vide epizoa." [That is, parasites] (Thomas Henry Huxley, Life and Letters of Thomas Henry Huxley, ed. by Leonard Huxley, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1901. 2 Vols. Vol. 2, p. 284)

"Some authors, like Dobzhansky, go so far as to call differential reproductive advantage "Darwinian fitness," although Darwin never used fitness in this sense, and although it was Herbert Spencer who first introduced the term "evolutionary theory by his unfortunate phrase The Survival of the Fittest, which Darwin did not employ in the earlier editions of the Origin of Species." (Julian Huxley, Evolution: The Modern Synthesis, 2nd edition, 1963. [P. of Introduction])

"Also in 1851, Herbert Spencer published his book Social Statics, that included the explanatory phrase "survival of the fittest" (which Charles Darwin himself later used)." (H. James Birx, Interpreting Evolution, Darwin and Teilhard de Chardin, Prometheus Books, Buffalo, N.Y., 1991. P. 139)
"In the first two editions of The Origin of Species (November 1859 and January 1860), Darwin used the phrase 'survival of the adapted', and it is only in the third (April, 1861), and subsequent editions, that he followed: 'I have called this principle, by which each slight variation, if useful, is preserved, by the term Natural Selection ...' with 'But the expression often used by Mr Herbert Spencer of the Survival of the Fittest is more accurate, and is sometimes equally convenient.' The expression was added, with the exception of sub-headings and the title of the fourth chapter, twice more to the original text, and provided Darwin with a catchphrase (at least in print), but not necessarily with an improvement.11 (Milo Keynes, footnote to G. Ainsworth Harrison, "Introduction", in Evolutionary Studies, A Centenary Celebration of the Life-of-Julian Huxley, ed. by Milo Keynes and G. Ainsworth Harrison, pp. 1- , Macmillan, London, 1989. P. In.)

"Here I must digress a moment to discuss the concept of evolutionary fitness. The biological avant garde has chosen to define fitness as 'net reproductive advantage,' to use the actual words employed by Professor Medawar in his Reith Lectures on The Future of Man. Any strain of animal, plant or man which leaves slightly more descendants capable of reproducing themselves than another, is then defined as 'fitter.' This I believe to be an unscientific and misleading definition. It disregards all scientific conventions as to priority, for it bears no resemblance to what Spencer implied or intended by his famous phrase the survival of the fittest. It is also nonsensical in every context save the limited field of population genetics. In biology, fitness must be defined, as Darwin did with improvement, 'in relation to the conditions of life'—in other words, in the context of the general evolutionary situation. I shall call it evolutionary fitness, in contradistinction to the purely reproductive fitness of the evangelists of geneticism, which I prefer to designate by the descriptive label of net or differential reproductive advantage."

(over)

"It is now well established that [American] business leaders of the Gilded Age only rarely defined their success as "survival of the fittest," arguing instead that success came through a combination of hard work and Christian stewardship." (George E. Webb, The Evolution Controversy in America, University Press of Kentucky, Lexington, Ky., 1994. P. 38)

Wrote George Macloskie, Professor of Biology at Princeton University: " ... are very like Darwin's 'survival of the fittest' ...." (Quoted in The Life of James McCosh, edited by William Milligan Sloane, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1896. P. 122)

"On a summer excursion I travelled from Glasgow to Oban with Herbert Spencer, one of my earliest friends in England. There were many English tourists on the barge, and barefoot children trotted beside it with the hope of having pennies thrown to them. A good many were thrown, as the scrambles were amusing. The little Scots long continued their pursuit, but presently the smaller ones weakened, especially the girls. "There," I said to Spencer, "is an example of the survival of the fittest or 'fleetest': the weaker fall behind and are getting no pennies." "Yes, for the moment," he said, "but soon the force of compassion will work for their benefit." And so it was; pennies were showered on the tired toddlers, and equality was established between the weak and the strong." (Moncure Daniel Conway, Autobiography, Memories and Experiences, 2 Vols., Houghton, Mifflin and Company, Boston, 1904. Vol. 2, p. 351)

"Now the basic law of organic growth is the Darwinian notion of the survival of the fittest." (Crane Brinton, English Political Thought in the Nineteenth Century, Ernest Benn, Ltd., London, 1933. P. 229)

"No less misleading is the expression "survival of the fittest," which Herbert Spencer unfortunately coined to describe the operation of natural selection, and which became associated with something like the image of the Nietzschean superman. Now, fitness in the evolutionary sense, or adaptive value, as it is better called, does not necessarily connot even a superior ability of an individual to survive, and a lack of fitness in this sense is not synonymous with weakness or frailty. A superior adaptive value of one genotype over another simply means that the carriers of the former leave, on the average, more surviving progeny than do the carriers of another genotype in the same environment. This superiority may result from the fact that individuals of one genetic type are stronger and more resistant to environmental hazards, and live longer than individuals of other genetic types. Or one type may be more sexually active or more fecund than another. Individual vigor and fecundity are not necessarily correlated, and a superior fecundity may compensate or even overcompensate for deficient vigor." (Theodosius Dobzhansky, "Heredity, Environment, and Evolution," Science, Vol. 111, pp. 161-166, 1950. Pp. 164-165)
"This laissez-faire attitude coloured Herbert Spencer's later attempt to take an organic view of society, and Darwin's "struggle for existence" and "survival of the fittest" were seized upon by a whole school of so-called evolutionists ...." (T. K. Penniman, A Hundred Years of Anthropology, Gerald Duckworth & Co. Ltd., London, 1952. P. 62)

"T. H. Huxley's criticism of "survival of the fittest" was very much to the point. What many biologists and most Social Darwinists overlooked was the fact that "fitness" is related to the current environment of a group and is not either necessarily or usually a capacity or function that enables the group or the organism to adapt itself to all environments. Failure to recognize this fact led to the conversion of "fittest" into "best" under all conditions. The fact is that "fitness" is a relative function, a function of the organism in relation to a particular environment." (Ashley Montagu, Darwin, Competition & Cooperation, Henry Schuman, New York, 1952. Pp. 57-58)

"There was a time when it was argued that Herbert Spencer's epigram 'the survival of the fittest' was tautological, since the characterization of the fittest was that they survived. Such objections melt like snow before the objective and positive proof provided by modern work carried out in the field, showing that on the average the organisms that do not survive are those which are demonstrably least well adapted to their environment." (Sir Gavin de Beer, Foreword to Charles Darwin and Alfred Russel Wallace, Evolution by Natural Selection, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1958. Pp. 21-22)

"Darwin wrote that evolution occurs through natural selection acting on organisms so that survival of the fittest results. The phrase "survival of the fittest" has always aroused much discussion. We now prefer to speak of this as Darwinian fitness, adaptive value, or selective value. Darwinian fitness of a population of organisms is measured as the reproductive capacity of the population. A population is "fit" relative to natural selection if it can maintain or increase its numbers from generation to generation." (John Buettnner-Janusch, The Origins of Man, John Wiley & Sons, Inc., New York, 1966. P. 10)

"Herbert Spencer, another of Darwin's friends, suggested that "survival of the fittest" was better than natural selection as a title for Darwin's theory. Darwin accepted survival of the fittest, much to the disgust of Huxley. It was a very poor term since it gave a "tooth and claw" idea of evolution. The term has resulted in a lot of misunderstanding of Darwin's theory. But it made a good heading for newspaper stories, and it persisted." (Aaron E. Klein, Threads of Life; Genetics from Aristotle to DNA, The Natural History Press, Garden City, N.Y., 1970. P. 38)
"One of the chief reasons I had for venturing to substitute another formula, ‘the survival of the fittest,’ for the formula of Mr. Darwin, was that ‘Natural Selection’ carries a decidedly teleological suggestion, which the hypothesis to be formulated does not in reality contain; and a good deal of the adverse criticism which the hypothesis has met with, especially in France, has, I think, arisen from the misapprehension thus caused. The expression, ‘Survival of the Fittest,’ seemed to me to have the advantage of suggesting no thought beyond the bare fact to be expressed; and this was in great part, though not wholly, the reason for using it. Just before this passage Spencer had objected to the apparent transmutation by E. D. Cope of survival of the fittest into preservation of the fittest by saying: ‘... the expression ‘Preservation of the Fittest’ is objectionable, because it supposes an act of preserving—a process beyond, and external to, the physical processes we commonly distinguish as natural; and this is a supposition quite alien to the idea to be conveyed.’ (p. 263) (Herbert Spencer, ‘The Survival of the Fittest,’ Nature, Vol. 5, pp. 263-264, 1872)

‘... the survival of the fittest is not always the survival of the best.’ (Herbert Spencer, ‘Evolutionary Ethics,’ The Athenaeum, No. 3432, pp. 193-194, August 5, 1893. P. 193)

In ‘Mr. Martineau on Evolution’ in discussing the survival of the fittest, Spencer pointed out that the fittest are not necessarily the best.

‘I have been much interested by your letter, which is as clear as daylight. I fully agree with all that you say on the advantages of H. Spencer’s excellent expression of ‘the survival of the fittest.’ This, however, / had not occurred to me till reading your letter. It is, however, a great objection to this term that it cannot be used as a substantive governing verb; and that this is a real objection I infer from H. Spencer continually using the words, natural selection.’ (Letter from Charles Darwin to Alfred Russel Wallace dated July 5, 1866. Quoted in The Life and Letters of Charles Darwin, edited by His Son, Francis Darwin, 2 Vols., Basic Books, Inc., New York, 1959. Vol. 2, pp. 229-230)

‘I have called this principle, by which each slight variation, if useful, is preserved, by the term Natural Selection, in order to mark its relation to man’s power of selection. But the expression often used by Mr. Herbert Spencer of the Survival of the Fittest is more accurate, and is sometimes equally convenient.’ (Charles Darwin, The Origin of Species, 6th edition, John Murray, London, 1890. P. 49) (This passage may appear in the fifth edition, but not in the fourth.)

‘The law that Mr. Herbert Spencer desires society to adopt is simply Darwin’s law—’the survival of the fittest.’” (Emile de Laveleye, ‘The State versus The Man: A Criticism of Mr. Herbert Spencer,’ The Contemporary Review, Vol. 47, pp. 485-508, 1885. P. 490)
"This preservation, during the battle for life, of varieties which possess any advantage in structure, constitution, or instinct, I have called Natural Selection; and Mr. Herbert Spencer has well expressed the same idea by the Survival of the Fittest. The term "natural selection" is in some respects a bad one, as it seems to imply conscious choice; but this will be disregarded after a little familiarity. No one objects to chemists speaking of "elective affinity;" and certainly an acid has no more choice in combining with a base, than the conditions of life have in determining whether or not a new form be selected or preserved." (Charles Darwin, The Variation of Animals and Plants under Domestication, 2 Vols., 2nd ed., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1892. Vol. 1, p. 6)

"But the special power of it /the expression "the survival of the fittest"/ lies in this, that it sounds as if it expressed a true physical cause. It gets rid of that detestable reference to the analogies of mind which are inseparably associated with the phrase of natural selection." (The Duke of Argyll /George Douglas Campbell/, Organic Evolution Cross-Examined, John Murray, London, 1898. P. 3)

"He /Spencer/ is the author of that other phrase, "the survival of the fittest," which has almost superseded Darwin's own original phrase of "natural selection." Nothing could be happier than this invention for the purpose of giving vogue to whatever it might be supposed to mean. There is a roundness, neatness, and compactness about it, which imparts to it all the qualities of a projectile with immense penetrating power. It is a signal illustration of itself. It is the fittest of all phrases to survive." (The Duke of Argyll /George Douglas Campbell/, Organic Evolution Cross-Examined, John Murray, London, 1898. P. 2)

"... there is a suggestion about it /the phrase "the survival of the fittest"/--not easily dismissed--that it is tautological. The survival of the fittest may be translated into the survival of that /which does actually survive." (pp. 2-3) "Yes, but this /the phrase "the survival of the fittest"/ is a mere restatement of certain facts under an altered form of words which pretends to explain them, whilst in reality it contains no explanatory element whatever. The survival of the fittest? Fittest for what? For surviving. So that the phrase means no more than this, that the survivor does survive." (p. 93) (The Duke of Argyll /George Douglas Campbell/, Organic Evolution Cross-Examined, John Murray, London, 1898)

"This is styled by Spencer the "survival of the fittest"; an expression both comprehensive and exact." (E. D. Cope, The Origin of the Fittest, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1887. P. 15)

"The unlucky substitution of "survival of the fittest" for "natural selection" has done much harm in consequence of the ambiguity of "fittest"--which many take to mean "best" or "highest"--whereas natural selection may work towards degradation vide epizoan." (Letter from Thomas Henry Huxley to W. Platt Ball dated October 27, 1890. Quoted in Life and Letters of Thomas Henry Huxley by His Son Leonard Huxley, 2 Vols., Macmillan and Co., Limited, London, 1900. Vol. 2, p. 268)
Frank Norris, at the end of The Octopus, wrote: "... the individual suffers, but the race goes on. Annixter dies, but in a far-distant corner of the world a thousand lives are saved. The larger view always and through all shams, all wickedness, discovers the Truth that will, in the end, prevail, and all things, surely, inevitably, resistlessly work together for good." (Complete Works of Frank Norris, Vol. 2, p. 361) Those were the words of a disciple of Spencer; the law of the survival of the fittest was a law that sometimes bore hard on the individual but was of the greatest importance for the race. Like Spencer and his followers Norris saw only the group, the nation, the world as the unit of survival, favoring the belief that the species counted for more than the individual." (Lars Ahnebrink, The Beginnings of Naturalism in American Fiction, 1891-1903, Russell & Russell, Inc., New York, 1961, P. 230)

"We raise questions of conduct in this matter [eugenics] very different from those raised by Mr. Herbert Spencer and the other first hasty generalizers about evolution, who seemed to suggest that if shopkeepers were encouraged to compete for business and clergymen for congregations, a process of the "survival of the fittest" would automatically set in, which would rapidly improve the race ...." (Graham Wallas, Men and Ideas, George Allen & Unwin Ltd, London, 1940, P. 90)

"Spencer was alive and active throughout this period, and so was his cosmic conception of evolution. A rival view was that of the social Darwinists who turned from the process of differentiation (basic in Spencer's thought) to stress the mechanisms of natural selection and survival of the fittest, whether individuals, groups, or social norms." (Nicholas S. Timasheff, Sociological Theory, Its Nature and Growth, 3rd edition, Random House, New York, 1967, P. 127).

"The process of natural selection is, in fact, dependent on adaptation—it is all one, whether one says that the competitor which survives is the "fittest" or the "best adapted."" (Thomas Henry Huxley, "Obituary of Charles Darwin," Darwiniana, p. 280)
"SYNTHETIC PHILOSOPHY"

"In the explanatory note inserted in the preface to 'First Principles' (p. xiv) he simply states that the application of these principles to inorganic nature is omitted [from the Synthetic Philosophy], but this gives no intimation as to how this application would have been made. He does, indeed, refer in at least two other places to these omitted volumes ('Principles of Biology,' Vol. I., Appendix, pp. 479, 480; 'Principles of Sociology,' Vol. I., p. 3), and in the second of these he says that one of the volumes would have dealt with 'Astrogeny' and the other with 'Geogeny.' These appear to be the only hints that he gave out on this point, and few readers probably ever noticed them. But in one of his letters written in 1895 he expounded much more fully into this subject and set forth clearly just what his whole system would have been had it been fully written out.* *See SCIENCE, N.S., Vol. III., February 21, 1896, p. 294 [consulted: of no value]; 'Pure Sociology,' pp. 67-69. (Lester F. Ward, "Herbert Spencer's Autobiography," Science, Vol. 19, pp. 873-879, 1904. P. 877)

"The actual effort demanded in the construction of the synthetic philosophy was nothing short of heroic. The struggle through so many years of neglect and failure, the persistence, through failing health, in poverty, at the cost of a final nervous collapse, is an achievement for which the world is richer, which should go down to the future as one of the great triumphs of human resolution over circumstance." (C. F. B. Masterson, "Spencer and Carlyle," in In Peril of Change, Essays Written in Time of Tranquility, pp. 74-96, B. W. Huebsch, New York, n.d. Pp. 81-82)

"I dare say you were surprised to find that I had not adopted the new title for the serial [Synthetic Philosophy], as I proposed. I discussed the matter with both Huxley and Tyndall, and though I do not think that the objections raised were such as to outweigh the manifest advantages, still there doubt / less are objections, and in the midst of conflicting considerations I eventually came so far undecided as to let the matter stand as it was." (Letter from Herbert Spencer to Edward L. Youmans, dated January 22, 1868. Quoted in John Fiske, Edward Livingston Youmans, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. Pp. 249-250)

"In joining the signatories to this address [a congratulatory address from his contemporaries on the occasion of finishing the Synthetic Philosophy in 1896], Mr. Gladstone most aptly expressed the general feeling as to Spencer's unselfish labours... "I beg that you will, if you think proper, set me down as an approver of the request to Mr. Spencer, whose signal abilities and, rarer still, whose manful and self-denying character are so justly objects of admiration."" (Unsigned, "Herbert Spencer" [Obituary], Knowledge & Illustrated Scientific News, Vol. 1, p. 13, 1904. P. 13)

Spencer Baynes, later Professor of English at St. Andrews University in Scotland and editor of the Encyclopaedia Britannica, and Francis Pigott, later Examiner of Plays, were, in the 1850s, journalists in London. "Baynes and Pigott were living together and both were intimate with Spencer, who not unfrequently called at their rooms. This he did a day or two after the publication of his prospectus, or syllabus, or summary, of what he proposed to achieve in his philosophic and scientific survey of sociology and the universe generally. Pigott was writing at a table when Spencer came in, and Baynes went forward alone to greet him. Baynes congratulated the philosopher heartily on the great effort he was about to make, said it was one that was well worthy of his life's work and added that if there was any man living who was capable of adequately covering so wide and difficult a field, he was the writer specially qualified for the task. When Baynes had finished Pigott arose and going up to Spencer, said, "I quite agree with Baynes, you will certainly carry out your magnificent programme and, exhausted with your successful labours, will retire to your rest. This will be the epitaph we shall have inscribed upon your tomb: 'In seven days the Lord made the earth and on the eighth Herbert Spencer wrote it down.'" (Henry Mayers Hyndman, The Record of an Adventurous Life, Macmillan and Co., Limited, London, 1911. Pp. 95-96)

"... the Synthetic Philosophy has already taken its place among the world's greatest works ..." (David Church Somervell, English Thought in the Nineteenth Century, 5th ed., Methuen, London, 1947. P. 6)

"The real modern era may be said in a way to begin with the publication of the System of Synthetic Philosophy; and that fact has been recognized in almost every nation in Europe." ("W.", "Herbert Spencer," The Athenaeum, No. 3972, pp. 794-795, December 12, 1903. P. 795)

"More than the first half of The Synthetic Philosophy was originally issued in portions of 80 pages to subscribers, who paid ten shillings for every four numbers.... On completion of the 44th number I decided to publish the remaining volumes in the ordinary way." (Herbert Spencer, Facts and Comments, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1902. P. 153n.)

"So long as there is no other title in use to express a philosophy formed of organized scientific knowledge, one cannot expect people to discriminate. Another title, therefore, is evidently extremely desirable, and will, I think, in many respects yield positive as well as negative advantages. I have decided upon the title Synthetic Philosophy, which, on the whole, seems the most descriptive. I am intending to make the issue of / this second edition of First Principles the occasion for introducing it, and propose that each successive volume shall bear this general title on its back in addition to its special title." (Letter from Herbert Spencer to Edward L. Youmans dated April 8, 1867. Quoted in John Fiske, Edward Livingston Youmans, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. Pp. 233-234)
"SYNTHETIC PHILOSOPHY"

"It is nearly ten years since, mainly with the view of checking the tendency to confusion with Positivism, I concluded it was desirable to give a special and distinctive name to the System of Philosophy. I took the advice of friends upon the matter, and by their remarks was led so to hesitate that I did not then take the step I thought of taking: an effect of advice which I have since seen good reasons for regretting. Had I suspected that this hesitation in giving my own specific name would have ended in another naming it for me, I should probably not have hesitated; still less should I have hesitated had I foreseen that the specific name I prefaced would be over-ridden.

"When, at the time you gave your lectures, I found that my objections to the title "Cosmic Philosophy" had no weight with you, I decided upon taking the only available course—that namely of forthwith giving the specific name I had intended. I had half-titles printed to all the successive volumes of the English and American edition; and I had the words "Synthetic Philosophy" Vol. I, II, III & c [sic] printed on the backs of the covers. And I concluded that this would set the question at rest.

"I will not re-discuss the question of the appropriateness of the titles: it will suffice simply to suggest that you ask an opinion earlier in the letter Spencer had suggested Lewes or Huxley for this respecting the general fitness of the step you are taking. Quite apart from any criticisms on the word "cosmic" considered, intrinsically, the use of it will, I think, naturally raise the criticism that the giving to the Philosophy of Evolution a name which I am known to disapprove, and which I finally gave my own name for the purpose of excluding, is a somewhat strange step."

(Letter from Herbert Spencer to John Fiske dated December 22, 1873. Henry E. Huntington Library Cat. No. HM 13733. Unpublished)

"I have decided within these few days to use a specific title for the whole series of volumes that I am issuing. Originally, when drawing up the programme, I contemplated doing so, and was very nearly using the title Deductive Philosophy; but I was dissuaded, and finally fell back upon the indefinite title of a System of Philosophy. There are decided evils, however, in the absence of a distinctive name, and I have had these evils just now thrust before me afresh. At the close of his new edition of his History of Philosophy Lewes persists in claiming me as one of his school, saying that "Mr. Spencer is unequivocally a positive philosopher, however he may repudiate being considered a disciple of Comte," ...." (Letter from Herbert Spencer to Edward L. Youmans dated April 8, 1867. Quoted in John Fiske, Edward Livingston Youmans, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. P. 233)

"... his [Spencer's] great system of philosophy ... [is] no mere logical castle built of air and definitions, and assuming in its premises, like the systems of the Metaphysicians, the very difficulties to be explained, but as a great granite pile sunk deep in the bed-rock of the world, each stone a scientific truth, and all so compacted and dovetailed together that it was difficult to find anywhere a logical flaw among their seams." (John Beattie Crozier, "Mr. Herbert Spencer and the Danger of Specialism," The Fortnightly Review, Vol. 75, n.s., pp. 105-120, 1904) (P. 106)
"Plato spun a system of thought before speculation was yet curbed by the knowledge of Nature; Spencer has constructed a philosophy out of the inflexible materials furnished in all the fields of modern investigation. His system is not a digest, but an organon; not merely an analytic dissection, but a grand synthetic construction; not a science, but a coordination of the sciences; not a metaphysical elaboration, but a positive body of doctrine conforming to verifiable facts, and based upon the most comprehensive principle of Nature yet arrived at by the human mind." (Edward L. Youmans, "Herbert Spencer and the Doctrine of Evolution," Appendix to Mr E. M. Cazelles, Outline of the Evolution-Philosophy, Translated from the French by Rev. O. B. Frothingham, D. Appleton & Company, New York, 1875. P. 150)

"Notwithstanding the claims of his Spencer's "Synthetic Philosophy" to rank as a system, it is not itself in strictness such, though a somewhat systematic, and certainly very able, coordination of the greater part of all known truth. But it is expository, not constructive. This gives it a character of great solidity and respectability." (Lester F. Ward, Dynamic Sociology, 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. Vol. 1, pp. 217-218)

"I can quite understand that you were disappointed that I did not use the general title of Synthetic Philosophy, as I had thought of doing. I discussed the matter at considerable length with both Huxley and Tyndall, and though the objections they raised were not, to my thinking, adequate, still they had weight, and though I thought, and continue to think, that on the whole this general title would be desirable, my conviction was not sufficiently decided to lead me to make the change in spite of adverse opinions. I see that you have been speaking of this proposed title, and that Mr. Alger has been making use of it. [Rev. W. R. Alger] To this I see no objection; and, indeed, it strikes me that this habitual application of it by those who write reviews in America will be the most desirable way of establishing its use, if no reason to the contrary should hereafter arise." (Letter from Herbert Spencer to Edward L. Youmans dated May 3, 1868. Quoted in John Fiske, Edward Livingston Youmans, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. P. 254)

The Philosophical Club of Bryn Mawr College in March of 1897 held a celebration meeting to mark the completion of Herbert Spencer's "Synthetic Philosophy." James Mark Baldwin was invited to deliver a lecture on the occasion, but sent a letter instead. (James Mark Baldwin, "Mr. Spencer's Psychology." The American Naturalist, Vol. 31, pp. 553-557, 1897. P. 553)

"The very circumstances which won for the Synthetic Philosophy such contemporary renown--the fact that it was a systematic guide to the rapidly developing biological and social sciences--now 'date' it badly." (John Passmore, A Hundred Years of Philosophy, A Pelican Book, Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, 1968. P. 42)
Grant Allen called the "Synthetic Philosophy" "... this highest and widest product of the human scientific and philosophical intelligence." (Grant Allen, Review of "An Epitome of the 'Synthetic Philosophy,'" by F. Howard Collins, The Midland Naturalist, Vol. 12, pp. 259-260, 1889, p. 260)

Gabriel Compayré called Spencer's Synthetic Philosophy "... the most stupendous investigation into the universality of phenomena ever attempted and carried out by human intellect." (Gabriel Compayré, Herbert Spencer and Scientific Education, translated from the French by Maria E. Findlay, Thomas Y. Crowell & Co., New York, 1907, p. 4)

"... his Synthetic Philosophy, that heroic effort to combine, in a Philosophy of Evolution, the whole range of physical, mental, and social science." (D'Arcy Wentworth Thompson, On Aristotle as A Biologist—A Proemion on Herbert Spencer, Herbert Spencer Lecture for 1913, 31pp., The Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1913, p. 5)


"His Spencer's fertility of mind was as astonishing as his independence. This is shown by almost every page of his Synthetic Philosophy ..." (William Henry Hudson, An Introduction to the Philosophy of Herbert Spencer, revised edition, Watts & Co., London, 1906, p. 25)

In the Preface to the last volume of Principles of Sociology Spencer wrote: "Doubtless in earlier days some exultation would have resulted at reaching the end of his Synthetic Philosophy; but as age creeps on feelings weaken, and now by chief pleasure is in my emancipation. Still there is satisfaction in the consciousness that losses, discouragements, and shattered health, have not prevented me from fulfilling the purpose of my life." (Dated August, 1896. Principles, Vol. III, p. vi. N.Y., 1909)

"For Huxley was never simply a Darwinian biologist. Rather, he was a philosopher of evolution on the grand scale. His vision of the progressive development of nature and society was arguably the nearest thing we have had in the twentieth century to the nineteenth-century evolutionary philosopher Herbert Spencer's so-called 'Synthetic Philosophy.'" (John R. Durant, "Julian Huxley and The Development of Evolutionary Studies," in Evolutionary Studies, A Centenary Celebration of the Life of Julian Huxley, ed. by Milo Keynes and G. Ainsworth Harrison, pp. 26-40, Macmillan, London, 1989, p. 38)
TELEOLOGY


"The welfare of the organism, or of the species, is in every case the end to further which a structure exists; and the difference between a legitimate and an illegitimate teleology is that, while the one explains its existence as having gradually arisen by furthering the end, the other gives no explanation of its existence other than that it was put there to further the end--a final cause of the "barren virgin" sort." (Herbert Spencer, "Replies to Criticisms on The Data of Ethics," Mind, Vol. 6, pp. 82-98, 1881. P. 83)

THERMODYNAMICS

"We have already seen that the Second Law of Thermodynamics proclaims a process in precisely the opposite direction [as Spencer's evolution], ending in the maximum of homogeneity. But Spencer and his contemporaries were judicially blind to the doom thus proclaimed to their romantic hopes." (William Ralph Inge, God and The Astronomers, Longmans, Green and Co., London, 1933. Pp. 134-135)

"Within a finite period of time past the earth must have been, and within a finite period of time to come the earth must again be, unfit for the habitation of man as at present constituted, unless operations have been, or are to be performed, which are impossible under the laws to which the known operations going on at present in the material world are subject." (William Thomson [Lord Kelvin], "On a Universal Tendency in Nature to the Dissipation of Mechanical Energy," Proceedings of the Royal Society of Edinburgh, Vol. 3, No. 42, pp. 139-142, 1851-52. P. 142. [Thomson's paper was read on Monday, April 19, 1852])

"From Herbert Spencer's references, during the last years of his life, to current scientific controversy, I gathered that he was profoundly disturbed by some of the newer hypotheses of the physicists; but as I had neither knowledge of nor interest in, these questions I failed to understand the cause of this unrest. In answer to my inquiry, my friend Bertrand Russell suggests the following explanation: "I don't know whether he was ever made to realize the implications of the second law of thermodynamics; if so, he might well be upset. The law says that everything tends to uniformity and a dead level, diminishing (not increasing) heterogeneity.... This law used to worry optimists about the time when Spencer was old." (Letter from Bertrand Russell to Beatrice Webb dated June 4, 1923. Quoted in Beatrice Webb, My Apprenticeship, Longmans, Green and Co., London, 1926. P. 88n.)
"Gibbon lived to relinquish his pen in triumph at the end of years of devotion to his "History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire"--Mr. Spencer planned the history of the rise and growth of a mightier, a more magnificent, and more beneficent Empire--that of Universal Law--and for forty years / he pursued his mighty story in every vicissitude of strength with unflinching purpose, and lived to complete it amid the applause of the world and the gratitude of all who have the grand passion to understand Nature, and advance the lofty destiny of humanity." (George Jacob Holyoake, Bygones Worth Remembering, 2 Vols., T. Fisher Unwin, London, 1905. Vol. 2, pp. 22-23)
"As regards the origin of totemism, I suggested that it originated from the practice of naming, first individuals, and then their group, after particular animals. A group, for instance, which was called after the bear would come to look on that animal first with interest, then with respect, and at length with a sort of awe. Mr. Herbert Spencer almost simultaneously, and I believe independently, arrived at a similar explanation. The principal difference was that my suggestion had no reference to nicknames." (Lord Avebury / Sir John Lubbock, The Origin of Civilisation and the Primitive Condition of Man, 7th edition, Longmans, Green and Co., London, 1912. P. xiii)

"Amongst the first to enter the field in offering a theory to account for the origin of totemism was Herbert Spencer. His view was that totemism originated in a misinterpretation of nicknames. He thought that the imperfections of primitive speech prevented savages from clearly distinguishing between things and their names, and that accordingly ancestors who had been nicknamed after animals, plants, or other natural objects on the ground of some imaginary resemblance to them, were confused in the minds of their descendants with the things after which they had been named; hence from revering his human progenitors the savage came to revere the species of animals or plants or other natural objects which through an ambiguity of speech he had been led to identify them. (This theory was put forward first and most clearly by Herbert Spencer in an essay entitled "The Origin of Animal Worship," which was published in The Fortnightly Review for May 1870. The essay, suggested by J.F. McLennan's recent papers on "The Worship of Animals and Plants," was afterwards republished by Spencer in his Essays, Scientific, Political, and Speculative, vol. iii. Third edition (London, 1878), pp. 101-124. The substance of the theory was afterwards embodied by the author in his large work The Principles of Sociology, vol. i §§ 169-176, 180-183 (pp. 331-346, 334-359, Third Edition, 1904). (pp. 43, 43n.-44n.) "The fundamental objection to both these theories including a similar one by Lord Avebury has already been stated. They attribute to verbal misunderstandings far more influence than verbal misunderstandings ever seem to have exercised." (p. 44) (James G. Frazer, Totemism and Exogamy, 4 Vols., Macmillan and Co., Limited, London, 1910. Vol. 4)"
"Evolution was chiefly responsible for the abandonment of transcendentalism and the formulation of a new philosophy known variously as empiricism, instrumentalism, or pragmatism. Transcendentalism had, indeed, served its purpose and served it well. Rooted in the eighteenth century, resting upon basic assumptions not susceptible to proof, cherishing truths that were intuitive rather than experimental, subjective rather than objective, employing deductive rather than the inductive method, it admirably expressed the faith set forth in the Declaration of Independence, that reformers of the early nineteenth century endeavored to apply. Transcendentalists lived in a paradise of absolutes, where truths were 'self-evident,' laws immutable, right and wrong clear-cut. Their universe was fixed, not growing; their philosophy constant, not dynamic; their morals absolute, not relative. Such a philosophy was obviously irrelevant to the kind of universe announced by Charles Darwin and described by Herbert Spencer. It was necessary to elaborate a new philosophy which would conform to and explain an organic world and a dynamic society," (Samuel Eliot Morison, The Growth of the American Republic, 2 Vols., Oxford University Press, New York, 1942. Vol. 2, pp. 269-270)

"No other philosophic works have, I suppose, been translated into so many languages as his [Spencer's]. Versions of at any rate a great part of the Synthetic Philosophy exist in French, German, Italian, and Russian." (William Henry Hudson, An Introduction to the Philosophy of Herbert Spencer, revised edition, Watts & Co., London, 1906. P. 24n.)

"In the autumn of this year [1936] the Trust which had been established by the will of Herbert Spencer in 1903 came to an end.... Our [Keith's and the other trustees'] business was to spend the income from Spencer's capital on publications specified in his will; this done, his estate was to be divided among certain scientific societies, the British Association and Anthropological Institute being on the list of Spencer's favoured societies. The trustees, believing that the period of utility of the Trust had come to an end, met at the B. [Juckston], B. [Trowne], P. [Arm] in Downe on October 28, 1936, to hold its last meeting." (Sir Arthur Keith, An Autobiography, Watts & Co., London, 1950. Pp. 633-634)
"On the 18th of September, 1874, my section of the Orientalist Congress, the Archaeological, met, and I delivered an address. In the evening, Mr. Tylor, Herbert Spencer, the Max Müllers, Lubbock, Sir Louis Mallet, and others came to dine at 4 Queen's Gate Gardens, to meet Prince Charles of Roumania."

(Sir Mountstuart E. Grant Duff, Notes from a Diary 1873-1881, Vol. 1, p. 82)

"Unlike Herbert Spencer, who, with all his gifts, was incapable of realising the importance of things, and especially of human products as a raw material for scientific classification, Tylor, like a field-worker, kept his eyes on the ground." (Stanley Casson, The Discovery of Man, Readers Union Limited with Hamish Hamilton, London, 1940. P. 237)

Tylor pointed out in his review of Vol. 3 of Descriptive Sociology that "Negrito" should be "the proper Spanish form Negritos, i.e., 'little negroes.'" (E. B. Tylor, Review of Vols. 2 and 3 of Descriptive Sociology, The Academy, Vol. 6, p. 298, Sept. 12, 1874. P. 298)


"Tylor's reputation has never faded as much as Spencer's, but for all that I think his importance today is much less." (Donald G. MacRae, "Darwinism and the Social Sciences," in S. A. Barnett, editor, A Century of Darwin, pp. 296-312, Heinemann, London, 1958. P. 308)

"Tylor is great on primitive man--greater than Lubbock--but he may not be able to leave his present publisher." (Letter from Edward L. Youmans to his sister, Eliza A. Youmans dated August 11, 1871. Quoted in John Fiske, Edward Livingston Youmans, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. P. 279)


Tylor also asserted the independency of his work from the ideas of Darwin and Spencer. (See the Preface of the second edition of Primitive Culture.)
"Anthropology ... [is] the science which, in its strictest sense, has as its object the study of man as a unit in the animal kingdom. It is distinguished from ethnology, which is devoted to the study of man as a racial unit, and from ethnography, which deals with the distribution of the races formed by the aggregation of such units. To anthropology, however, in its more general sense as the natural history of man, ethnology and ethnography may both be considered to belong, being related as parts to a whole." (Edward B. Tylor, "Anthropology," Encyclopaedia Britannica, 11th ed., Vol. 2, pp. 108-119, 1910. P. 108)

"Sociology and the science of culture are concerned with the origin and development of arts and sciences, opinions, beliefs, customs, laws and institutions generally among mankind within historic time; while beyond the historic limit the study in continued by inferences from relics of early ages and remote districts, to interpret which is the task of pre-historic archaeology ...." (Edward B. Tylor, "Anthropology," Encyclopaedia Britannica, Vol. 2, pp. 108-119, 1910. P. 108)

"Herbert Spencer's work, on the other hand, was much broader both in point of view and in its influence than that of Tylor and Morgan/" (George W. Stocking, Jr., Race, Culture, and Evolution, The Free Press, New York, 1968. P. 117)

"The enquirer who seeks ... the beginnings of man's civilization must deduce general principles by reasoning downwards from the civilized European to the savage, and then descend to still lower possible levels of human existence ...." (E. B. Tylor, "Wild Men and Beast-Children," Anthropological Review, Vol. 1, pp. 21-32, 1863. (pp. 21, 32)

"And while the circle of his [Tylor's] influence widened, he retained the profound and growing respect of his professional colleagues. Even with the irreverent group of American fieldworkers who turn up their noses at the classical school of ethnologists his prestige remains undiminished ...." (Robert H. Lowie, "Edward B. Tylor," American Anthropologist, Vol. 19, pp. 262-268, 1917. P. 262)

"And as to Spencer, one can only note that Tylor later engaged him in a rather extended and vitriolic polemic in which he was at great pains to deny any intellectual debt, and to assert his own priority in the formulation of the idea of animism, as well as to acknowledge its 18th century origins. In the process, he came very close to accusing Spencer of plagiarism." (George W. Stocking, Jr., "Cultural Darwinism" and "Philosophical Idealism" in E. B. Tylor: A Special Plea for Historicism in the History of Anthropology," Southwestern Journal of Anthropology, Vol. 21, pp. 130-147, 1965)

"Dr. Tylor, who, describing my method as being that of deducing all men's customs "from laws of nature," alleges that my inferences are vitiated by it, contends that the skin-marks are all record marks, when not deliberately decorative. Whether the inductive basis for this conclusion is wider than that for the conclusion drawn by me, and whether the superiority of Dr. Tylor's method is thereby shown, may be judged by the reader who refers to his essay." (The essay in question is E. B. Tylor, "The Study of Customs," Macmillan's Magazine, Vol. 46, pp. 73-86, 1887. (Herbert Spencer, The Principles of Sociology, Vol. 2, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1899. 2nd ed. P. 231*)

"It may have struck some readers as an omission, that in a work on civilization insisting so strenuously on a theory of development or evolution, mention should scarcely have been made of Mr. Darwin and Mr. Herbert Spencer, whose influence on the whole course of modern thought on such subjects should not be left without formal recognition. This absence of particular reference is accounted for by the present work, arranged on its own lines, coming scarcely into contact of detail with the previous works of these eminent philosophers." (Edward B. Tylor, Preface to the Second Edition [dated September, 1873], Primitive Culture, 2 Vols., Sixth edition, John Murray, London, 1920. Vol. 1, p. vii)

"Mr. Tylor's "Animism," which he has elaborated with great ability in his "Primitive Culture," was a very distinct adumbration of the general truth underlying the whole subject, and really amounts to a history of the development of the conception of Deity. It lacks only the initial idea that all worship is the worship of the ghosts of dead men, perhaps not universally true, to make it cover in a manner the whole ground of Mr. Spencer's argument. The general student of ethnography is surprised at not finding here a more definite recognition of Mr. Tylor's services in this respect. Mr. Spencer's treatise certainly contains enough that is original." (Lester F. Ward, Dynamic Sociology, 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. Vol. 1, p. 208)
"But the more difficult it is to account for observed facts in this way [by independent invention], and the more necessary it becomes to have recourse to theories of [cultural] inheritance or transmission to explain them, the greater is their value in the eyes of the Ethnologist. Wherever he can judge that the existence of similar phenomena in the culture of distant peoples cannot be fairly accounted for, except by supposing that there has been a connexion by blood or by intercourse between them, then he has before him evidence bearing upon the history of civilization and on the history of mankind, ...." (Edward B. Tylor, Researches into the Early History of Mankind, second edition, John Murray, London, 1870, P. 374)

In his little-known article, "The Study of Customs" (Macmillan's Magazine, Vol. 46, pp. 73-86, 1882, esp. pp. 73-79) E. B. Tylor reviews, after a fashion, Spencer's Ceremonial Institutions, which had just been published. He correctly (I would say) criticizes Spencer for his unsubstantiated and conjectural explanations of the origin of a variety of ceremonial practices (e.g., the Japanese practice of wearing two swords). He offers his own alternative explanations for a few of these practices which seem sounder, and based on a broader and deeper knowledge of the facts involved. But Tylor reveals himself as a dedicated culture historian par excellence, and a rather picayune one at that. There is no discussion, or even mention, of Spencer's sociological generalizations, and no attempt on Tylor's part to propose any himself. Tylor is strong where Spencer is weak, and weak where Spencer is strong. One man is the epitome of facts, the other the epitome of theory.
"It was in 1851 and 1852, just as this career of work in Lon-
don was beginning, that Tyndall became acquainted with Spencer, who, as already observed, was about his own age, and with Huxley, who was five years younger. This was the beginning of friendships of the most intimate sort; the mutual respect and affection between the three was always charming to contemplate. On all sorts of minor topics they were liable to differ in opinion, and they never hesi-
tated a moment about criticising or attacking each other. The at-
mosphere of the room in which those three men were gathered was not likely to be an atmosphere of monotonous assent; the enlivening spice of controversy was seldom far away; but the fundamental har-
mony between them was profound, for all cared immeasurably more for truth than for anything else. It was no small intellectual boon in life, no trifling moral support, for either of those men to have the friendship of the other two." (John Fiske, "John Tyndall," pp. 241-248, in Essays Historical and Literary, 2 Vols., The Macmillan Company, New York, 1902. Vol. 2, p. 243)

"In those days Tyndall kept bachelor's hall, and it was his regular habit, year after year, to dine with Spencer and Hirst at the Athenaeum Club." (John Fiske, "John Tyndall," pp. 241-248, in Essays Historical and Literary, 2 Vols., The Macmillan Company, New York, 1902. Vol. 2, p. 243)

"In the same month of May, 1852, he attended a conversazione at the Royal Society, where he met Herbert Spencer, of whom he wrote "a good mind, I believe."" (A. S. Eve and C. H. Creasey, Life and Work of John Tyndall, Macmillan & Co. Ltd., Lon-
don, 1945. P. 74)

"Spencer's condition causes me the gravest anxiety. He has sent me a full description of his present state. Matters have taken a turn for the better, but nobody can say whether this improvement will continue. He is terribly liable to be overthrown." (Letter from John Tyndall to Joseph D. Hooker dated December 27, 1892. Quoted in Life and Work of John Tyndall by A. S. Eve and C. C. Creasey, Macmillan & Co. Ltd., London, 1945. P. 277)

"It was, I think, in 1852 that Professor Tyndall gave at the Royal Institution the lecture by which he won his spurs: proving, as he then did, to Faraday himself, that he had been wrong in deny-
ing diamagnetic polarity. I was present at that lecture; and when introduced to him very shortly after it, there commenced one of those friendships which enter into the fabric of life and leave their marks. Though both had pronounced opinions about most things, and though neither had much reticence, the forty years which have e-
lapsed since we first met witnessed no interruption of our cordial relations." (Herbert Spencer, "The Late Professor Tyndall," The Fortnightly Review, Vol. 61, pp. 141-148, 1894. P. 141)
"Bishop Ellicot is here. He came up on Saturday—frail but fresh. He is one of the most pleasant companions, but at the same time one of the purest Sadducees that I have ever met. He takes parties of young ladies upon the glacier, and thus adds to the mere physics of his holiday the emotional factor which Spencer deems so important." (Letter from John Tyndall to Thomas Henry Huxley dated August 22, 1886. Quoted in Life and Work of John Tyndall by A. S. Eve and C. H. Creasey, Macmillan & Co. Ltd, London, 1945. P. 247)

"Tyndall's naturally strong constitution and stout courage enabled him to make quick recovery [from an attack of phlebitis] and on the sofa he began to work again on "a book I had on the stock before I broke down", as he wrote to Hirst on February 12th [1891]. About this time Spencer remarked to Hirst during lunch at the Athenæum that "Tyndall lives, and has lived, unwisely". To which in the Journal Hirst remarks of Spencer, "How pedantic he is!" (A. S. Eve and C. H. Creasey, Life and Work of John Tyndall, Macmillan & Co. Ltd, London, 1945. P. 270)

At a farewell banquet for John Tyndall, and at other lectures he had given in the United States, including one at the "Presbyterian College of Yale" at New Haven, Tyndall had made some remarks which were interpreted by orthodox clergymen as offensive to religion. An article in the Christian Intelligencer for February 13, 1873, warmly criticised Tyndall for "attacking ... our religious faith," and sought to uphold "the religion he had wantonly assailed." (John Tyndall, "A Correction.--Letter from Prof. Tyndall." The Popular Science Monthly, Vol. 3, pp. 241-243, 1873. P. 242)

The first volume of the "International Scientific Series" was John Tyndall's Forms of Water, which was published in 1872. Other scientists who wrote volumes for the series included Darwin, Liebig, Helmholtz, and Huxley.
"Spencer stands out amongst all living philosophers since Bacon, in that he deliberately set himself to frame a Synthesis of knowledge, that is, a system whereby a real concatenation of all our scientific and moral ideas could be harmonised. To Spencer Synthesis always meant an organisation of the sciences, the binding up of all special learning into an organic unity—vitalised in every nerve and pore of the encyclopaedic mass by creative and omnipresent ideas, themselves inspired and ruled by one supreme conception." (Frederic Harrison, Realities and Ideals, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1908. P. 391)

"But the wonder of Spencerianism was its adaptability. Because of the vastness of the over-all conception, in application and interpretation it tended to become like a large apple shared by several boys—each searches for a favored spot, one takes a bite here, another there, but no one swallows it whole." (Donald Pizer, "Herbert Spencer and the Genesis of Hamlin Garland's Critical System," Tulane Studies in English, Vol. 7, pp. 153-168, 1957. Pp. 157-158)
Social progress is not linear, says Spencer, but divergent and redivergent. (Quote: Vol. III, p. 331).

As well-read and sophisticated a historical sociologist as Howard Becker of "the notion of unilinear stage-sequences attributable to social evolutionists such as Spencer ...." (p. 525) ("Historical Sociology." In Contemporary Social Theory, ed. by Harry Elmer Barnes and Howard Becker, pp. 491-542. D. Appleton-Century Company. New York, 1940)

"... irresponsible, premature, and global generalizations about stage sequences and about world distributions of gross aspects of culture such as appeared in Spencer ...." (Melville Jacobs, Pattern in Cultural Anthropology, The Dorsey Press, Hombwood, Ill., 1964. P. 358)

"... the naturalism of the nineteenth century has produced a great deal more a priori history under the guise of Spencerian evolution, with its sweeping dogma that all peoples and institutions must pass through the same stages of development from the simple to the complex." (Morris R. Cohen, Reason and Nature, 2nd edition, The Free Press, Glencoe, Ill., 1953. P. 12)

"... the once widely accepted viewpoints of such men as Herbert Spencer, E. B. Tylor, and L. H. Morgan, viewpoints based on unilinear cultural evolution, are no longer acceptable today." (Raymond W. Murray, Introductory Sociology, second edition, F. S. Crofts & Company, New York, 1946. P. 193)

Spencer is often classed with the 19th century "unilinear" evolutionists, and dismissed accordingly. But Spencer was not a unilinear evolutionist. In fact, he was not even a linear evolutionist. He saw evolution as, essentially, a process of divergence and redivergence, in which primitive homogeneous units—both societies and parts of societies—became distinguishable, in which more heterogeneous, definite, and coherent units differentiate out of more homogeneous units. This process of differentiation continues, with units continuing to differentiate successively, producing an ever more complex branching effect. Thus, he saw evolution more as a succession of divergences and differentiations rather than as a single series of stages. Spencer was much more concerned with process than with stages. This fact has been missed by those who have written about Spencer.
"Like other kinds of progress, social progress is not linear but divergent and re-divergent. Each differentiated product gives origin to a new set of differentiated products. While spreading over the Earth mankind have found environments of various characters, and in each case the social life fallen into, partly determined by the social life previously led, has been partly determined by the influences of the new environment; so that the multiplying groups have tended ever to acquire differences, now major and now minor: there have arisen genera and species of societies." (Principles, Vol. III, p. 331. New York, 1909)

Spencer very interestingly sees forms of marriage as arising and being adapted to particular ecological (as we would say now) conditions, rather than succeeding each other in a fixed and uniform order everywhere, out of some "logical necessity," or as a manifestation of the "unfolding of immanences." Stress this point. For example, according to Spencer, McLennan considered polyandry to have been "a transitional form once passed through by every race" (Vol. I, p. 679, 1st ed.). Spencer disagreed, maintaining that polyandry arose out of specific cultural and environmental conditions, and was not a universal stage at all. (Vol. I, pp. 678-681, 1st ed.).

"A main target of Goldenweiser's criticism was Herbert Spencer, and it is true that much that Spencer wrote implied that "social forms and institutions pass everywhere and always through the same stages of development," in Goldenweiser's words. But the same Herbert Spencer could contend with happy inconsistency, in the third volume of his Principles of Sociology, that social development is "not linear but divergent and re-divergent," that "multiplying groups" of societies "have tended ever to acquire differences, now major and now minor." (Louis Schneider, Review of Robert A. Nisbet, Social Change and History, Journal of the History of the Behavioral

"Even the arch-evolutionist Herbert Spencer did not believe that every people necessarily passed through the same stages in regular and progressive order ...." (Morris Ginsberg, Essays in Sociology and Social Philosophy, Penguin Books, Baltimore, 1968. P. 52)

What Spencer said about the sciences, that they "do not admit of a serial arrangement," but "that they stand in relations of divergence and re-divergence, which may be symbolized by the branches of a tree," may be taken to characterize his attitude toward cultures, too—at least to a considerable extent. (Auto, II, 106)
"Anthropology was created in the evolutionary faith by Herbert Spencer and E. B. Tylor, who generalized from a few observations simple and rigid schemes of institutional development which unrolled automatically by themselves, following the same order in all parts of the world. Everywhere society had to traverse the same rigid stages, from a primitive communism and promiscuity to the "higher" form of present-day European civilization. Facts were cavalierly fitted into these formulae, and little attentions was paid to the means whereby the changes were effected: the same "by evolution."" (John Herman Randall, The Making of the Modern Mind, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1926. P. 507)


"... when there comes a transition to the agricultural stage, either directly from a hunting stage or a indirectly through the pastoral stage ..." (Vol. II, p. 541).

"This work (by Ratzel) was followed by the world-wide assembly of data by Herbert Spencer. 'Principles of Sociology (1880-96)' His work, however, was hardly inductive; he was concerned rather to find support for a scheme of evolution through which he believed human institutions must pass. Spencer held that social institutions passed through a definite series of stages; fundamental laws of development were supposed to lie behind changes in economic and social structure." (Gardner Murphy, An Historical Introduction to Modern Psychology, 2nd ed., Harcourt, Brace & Company, Inc., New York, 1930. P. 130)

"The social evolutionists of the later nineteenth century conceived themselves to be following Darwin's example in asserting that human society had passed through the same succession of stages in every part of the world." (Lucy Mari, An Introduction to Social Anthropology, 2nd ed., Oxford University Press, New York and London, 1972. P. 41)

The militant and industrial types of society Spencer regarded as not necessarily successive, but as coordinate. Thus he did not view societal evolution as unilinear.
"If then anthropologists were, as is alleged, seriously misled by the 'classical evolutionists', they either had not read their writings or, if they had, must have misunderstood them." (Morris Ginsberg, Evolution and Progress. William Heinemann Ltd. London, 1961. P. 199)

Re unilinearism: Spencer shows that in a militant society, the paramount chief or king will have supreme legal power, whereas in a less militant society, secondary political officials or the body of freemen exercise judicial authority.

Speaking of Comte, Morgan, and Spencer, Stocking says: "... each of these men embraced some form of unilinear social evolution; each felt that the normal evolution of human societies proceeded through a single progressive sequence of social or intellectual stages." (George W. Stocking, Jr., "Lamarckianism in American Social Science: 1890-1915," Journal of the History of Ideas, Vol. 23, pp. 239-256, 1962. P. 241)

"The evolutionary formulations of a Herbert Spencer were based on an implicit faith in a rigid historical determinism. In Spencer's presentation this determinism takes the form of a quasi-organic principle of cultural development, for every and everywhere the same." (Alexander Goldenweiser, History, Psychology, and Culture, Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1933. P. 15)

"Exponents of the latter /the comparative method in the nineteenth century/ assumed a unilinear evolutionism; data from primitive or ancient societies were fitted to the procrustean bed of a certain "stage" of social evolution by means of the "cut and paste" method which is illustrated in Spencer's Autobiography. The methodology was basically argument by illustration: a given bit of ethnographic data was selected in order to "demonstrate" some aspect of a "law" of evolution." (Robert M. Marsh, Comparative Sociology, Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., New York, 1967. P. 22)

"Thus, keeping of animals has not everywhere preceded agriculture. In the West considerable civilizations arose which gave no sign of having had a pastoral origin. Ancient Mexicans and Central Americans carried on crop-raising without the aid of animals of draught; and lacking horses, cattle, and sheep, as they did, there was no stock-farming to cooperate with arable farming by furnishing manure as well as traction. Of course a like industrial history is to be recognized among the South Sea Islanders." (Principles, Vol. III, pp. 332-3. New York, 1909)
According to Spencer, Goldenweiser asserts: "evolution is uniform, gradual and progressive, meaning by this that social forms and institutions pass everywhere and always through the same stages of development ...." (Alexander A. Goldenweiser, *Early Civilization*, F. S. Crofts & Co., New York, 1922. P. 21)


"According to him [Spencer], every society at any moment represents a certain stage in the universal evolution which follows the same line throughout the world." (Florian Znaniecki, *Social Relations and Social Roles*, Chandler Publishing Company, San Francisco, 1965. P. 105)

"By analysing and comparing the arts and crafts, the social institutions, numenological beliefs and rituals of contemporary backward peoples, the Spencerian evolutionists sought to document an hypothesis of unilinear social evolution according to which all peoples on earth were advancing along parallel roads, albeit at different rates, to a single goal that was almost realized in Victorian liberalism." (V. Gordon Childe, *Piecing Together the Past*, Frederick A. Praeger, New York, 1956. Pp. 164-165)

"... the theory of the evolution of culture appeared to them [Spencer, Tylor, Morgan and Lubbock] as a continuous process. They erred in assuming a single unilinear evolution which may be discovered by means of the study of examples collected at random from all parts of the world." (Franz Boas, "Anthropology," *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences*, Vol. 1, pp. 73-110, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1930. P. 102)

"By introducing a priori stages of evolution which captured the imagination and diverted the attention of anthropologists for two generations, Spencer substituted for the comparative study of actual societies which he advocated in principle, the formulation of hypothetical social conditions in imaginary primeval societies which could be considered plausible starting-points for processes of unilinear evolution by which the more complex historic societies have emerged." (C. Daryll Forde, Presidential Address to Section H, British Association for the Advancement of Science, 1947)
Ostensibly summarizing Spencer's views, Goldenweiser says: "Social evolution ... is uniform, meaning that it everywhere proceeds in a similar way, passing through certain necessary and inevitable stages ...." (Alexander Goldenweiser, Anthropology, F. S. Crofts & Co., New York, 1937, P. 506)

"Hence arose, among other erroneous pre-conceptions, this serious one, that the different forms of society presented by savage and civilized races all over the globe, are but different stages in the evolution of one form: the truth being, rather, that social types, like types of individual organisms, do not form a series, but are classifiable only in divergent and re-divergent groups." (Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, D. Appleton and Company, New York, N.Y. 1891. P. 329)

"The Sociologist as opposed to the ethnographer always deals with ideal rather than empirical societies. It has been so since the very beginning. Spencer, for example, originally proposed that the second part of his Principles of Sociology should contain 'General facts, structural and functional, as gathered from a survey of societies and their changes; in other words the empirical generalisations that are arrived at by comparing different societies and successive phases of the same society.' [Spencer (1858), cited in Rumney (1934). The 'general facts' are conceived of as being fitted to the ideal model of human society at a particular stage of development and are obtained from observation of societies assumed by definition to be at a particular phase--i.e. in an unreal static condition. The evolutionists never discussed in detail--still less observed--what actually happened when a society in Stage A changed into a society at Stage B; it was merely argued that all Stage B societies must somehow have evolved out of Stage A societies.... ... one might pronounce upon the technical superiority / of the Greeks over the Ancient Egyptians, but the problem of the contemporary interrelationship of political structure in Athens and Sparta was outside the field of anthropology." (E. R. Leach, Political Systems of Highland Burma, Beacon Press, Boston, 1965. Pp. 283-284)

"Last century Herbert Spencer, Lewis H. Morgan, and Tylor propounded divergent schemes purporting to depict the unilineal evolution of human society or of human institutions. As a result of comparative studies of existing contemporary human societies or institutions they arranged these in a logical order, indeed a hierarchy. They assumed that the logical order was also a temporal one, that the hierarchy was a historical sequence." (V. Gordon Childe, "The Evolution of Society," Antiquity, Vol. 31, pp. 210-213, 1957. P.211)
"Spencer's theory was what has come to be known as unilineal evolution." (Alexander Alland, Jr., Evolution and Human Behavior, The Natural History Press, Garden City, 1967. P. 173)
"... the structures and actions throughout a society are determined by the properties of its units, and ... the society cannot be substantially and permanently changed without its units being substantially and permanently changed ...." (Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1891. P. 400)

"Be it rudimentary or be it advanced, every society displays phenomena that are ascribable to the characters of its units and to the conditions under which they exist." (Herbert Spencer, The Principles of Sociology, Vol. 1, third edition, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1890. Pp. 8-9)

"But no compound mass or aggregate can possess that which does not exist potentially in the elements of which it is composed [Leibniz maintained]. In other words, the monads possess the "promise and potency" of all that which is subsequently manifested in their various combinations—that is, force, life, consciousness, intelligence." (William C. Morey, "Herbert Spencer in the Light of History," Baptist Quarterly Review, Vol. 5, pp. 279-309, 1883. P. 295)

Spencer argues that the character of a society is determined by the character of its constituent members in First Principles (probably the 4th edition of 1880), p. 133, and in Principles of Sociology, Vol. 1, Chapter 2. (Lester F. Ward says this in his Dynamic Sociology.)

An anonymous reviewer of The Study of Sociology summarizes its message as follows: "... sociology ... is physiology writ large; as physiology generalizes /sics/ and explains the phenomena presented by the individual life of man, so this science of society is to treat the phenomena presented by the collective life of societies of men." (Anonymous, "Spencer's Study of Sociology," The Saturday Review of Politics, Literature, Science, and Art, Vol. 36, pp. 701-703, 1873. P. )

"But what he has failed to refer to, and what the whole tenor of his argument and illustrations tends to put out of sight is, that within the limits of variation thus set /by the nature of the units of an (social) aggregate/ there is room for an almost infinite variety in the character/shapes of the aggregates; so that from the same collection of units may be obtained, according to the manner in which they are distributed and organized, results of the most different kind—results which make all the difference between freedom and servitude, and between progress and retrogression." (J. E. Cairnes, "Mr. Spencer on the Study of Sociology," The Fortnightly Review, Vol. 17, n.s., pp. 200-213, 1875. P. 202)
"... the nature of an aggregate is determined by the natures of its units ...." (Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1891. P. 411)

"Always the power which initiates a change is feeling, separate or aggregated, guided to its ends by intellect; and not even an approach to an explanation of social phenomena can be made, without the thoughts and sentiments of citizens being recognized as factors." (Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1891. P. 382)

Spencer "... present social life as a simple resultant of individual natures ...." (p. 349) (Emile Durkheim, The Division of Labor in Society. Translated by George Simpson. The Free Press. Glencoe, 1949)

"... the properties of the aggregate are determined by the properties of its units, ... [so] that so long as the characters of citizens remain substantially unchanged, there can be no substantial change in the political organization which has slowly been evolved by them." (Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1891. P. 122)

"... the formation of societies is determined by the attributes of individuals, and that the growth of a governmental organization follows from the natures of the men who have associated themselves the better to satisfy their needs." (Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1891. P. 327)

"By the characters of the units are necessitate certain limits within which the characters of the aggregate must fall. The circumstances attending aggregation greatly modify the results; but the truth here to be recognized is, that these circumstances, in some cases perhaps preventing aggregation altogether, in other cases impeding it, in other cases facilitating it more or less, can never give to the aggregate, characters that do not consist with the characters of the units." (Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1891. P. 50)
... the forms of both religious and secular rule follow the same law—that as an ill-controlled national character produces a despotic terrestrial government, so also does it produce a despotic celestial government...." (Herbert Spencer, "The Use of Anthropomorphism," The Leader, Vol. 4, No. 189, pp. 1076-1077, November, 5, 1853. P. 1076)

"It is not necessary, then, with Spencer, to present social life as a simple resultant of individual natures, since, on the contrary, it is rather the latter which come from the former." (Emile Durkheim, The Division of Labor in Society, translated by George Simpson, The Free Press, Glencoe, 1933. P. 349)

"Throughout this volume it has been variously shown that higher types of society are made possible only by higher types of nature; and the implication is that the best industrial institutions are possible only with the best men." (Herbert Spencer, The Principles of Sociology, Vol. 3, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1909. P. 573)

"That the differences between the people of communities in different places and at different times, which we call differences of civilization, are not differences which inhere in the individuals, but differences which inhere in the society; that they are not, as Herbert Spencer holds, differences resulting from differences in the units; but that they are differences resulting from the conditions under which these units are brought in the society." (Henry George, Progress and Poverty, The Modern Library, New York, nd. P. 504) (this book was finished in 1879 and published originally in 1880)

"The characteristics exhibited by beings in an associated state cannot arise from the accident of combination, but must be the consequences of certain inherent properties of the beings themselves. True, the gathering together may call out these characteristics; it may make manifest what was before dormant; it may afford the opportunity for undeveloped peculiarities to appear; but it evidently does not create them. No phenomenon can be presented by a corporate body, but what there is a pre-existing capacity in its individual members for producing. This fact, that the properties of a mass are dependent upon the attributes of its component parts, we see throughout nature." (Herbert Spencer, Social Statics, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1883. Pp. 28-29)
Spencer's use of the biological analogy fitted in well with his idea that a society reflects the natures of the individuals that compose it. (Only later did he add "and external conditions" to the equation.) Such a view tends to prevent one from seeing a socio-cultural system as an emergent, as something categorically different from the sum (or product) of individual behavior. There is nothing in it of the notion of the transformation of quantity into quality.

"If the cause of all historical social progress is to be sought in the nature of man, and if, as Saint-Simon himself justly remarks, society consists of individuals, then the nature of the individual has to provide the key to the explanation of history. The nature of the individual is the subject of physiology in the broad sense of the word, i.e., of a science which also covers psychological phenomena. That is why physiology, in the eyes of Saint-Simon and his followers, was the basis of sociology, which they called social physics." (G. Plekhanov (N. Beltov), The Development of the Monist View of History, Foreign Languages Publishing House, Moscow, 1956. P. 82)

Guillaume De Greef said: "If the social aggregates are only the larger and more complex image of the units that compose them, if social science is concerned only with the morphological or functional relations between the series of units and the resulting aggregates, it evidently follows that, although there are social phenomena, these are not markedly distinct from biological or psychological phenomena." (Guillaume De Greef, Introduction à la sociologie, Première partie, p. 19. Quoted by Edward A. Ross, Foundations of Sociology, fifth edition, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1915. P. 117)

"Each kind of system must be understood in terms of its own structure and behavior and not in terms of systems which are its constituent parts. Thus, we must understand a molecule as a molecule; we cannot discover the properties of sugar in its component atoms of carbon, hydrogen, and oxygen. A living cell cannot be understood by an examination of its constituent molecules. Similarly, we cannot comprehend a society of chimpanzees by any amount of observation of individual chimpanzees singly and in isolation." (Leslie A. White, "Nations as Sociocultural Systems," Ingenor (Ann Arbor, Michigan), Vol. 5, pp. 5-7, 14-18, 1968, Autumn. P. ?)

"There is no way of coming at a true theory of society, but by inquiring into the nature of its component individuals. To understand humanity in its combinations, it is necessary to analyze that humanity in its elementary form—for the explanation of the compound, to refer back to the simple. We quickly find that every phenomenon exhibited by an aggregation of men, originates in some quality of man himself. A little consideration shows us, for instance, that the very existence of society, implies some natural affinity in its members for such a union." (Herbert Spencer, Social Statics, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1883. P. 28)
In *The Study of Sociology* Spencer wrote as follows: He spoke of "... the most general truth ... that the character of the aggregate is determined by the characters of the units." (p. 43) "Given the structures and consequent instincts of the individuals as we find them, and the community they form will inevitably present certain traits; and no community having such traits can be formed out of individuals having other structures and instincts." (p. 45) "... that the properties of the units determines the properties of the whole they make up, evidently holds of societies as of other things." (p. 45) "Setting out, then, with this general principle, that the properties of the units determine the properties of the aggregate, ...." (p. 47) "... the structures and actions throughout a society are determined by the properties of its units, and ... the society cannot be substantially and permanently changed without its units being substantially and permanently changed, ...." (p. 365) But in the 1st edition of Vol. 1 of *Principles of Sociology* Spencer noted that "social phenomena depend in part on the natures of the individuals and in part on the forces the individuals are subject to, ...." (p. 15) He spoke of "... the reciprocal influence of the society and its units—the influence of the whole on the parts, and of the parts on the whole." (p. 12) And added: "As soon as a social combination acquires some permanence, there begin actions and reactions between the so / ciety as a whole and each member of it, such that either affects the nature of the other. The control exercised by the aggregate over its units, is one tending ever to mould their activities and sentiments and ideas into congruity with social requirements ...." (pp. 12-13) And he stated that "... the ever-accumulating, ever-complicating super-organic products, material and mental, constitute a further set of factors, which become more and more influential causes of change." (p. 16)

"He [Spencer] is an individualist and endeavors to derive knowledge of social events from the individual and his nature. If this were possible sociology must be a higher order of biology, since we get our knowledge of the individual through the latter. But we may state here that the social communities are the sociological units or elements, and that it is not possible to ascertain their mutual relations from the properties of their constituent parts, i.e., from the properties of individuals. No one starting from the latter can / reach the nature of the group. Hence biological analogies are worthless in sociology except as illustrations." (Ludwig Gumplowicz, *The Outlines of Sociology*, Translated by Frederick W. Moore, American Academy of Political and Social Science, Philadelphia, 1899. Pp. 28-29)

"If the social aggregate are only the larger and more complex image of the units that compose them, if social science is concerned only with the morphological or functional relations between the series of units and the / resulting aggregates, it evidently follows that, although there are social phenomena, these are not markedly distinct from biological or psychological phenomena." (Guillaume DeGreef, quoted in Edward Alsworth Ross, "Moot Points in Sociology. IV. The Properties of Group Units," *The American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 9, pp. 349-372, 1903. Pp. 349-350)
"Spencer placed an unusually heavy emphasis, obviously, on the elements of an organism at the expense of the organism as such. Indeed, at times he abandoned the biological in favor of a mechanical analogy and employed the terminology of physics rather than of biology.\(" The footnote here cites The Study of Sociology, pp. 5-6; Essays, Vol. 3, p. 246; First Principles (N.Y., 1958), pp. 223, 244.\) (Walter M. Simon, "Herbert Spencer and the "Social Organism"," Journal of the History of Ideas, Vol. 21, pp. 294-299, 1960. P.\)  

"From their study of crowds Sighele \("La foule criminelle", Tarde \("L'opinion et la foule", and Le Bon \("The Crowd") conclude that, contrary to Spencer's hypothesis, the group-unit does not faithfully reflect the characteristics of its members. The whole is not the algebraic sum of its parts. It is not a resultant of its units, according to the "law of the parallelogram of forces," but is a chemical combination possessing properties different from those of its elements." (Edward A. Ross, Foundations of Sociology, fifth edition, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1915. P. 119)  

"... in a given society the fact that the characters of the people composing it are such as they are, by no means determines the plant of their social organization to the particular form which it has actually assumed—by no means renders it impossible to modify extensively, either for the better or for the worse, existing arrangements, and to obtain from the same groups of individuals greatly superior or greatly inferior social results." (J. E. Cairnes, Mr. Spencer on Social Evolution," The Fortnightly Review, Vol. 23, pp. 63-82, 200-213, 1875. P. 205)  

In arguing against Spencer's assertion that "the character of the aggregate is determined by the character of the units," J. E. Cairnes used the wrong argument. Instead of saying that in many instances where "the character of the units" (in the range or average of innate psycho-biological nature of the individuals) was the same, as in say, Anglo-Saxon England and Victorian England, but the "aggregate" (in the form of society) was different, as he might cogently have said, he took the task of arguing that the "character of the units" is so varied, and may be arranged in so many different ways, that numerous outcomes (i.e., different types of society) may be produced. Thus he almost was saying the same thing that Spencer did. (J. E. Cairnes, "Mr. Spencer on the Study of Sociology," The Fortnightly Review, Vol. 17, n.s., pp. 200-213, 1875. Pp. 201-205)
"... a society and its members act and react in such wise that while, on the one hand, the nature of the society is determined by the natures of its members; on the other hand, the activities of its members (and presently their natures) are re-determined by the needs of the society, as these alter: change in either entails change in the other. It is an obvious implication that, to a great extent the life of a society so sways the wills of its members as to turn them to its ends. That which is manifest during the militant stage, when the social aggregate coerces its units into co-operation for defence, and sacrifices many of their lives for its corporate preservation holds under another form during the industrial stage, as we at present know it. Though the co-operation of citizens is now voluntary instead of compulsory; yet the social forces impel them to achieve social ends while apparently achieving their own ends." (Herbert Spencer, "The Americans," in Essays: Scientific, Political, & Speculative, Vol. 3, pp. 471-492, Williams and Norgate, London, 1891. P. 490)
"To Spencer is certainly due the immense credit of having been the first to see in evolution an absolutely universal principle. If any one else had grasped its universality, it failed at any rate to grasp him as it grasped Spencer." (William James, Memories and Studies, Longmans, Green, and Co., New York, 1911. P. 124)

"And here was the man Spencer, organizing all knowledge for him, reducing everything to unity, elaborating ultimate realities, and presenting to his startled gaze a universe so concrete of realization that it was like the model of a ship such as sailors make and put into glass bottles. There was no caprice, no chance. All was law." This was written of the effect produced on "martin Eden" (Jack London) by Spencer's First Principles. (Jack London, Martin Eden. The Macmillan Company. New York, 1937. P. 99.)

Try as men may, "there is no nook or corner in speculative science where they can get away from the sweep of Mr. Spencer's thought." (John Fiske, "The Doctrine of Evolution: Its Scope and Purport," in John Fiske, A Century of Science and Other Essays, pp. 37-60, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1902. P. 47)

"It is this systematization and coordination of the various sciences into a universal philosophy which reduces all phenomena to one general law, that constitutes Mr. Spencer's great contribution to civilization." (Unsigned, probably by George Gunton himself, "Spencer's Last Book," Gunton's Magazine, Vol. 12, pp. 291-304, 1897. P. 291)

"The second peak [in "The Secret History of Oedipus," an apparently unpublished manuscript by Mark Twain] comes at the end of a listing of the accomplishments of a dozen scientists, from Newton through Darwin, and closing again with Spencer's "climaxing mighty law of Evolution, binding all the universe's inertness and vitalities together under its sole sway and command—and the History of Things and the Meanings of them stood revealed!" That last triumphant clause, as Twain's manuscript shows, survived a welter of indecisions and revisions ••••" (Sherwood Cummings, Mark Twain and Science, Louisiana State University Press, Baton Rouge, 1988. Pp. 205-206)
"Thus it turns out that the objective agency, the noumenal power, the absolute force, declared by Spencer to be unknown and unknowable, is known after all to exist, persist, resist and cause our subjective affections of phenomena, yet not to think or to will. Such a noumenon looks very like body or matter." (Thomas Case, "Metaphysics," The Encyclopaedia Britannica, 11th edition, Vol. 18, pp. 224-253, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1911. P. 227)

"The scruples that made him substitute the word unknowable for the word force or the word force for the word matter, were the scruples of an idealist, such as he did not intend to be. They sprang from the habit of reducing things to their adventitious relation to ourselves, the habit of Egotism; as if the difficulty we may have in approaching them could constitute their intrinsic being." (George Santayana, "The Unknowable," The Herbert Spencer Lecture for 1923, The Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1923. P. 18)

"... Part I. of his "First Principles" (1862), which formed the stumbling-block to his whole system of philosophy, and if published at all, should have been placed at the end as a sort of appendix or curious metaphysical by-product." (Lester F. Ward, "The Career of Herbert Spencer," The Popular Science Monthly, Vol. 74, pp. 5-18, 1909. P. 8)

"Throughout the varied and conflicting forms of religious belief, there is one truth, and but one, that underlies them all. This truth is, that there exists a something which the finite intelligence does not and cannot comprehend. That something is the Absolute, the Unconditioned, the Unknowable. This is the foundation of all religion, and, as it is for ever safe from all the encroachments of Science, it insures to Religion a reign of perpetuity." (Ward is paraphrasing Spencer's argument, but I get the impression that he rather accepts it too.) (Lester Frank Ward, Dynamic Sociology, 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1883. Vol. 1, p. 156)

"I do not know what religious profit Mr. Spencer may derive from meditating on this Unknown, .... But of this I am sure, that if people generally should be led to embrace this creed, it would come to mean that men need not trouble themselves about religion, in the darkness of which no object can be seen to revere or to love. I am sure that if we banish religion to this Siberia, it will be to make it perish in the cold. To consign it thus is to bury it in the grave from which it will not send forth even a ghost to trouble anyone." (James McCosh, Christianity and Positivism, Robert Carter and Brothers, New York, 1875. P. 142)
"Spencer tossed all his inexpressibilities into the Unknowable, and gladly turned his back on them forever." (William James, Memories and Studies, Longmans, Green, and Co., New York, 1911. P. 114)

"I am confident that I have finally refuted the idea that the Unknowable can be made the basis of anything that can be called religion; ...." (Frederic Harrison, "Herbert Spencer's "Life"", The Positivist Review, Vol. 16, pp. 145-149, 1908. P. 146)

"What practical difference is there between saying that there is no God, and saying there is no God apprehensible to us, no God that we can distinguish from the sum total of things, no God that certainly exists apart from our subjective ideas of Him?" (Augustus Hopkins Strong, Philosophy and Religion, A. C. Armstrong and Son, New York, 1888. P. 53)

"His Spencer's hopes that the theory of the Unknowable would shield his philosophy from the charges of atheism and materialism were not fulfilled at the time (in the 1860's), though twenty years later, when religion was under heavy fire, the defenders of belief sometimes claimed him as an ally." (Sydney Eisen, "Frederic Harrison and Herbert Spencer: Embattled Unbelievers," Victorian Studies, Vol. 12, pp. 33-56, 1968. P. 36)

"Indeed, if the epithet The Unknowable were taken strictly, it would positively contradict and abolish belief in that tremendous reality on which he Spencer bestowed it, partly perhaps in reverence, and partly in haste to be done with reverence and to come to business." (George Santayana, "The Unknowable," The Herbert Spencer Lecture for 1923, The Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1923. P. 8)

"It The first part of First Principles needlessly offended theologians, who professed to have information respecting the Unknowable; it wantonly alienated metaphysicians, who considered that the Unknowable should also be the Unmentionable. In any case, it said too much: it asserted, respecting the Unknowable, (a) that it exists; (b) that it is infinite; (c) that it is absolute; (d) that it is impersonal; (e) that it is inscrutable; (f) that it is unconditioned; (g) that it is indestructible. By the time the end of the dissertation is reached the reader feels that the Unknowable is an old familiar acquaintance." (F. J. C. Hearnshaw, "Herbert Spencer and the Individualists," in The Social & Political Ideas of Some Representative Thinkers of the Victorian Age, ed. by F. J. C. Hearnshaw, pp. 53-83, George G. Harrap & Co. Ltd., London, 1933. Pp. 66-67)
"And yet I think that Herbert Spencer, in throwing somewhat contemptuously that sop to religion [The Unknowable], was in fact silently reconciling religion with science behind his back and without suspecting it. The substance envisaged in science and that envisaged in religion have always been the same. The paths of discovery are different, but, if they convey true knowledge, they must ultimately converge upon the same facts, on the same ground of necessity in things. In the recognition of a universal substance far removed from the imagination and the will of men, yet creating this will and imagination at the appropriate places, and giving them their natural scope, there lies a quite positive religion...." (George Santayana, "The Unknowable," The Herbert Spencer Lecture for 1923, The Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1923. P. 19)

"...the only religious truth that Mr. Spencer can recognize is that there is a Power manifested to us by the universe, but that that Power is utterly inscrutable." (Henry Sidgwick, Lectures on the Philosophy of Kant and other Philosophical Lectures & Essays, Macmillan and Co., Limited, London, 1905. P. 281)

After reading the published book version of the Spencer-Harrison debate on religion Brace wrote: "I am most struck by the evolutionist admitting a God--or a Power--within and without ourselves, making for order and righteousness; mysterious, awful, unknowable, but not a force alone, with something like ourselves, only infinitely greater and better." (Letter from Charles Loring Brace to Dr. George E. the sociologist/ Howard, dated June 11, 1885. Quoted in The Life of Charles Loring Brace, edited by His Daughter/Emma Brace/ Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1894. P. 417)

"Doubt has sometimes been expressed whether these ideas are physical or metaphysical, and, if the former, what is their relation to Spencer's particular system of metaphysics, as expressed in "The Unknowable." To the first question there is only one possible answer. The formula of evolution and the principle of the persistence of force are purely physical. Their truth or falsehood is entirely independent of Spencer's metaphysics.... An objective philosophy, concerned with the unification of positive knowledge, must be judged by its congruity with the facts it seeks to coordinate and explain, and cannot be dependent on metaphysical principles. That Spencer recognized and asserted this essential separation is shown by the following passage:

""The subjects on which we are about to enter [The Knowable] are independent of the subjects thus far discussed [The Unknowable]; and he may reject any or all of that which has gone before, while leaving himself free to accept any or all of that which is now to come." (First Principles, 6th edition, Thinker's Library Edition, Watts & Co., London, 1937. P. 105) (H. S. Shelton, "Spencer's Formula of Evolution," The Philosophical Review, Vol. 19, pp. 241-258, 1910. P. 246)
"... if we know and can know nothing of its (Spencer's Unknowable) nature, it is a matter of no moment whether it exists or not; that the admission can carry with it no practical consequences for instruction, for comfort, or for admonition. If this be so, then this region which Mr. Spencer has so kindly allotted to religion, and in which all religions may meet—in the dark—vanishes; and mankind will not miss it, there being extremely little difference to us between absolute nothing, and the absolutely unknowable." (James McCosh, Christianity and Positivism, Robert Carter and Brothers, New York, 1875. P. 144)

In the controversy with Frederic Harrison, "... Spencer, wounded by ridicule for raising aloft as an object of reverence a mere emptiness, puffed up the Unknowable with attributes which brought it dangerously close to the anthropomorphic Deity he had rejected." (Sydney Eisen, "Frederic Harrison and Herbert Spencer: Embattled Unbelievers," Victorian Studies, Vol. 12, pp. 33-56, 1968. P. 56)

"But once stated, in First Principles, this part of Spencer's system (the Unknowable) is, not unnaturally, made no further use of, and, if one looks at his life and work as a whole, it is evident that for Spencer the idea of the uniformity of nature, rather than a vacuous Unknowable, took the place of religion." (J. W. Burrow, Evolution and Society, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1966. Pp. 211-212)

"Nothing can be intrinsically unknowable; for if any one was tempted to imagine a substance such that it should antecedently defy description, inasmuch as that substance had no assignable character, he would be attributing existence to a nonentity. It would evidently make no difference in the universe whether a thing without any character were added to it or were taken away. If substance is to exist, it must have a character distinguishing it from nothing, and also from everything else." (George Santayana, "The Unknowable," The Herbert Spencer Lecture for 1923, The Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1923. Pp. 8-9)

"Religion in the mass of mankind has never been a mere / sense of mystery. It has been a positive belief, and an experimental effort, directed on the means of salvation. A prophet, conscious of some promises or warning conveyed to him miraculously, cannot substitute for this specific faith an official assurance that science will never quite succeed in dissipating the mystery of things: it is not what he will never know that interest him, but what he thinks he has discovered. Genuine religion professes to have positive knowledge and to bring positive benefits: it is an art; and to ask it to be satisfied with knowing that no knowledge can penetrate to the heart of things is sheer mockery: the opposite is what religion instinctively asserts." (George Santayana, "The Unknowable," The Herbert Spencer Lecture for 1923, The Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1923. Pp. 18-19)

"... Herbert Spencer threw in the word "Unknowable" to undo all he had done ...." (Israel Zangwill, "Herbert Spencer," The Reader Magazine, Vol. 4, pp. 27-29, 1904. P. 28)

"Note also F. H. Bradley's comment: 'Mr. Spencer's attitude towards the Unknowable seems a proposal to take something for God simply because we do not know what the devil it can be.'" (John Passmore, A Hundred Years of Philosophy, A Pelican Book, Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, 1968. P. 535)

Spencer's concept of the Unknowable came in for some very acute and telling criticism on the part of a number of reviewers. One of the best of these was by J. Stahl Patterson, "Spencer's Unknowable as the Basis of Religion," The Radical Review, Vol. 1, pp. 419-442, 1877-78.

"Why this anomaly? The section on "The Unknowable" at the beginning of First Principles. Why any metaphysical preface at all to a work of straightforward natural philosophy? I think the reason was that Spencer, not being by nature a logician, bowed in logic to casual authorities, and relied too much, in this subject too, on the fashion of the hour. He supposed, as some do to-day, that the latest logic was the last. Dean Mansel, Sir William Hamilton, and Kant would never be superseded. He hardly considered the atmosphere, the implications, or the contradictions of the doctrines he quoted from those worthies; he appealed to them on one point, in order to discredit all their other arguments. Metaphysics should be proved, out of the mouths of the metaphysicians themselves, to be incompetent to revise his scientific speculations, or to refute his conclusions. He hardly cared, therefore, if the language of his metaphysical preface was that of his natural enemies, and perverse essentially: that fact seemed almost an advantage since it locked the gates against those enemies with their own bolts." (George Santayana, "The Unknowable," The Herbert Spencer Lecture for 1923, The Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1923. Pp. 7-8)

"His Unknowable was in reality a critical point--perhaps even his heel of Achilles. It summarily alienated the natural world and so did perpetuate the medieval tradition ... within the very camp of rationalistic science and philosophy." (A. H. Lloyd, "The Philosophy of Herbert Spencer," The Scientific Monthly, Vol. 11, pp. 97-111, 1920. P. 104)

“To him [Spencer] the unknowable is an Atlantic, whereas in reality there is a continent beyond.” [i.e., we may learn tomorrow something about what we consider unknowable today.] (John Butler Burke, "Herbert Spencer and the Master Key," The Contemporary Review, Vol. 89, pp. 783-794, 1906. P. 792)

Spencer "... has discovered ... that the man of science "knows that in its ultimate essence nothing can be known." Yet he goes on writing.... he holds that suicides should rather be encouraged. Yet he goes on living." (Jehu Junior, "Men of the Day.--No. CXCIII., Mr. Herbert Spencer," Vanity Fair, April 26, 1879, p. 241. P. 241)

“To the theory of the unknowable must largely be attributed the unpopularity which attached itself to the philosophy of Spencer. Critics fixed upon the ontology, to the comparative neglect of the cosmology; and in consequence of his defective metaphysical equipment, Spencer laid himself open on the purely speculative side to attacks which reacted with adverse influence upon the scientific side of his great work. If ontology was to be dealt with at all, it should have been at the end, not at the beginning of his philosophy, when Spencer would have been able to deal with the problems involved on better and more modern philosophic lines than those of Hamilton and Mansel. In his later days Spencer seemed to feel that his influence had been hindered by his theory of the unknowable. This much may be gathered from a remark he once made to the present writer, that his system of philosophy should not be judged by his theory of the unknowable. The philosophy of evolution as a cosmical generalisation, he said, rests upon its own merits apart from its philosophic and religious agnosticism." (Anonymous, "The Philosophy of Herbert Spencer," The Edinburgh Review, Vol. 199, pp. 352-373, 1904. Pp. 359-360)

"But one truth must grow ever clearer--the truth that there is an Inscrutable Existence everywhere manifested, to which he can neither find nor conceive either beginning or end. Amid the mysteries which become the more mysterious the more they are thought about, there will remain the one absolute certainty, that he is ever in presence of an Infinite and Eternal Energy, from which all things proceed." (Herbert Spencer, The Principles of Sociology, Vol. 3, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1896. P. 175)
"Studying Spencer, especially the first section of the "Unknowable," he could see that he would not have to discard his old outlook so much as to consign it to a sphere that did not effect his daily problems. He learned how religion and science were complementary rather than contradictory and that in the realm of facts religion had no place." (Robert H. Elias, Theodore Dreiser: Apostle of Nature, Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1949. Pp. 81-82)

"This division of the universe into the knowable and unknowable is presented with a certain under-current of grim irony as a "reconciliation" between science and religion. It is really a polite way of saying that science means knowledge, while religion is a synonym for ignorance." (Arthur M. Lewis, An Introduction to Sociology, Charles H. Kerr & Company, Chicago, 1913. P. 58)

"... I have always thought that it would be more philosophical not to assert of the Unknown that it is Unknowable. And, indeed, I would rather not use the capital letter, but stick literally to our evidence, and say frankly "the unknown"." (Frederic Harrison, The Philosophy of Common Sense, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1907. P. 336)

"... the verbal erection into an entity of something unconceived and inconceivable yet declared to be the subject of a "positive consciousness" is an idle exercise." (J. M. Robertson, A History of Freethought in the Nineteenth Century, Watts & Co., London, 1929. P. 216)

"For my part, I prefer his old term, the Unknowable. Though I have always thought it would be more philosophical not to assert of the Unknown that it is Unknowable." (Frederic Harrison, "The Ghost of Religion," in The Nature and Reality of Religion, a Controversy between Frederic Harrison and Herbert Spencer, pp. 39-58, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1885. P. 41)

In Sections 659-660 of "Ecclesiastical Institutions" in Principles of Sociology, Vol. 3, Spencer wrote that "... amid the mysteries which become the more mysterious, the more they are thought about, there will remain one absolute certainty, that he is ever in the presence of an Infinite and Eternal Energy, from which all things proceed." Edward Caird, Professor of Moral Philosophy at Glasgow, interpreted these and other remarks in these Sections as showing that "... he is anxious to claim for it [the Unknowable] some of those feelings of reverential awe, which are possible only towards that which we partly know and, therefore, see to be worthy of our reverence." (Cf. Frederic Harrison's reaction to the same passage in The Nineteenth Century, 1884.) (Edward Caird, The Evolution of Religion, 3rd edition, 2 Vols., James Maclehose and Sons, Glasgow, 1899. Vol. 1, p. 144n.)
"I pass by the section on the Unknowable, because this part of Mr. Spencer's philosophy has won fewer friends than any other. It consists chiefly of a rehash of Mansel's rehash of Hamilton's "Philosophy of the Conditioned," and has hardly raised its head since John Mill so effectively demolished it." (William James, Memories and Studies, Longmans, Green, and Co., New York, 1911. P. 128)

"But let no one suppose that this '"Infinite and Eternal Energy' is merely a new name for the Great First Cause of so many theologies and metaphysics. In spite of the capital letters, and the use of theological terms as ols as Isaiah and Athanasius ("... from which all things proceed.'), Mr. Spencer's Energy has no analogy with God. It is Eternal, Infinite, and Incomprehensible; but still it is not He, but It. It remains always Energy, Force, nothing anthropomorphic .... None of the positive attributes which have ever been predicated of God can be used of this Energy. Neither goodness, nor wisdom, nor justice, nor consciousness, nor will, nor life, can be ascribed, even by analogy, to this Force." (Frederic Harrison, "The Ghost of Religion," in The Nature and Reality of Religion, A Controversy between Frederic Harrison and Herbert Spencer, pp. 39-58, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1885. P. 40)

"So there can never be congregations of Unknowable worshippers, nor churches dedicated to the Holy Unknowable, nor images nor symbols of the Unknowable mystery. Yes! there is one symbol of the infinite Unknowable, and it is perhaps the most definite and ultimate word that can be said about it. The precise and yet inexhaustible language of mathematics enables us to express, in a common algebraic formula, the exact combination of the unknown raised to its highest power of infinity. That formula is (x^n), and here we have the beginning and perhaps the end of a symbolism for the religion of the Infinite Unknowable. Schools, academies, temples of the Unknowable, there cannot be. But where two or three are gathered together to worship the Unknowable, there the algebraic formula may suffice to give form to their emotions: they may be heard to profess their unwavering belief in (x^n), even if no weak brother with ritualistic tendencies be heard to cry, "O x^n, love us, help us, make us one with thee!" (Frederic Harrison, "The Ghost of Religion," in The Nature and Reality of Religion, a Controversy between Frederic Harrison and Herbert Spencer, pp. 39-58, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1885. P. 54)
"An example of this double dealing is found in his well-known theory of the Unknowable. After identifying the real with an absolute Unknowable, which should once for all preclude any further reference to it, especially on the part of a philosophy of experience, Spencer proceeds in a later paragraph to define the real as "persistence in consciousness;" and on the basis of this assurance informs us that the Unknowable is one, not many; that it is the causal energy on which phenomena depend and from which they spring; that it is omnipresent, persistent, unchangeable, etc., etc.; thus giving us, in Mr. Mill's happy phrase, "a prodigious amount of knowledge about the Unknowable." Then a scrutiny of these attributes of ultimate reality reveals the fact that it is both static and dynamic. The Unknowable as changeless absolute becomes on occasion a causal energy with a succession of changes paralleled by a succession of changes among appearances." (W. Rose, "Herbert Spencer as a Philosopher," Journal of Proceedings and Addresses of the Forty-Third Annual Meeting of the National Education Association, pp. 231-235, St. Louis, Mo., 1904. Pp. 232-233)

"It was not until quite a bit later than when he first read Spencer's First Principles at age 12 that I began to be aware of a catch: Much of the Unknowable is so much more important than most of the Knowable that even guesses about it are more interesting and more fateful than positive knowledge about the rest.... To this day I am more sympathetic toward those who recognize the two relams, the Knowable and the Unknowable, than to those who maintain that by hook or by crook--by induction or deduction, science or metaphysics, logic or revelation--everything is knowable. And I suppose it is because I did continue to accept the distinction without renouncing my interest in either category that I became a minor man of letters instead of the scientist I was for some time resolved to be. After all, it is with the Unknowable, not with the Knowable, that literature is primarily concerned ...." (Joseph Wood Krutch, More Lives Than One, William Sloane Associates, New York, 1962. P. 22)
"When the agnostic says that we cannot know anything about the reality beyond nature or experience, he implies that there is such a reality; and some, like Spencer, clearly accept this inference. To this extent they are not pure naturalists. They are only naturalists for all practical purposes: that is, since we can know nothing of supernature, we have nothing to do with it either in thought or conduct,---we can manage our lives as if it did not exist. At the same time, it is possible to maintain a sentiment of reverence toward the "Unknowable": in this limited sense, the agnostic is often a profoundly religious man." (William Earnest Hocking, *Types of Philosophy, Revised edition*, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1939, P. 136)

"... he plant himself squarely upon utilitarian principles. Indeed, this book contains decidedly the best defense of utilitarianism that has yet been made. Its chief merit consists in the thorough and able manner in which the doctrine is pruned of its crudities, confined within its proper boundaries, and presented as a reasonable and respectable truth for acceptance." (Lester Frank Ward, Dynamic Sociology, 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1883. Vol. 1, p. 217)
"(The theory behind Veblen's description of conspicuous consumption—that it is a survival of the warlike past—is purely Spencerian.)" (J. D. Y. Peel, Herbert Spencer on Social Evolution, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1972. P. xxxv)

"When Small criticised Spencer, Veblen declared that Spencer's critics "stand on his shoulders and beat him about the ears."" (Joseph Dorfman, Thorstein Veblen and His America, The Viking Press. New York, 1934. P. 247.)

"Spencer's demonstration of the universal law of the evolution of institutions—from "indefinite, incoherent homogeneity to definite, coherent heterogeneity"—seems to have impressed Veblen favorably ...." (Stanley Matthew Daugert, The Philosophy of Thorstein Veblen, Columbia University Press, New York, 1950. P. 45)

Thorstein Veblen "seems to have read books on modern society he could dismiss as written by idiots, save for Spencer and socialists like the early Sombart, from whom he borrowed many concepts." (David Riesman, Thorstein Veblen: A Critical Interpretation. Charles Scribner's Sons. New York, 1953. (P. 38)

"Following the tradition of Rousseau, and influenced by Spencer, he conceives of society as an organism possessing certain functions, not as a rigid organization of classes related by status or contract, each of which is exclusive of the other." (Stanley Matthew Daugert, The Philosophy of Thorstein Veblen, Columbia University Press. New York, 1950. P. 30)

"... what Veblen did in The Theory of the Leisure Class was to use Spencer's material, particularly his Principles of Sociology, to reverse Spencer's position. Veblen's intention, satirical or otherwise, becomes clear only when the relationship between his work and Spencer's is brought under scrutiny. Veblen always felt that he was influenced by Spencer. In The Theory of the Leisure Class and elsewhere he coupled Spencer's evolutionism with the of Darwin. At the same time he maintained that Spencer's evolutionism was constrained by the belief in the natural right of property as expressed in the system of free contract." (Joseph Dorfman, "The 'Satire' of Thorstein Veblen's Theory of the Leisure Class." Political Science Quarterly, Vol. 47, pp. 363-409, 1932. P. 363.)
"He [Veblen] read Spencer, whom in particular he considered a great contributor to intellectual advance ...." (Joseph Dorfman, Thorstein Veblen and His America. The Viking Press. New York, 1934. P. 30.)

"This paper is mainly a suggestion, offered in the spirit of the disciple, with respect to a point not adequately covered by Mr. Spencer's discussion ... [in Spencer's Introduction to From Freedom to Bondage]." (p. 345) "The immediate occasion for the writing of the paper was given by the publication of Mr. Spencer's essay, "From Freedom to Bondage." (p. 345) (T[horstein] B. Veblen, "Some Neglected points in the Theory of Socialism," Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, Vol. 2, pp. 345-362, 1892)

"A romance sprang up between Veblen and the niece of the president of the college [Carleton], Ellen Rolfe. She was an intellectual and a brilliant personality on her own account, and the two drifted together under a natural gravitation. Veblen read Spencer to Ellen, converted her to agnosticism, ...." (Robert L. Heilbroner, The Worldly Philosophers, Simon and Schuster, New York, 1953. Pp. 209-210)

"Yet there is little question, to repeat, that Veblen was considerably indebted to Spencer, more indebted, perhaps, than he himself would have been willing to admit. With Spencer he assumed that human beings, human societies, and human cultures, as well as plant and animal life, were subject to evolutionary growth and change. Spencer's analysis of the evolution of social institutions / in the Principles of Sociology may well have suggested to Veblen the possibility of dealing specifically with economic institutions in a similar manner. Veblen's theory of cumulative causation, or cumulative evolutionary institutionalism, as it is sometimes called, is Spencer's theory of "continually-accumulating modifications" interpreted somewhat more strictly and, at the same time, somewhat more broadly, that is, as habits." (Staley Matthew Daugert, The Philosophy of Thorstein Veblen, Columbia University Press, New York, 1950. Pp. 46-47)
It is true that Spencer considered monogamy to be the highest form of marriage, but not because it was the system prevalent in Victorian England, but for structural and functional reasons which he took pains to set forth in considerable detail (Vol. I, pp. 700-704, 1st ed.).

Spencer did not see monogamy as necessarily the best form of marriage, in some Victorian sense, toward which all societies were striving. He says: "In competition with polygyny and monogamy, polyandry may, in some cases, have had the advantage for reasons cited above; having several "fathers", the children of a polyandrous household would be better off; polygynic and monogamic families dying out because the offspring of them were relatively ill-fed" (Vol. I, p. 681, 1st ed.)

Victorian England not the Pinnacle

Herbert Spencer

"... after observing how the processes that have brought things to their present stage are still going on, not with a decreasing rapidity indicating approach to cessation, but with an increasing rapidity that implies long continuance and immense transformations; there follows the conviction that the remote future has in store, forms of social life / higher than any we have imagined ...." (pp. 399-400)

(The Study of Sociology. D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1891)

"The 19th-century school of cultural evolutionists--mainly British--reasoned that man had progressed from a condition of simple, amoral savagery to a civilized state whose ultimate achievement was the Victorian Englishman, living in an industrial society and political democracy, believing in the Empire and belonging to the Church of England." (Julian H. Steward, "Cultural Evolution," The Scientific Monthly, Vol. 194, pp. 69-76, 78, 80, 1956. P. 69)

"... the social states towards which our race is being carried, are probably as little conceivable by us as our present social state was conceivable by a Norse pirate and his followers." (P. 120) "... the changes which have brought social arrangements to a form so different from past forms, will in future carry them on to forms as different from those now existing." (P. 122) "... there are various germs of things which will in the future develop in ways no one imagines ...." (Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1891. P. 123)
"'Finalism' refers to a determinate end state to be achieved ... a state of society whose social conditions, like those of Victorian England, represent the ultimate possible in human achievement, as in Spencer's thought ...." (Anthony Leeds, "Darwinian and "Darwinian" Evolutionism in the Study of Society and Culture," in The Comparative Reception of Darwinism, ed. by Thomas F. Glick, pp. 437-485, University of Texas Press, Austin, 1974. P. 464)

"Spencer thought he ... was living at the tail end of the evolutionary chain." [That is, that evolution had culminated and ceased.] (Terry M. Perlin, Review of Herbert Spencer: The Evolution of a Sociologist by J. D. Y. Peel, Society [formerly Transaction], Vol. 10, No. 1, pp. 119-122, Nov.-Dec., 1972. P. 120)

"In their establishment of stages in the evolution both of institutions and of cultures as wholes, the [classical] evolutionary school resorted to a curious and thoroughly unscientific device. Since the actual history of most cultures was unknown, they assumed that the institutions characteristic of Victorian England ... represented the last evolutionary stage in every case, and that the corresponding institutions of other societies could be arranged in a descending scale, their position in this scale being determined by the degree in which they differed from the Victorian institutions." (Ralph Linton, "Error in Anthropology," in The Story of Human Error, ed. by Joseph Jastrow, pp. 292-321. D. Appleton-Century Company, New York, 1936. P. 314)
"Now that the white savages of Europe are overrunning the dark savages everywhere; now that the European nations are vying with one another in political burglaries; now that we have entered upon an era of social cannibalism, in which the strong nations are devouring the weaker; now that national interests, national prestige, pluck, and so forth, are alone thought of, and equity has utterly dropped out of thought, while rectitude is scorned as "unctuous;" it is useless to resist the wave of barbarism. There is a bad time coming, and civilized mankind will (morally) be uncivilized before civilization can again advance. Such a body as that which you propose, even could its members agree, would be pooh-poohed as sentimental and visionary. The universal aggressiveness and universal culture of blood-thirst will bring back military despotism, out of which, after many generations, partial freedom may again emerge." (Letter from Herbert Spencer to Moncure D. Conway dated July 17, 1898. Quoted in Moncure Daniel Conway, Autobiography, Memories and Experiences, 2 Vols., Houghton, Mifflin and Company, Boston, 1904. Vol. 2, p. 449)

During the Negro uprising in Jamaica: "Herbert Spencer emerged for the first time in his life, so far as I know, from the rigid seclusion of a silent student's career, and appeared in public as an active, hard-working member of a political organization. The American Civil War had drawn Mill for the first time into the public arena of politics; the Jamaica massacre made a political agitator of Herbert / Spencer. The noble human sympathies of Spencer, his austere and uncompromising love of justice, his instinctive detestation of brute, blind, despotic force, compelled him to come from his seclusion, and join those who protested against the lawless and senseless massacre of the wretched blacks in Jamaica." (Justin McCarthy, M.P., Reminiscences, 2 Vols., Chatto & Windus, London, 1899. Vol. 2, pp. 318-319)

"After that (the election of 1880), sanguine people proclaimed that the Jingoes--the party of aggression and 'Empire'--were destroyed. I was one who thought them still the most powerful force in the country, as well as the most dangerous. Herbert Spencer thought likewise. We got together a meeting at my house, with the view of setting up an Anti-aggression League. But we met with no support, the bulk of people thinking that the danger of ousting from public policy was past." (Note found among the writings of Lord /Arthur/ Hobhouse. Quoted in L. T. Hobhouse and J. L. Hammond, Lord Hobhouse; A Memoir, Edward Arnold, London, 1905. P. 138)

"He [Spencer] is to be remembered, further, as the man who in his age most consistently, most powerfully, and most unweariedly wrought against the criminal proclivity to wanton war--a service naturally little recognized at / home when his countrymen were collectively among the sinners ...." (J. M. Robertson, A History of Freethought in the Nineteenth Century, Watts & Co., London, 1929. Pp. 387-388)

"... the badness of our conduct towards inferior races ...." (Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1891. P. 213)
"So long as it is felt by colonists that when they aggress on natives and get into quarrels, the home government will come to their defence, and so long as men who initiate aggressive policies, which end in the annexation of territory, get titles and honours, notwithstanding their unauthorised actions and even their disobedience to orders, the filibustering policy with all its atrocities will continue." (Herbert Spencer to F. W. Chesson, November 18, 1880, quoted in David Duncan, Life and Letters of Herbert Spencer, 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1908. Vol. 1, p. 292)

"Courtney's compulsory withdrawal from Parliament [he lost an election as a Liberal, opposing British policy in South Africa] made at first but little immediate difference in his life, for owing to blocking motions the opportunities of speaking at Westminster on South African affairs had been rare. Herbert Spencer wrote to suggest that he should devote a part of his leisure to writing a book entitled How we came by our Possessions ...." (G. P. Gooch, Life of Lord Leonard Courtney, Macmillan, London, 1920. P. 415)

Spencer was not a typical Victorian in the sense of believing in his country right or wrong. He speaks of England's "late aggressive activities" (Vol. II, p. 602). He gives examples of the increase of militancy in England (Vol. II, pp. 591-592). He compares the many violations of norms of morality by Christian Englishmen to the moral conduct of many primitive peoples (Vol. II, pp. 641-642).

"Early in January [1901] a number of friends in England, Herbert Spencer among them (also Dr. John Brown, whom I suspect to have been a prime mover), subscribed and sent her [Olive Schreiner] a sum of money (over £150, I think)." (She opposed the British in the war, and suffered accordingly.) (S. C. Cronwright-Schreiner, The Life of Olive Schreiner, Little, Brown, and Company, Boston, 1923. P. 325)

"But despite his reputation as a generalizer of natural selection, Spencer's conception of struggle was different from that of most Social Darwinists; and he continued to oppose the sanctification of colonial wars, although he had given war a great role in the past formation of society ...." (J. D. Y. Peel, Herbert Spencer on Social Evolution, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1972. P. xxxviii)

Brinton says that for Spencer: "Monogamy as practiced in the British Isles is the fine flower of evolution." (Crane Brinton, English Political Thought in the Nineteenth Century, Ernest Benn, Ltd., London, 1933. P. 234)

Spencer was a thoroughgoing champion of freedom. He wrote scathingly of the callous, self-righteous way in which the British Empire was being extended. (See Vol. II, p. 239n.)
Spencer was shown through the Peabody Museum at Yale by O. C. Marsh on October 21, 1877.

"Before he did so [leave New York for England], however, he was tendered a farewell banquet at Delmonico's on November 9, 1887, which I had the honor of attending, and at which I was invited to speak, only, owing to the fact that Henry Ward Beecher and several others monopolized so much of the time with their remarks. Myself, Prof. Youmans, and a number of other men of science, were denied the opportunity." (Lester F. Ward, Glimpses of the Cosmos, Vol. 6, G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1918. P. 164)

"Even Darwinians were well grounded in Spencer. [O. C.] Marsh (1877), 48, accepted natural selection "in the broad sense in which that term is now used by American evolutionists," and helped get Spencer's banned Study of Sociology into the classrooms at Yale. At the Peabody Museum in 1862 Marsh entertained Spencer and at the farewell banquet for the philosopher at Delmonico's in New York flatteringly echoed Spencer's words by talking of evolution as the "law of all progress": Marsh (1882), 3." (Adrian Desmond, Archetypes and Ancestors, Blond & Briggs, London, 1982. P. 228n.)

VITALISM

In Chapter VIA, inserted into the revised 1898 edition of The Principles of Biology and entitled "The Dynamic Element in Life," Spencer reconsidered the problem of the basic nature of life. There, in the narrow compass of four pages (pp. 114-117), Spencer presents one of the most brilliant, beautiful, and devastating critiques of vitalism ever written. But with regard to the remaining problems of the nature of life, Spencer was a little too quick to relegate the unknown to the unknowable. Many of the problems of the behavior of living matter that Spencer thought insoluble (pp. 117-120) are today yielding to studies of molecular biology.

"The process known as living, like the process known as not-living, should be capable of a mechanical explanation. If, as Spencer admits, there is a dynamic element in life, and if that element cannot be conceived in terms of matter and motion, cannot be interpreted by physical or chemical methods, the conclusion is inevitable that in presence of living processes the Spencerian formula of evolution is defective. The effect of Spencer's admissions is to make his system of philosophy dualistic instead of monistic." (Anonymous, "The Philosophy of Herbert Spencer," The Edinburgh Review, Vol. 199, pp. 352-373, 1904. P. 362)
"Wallace and Bates resumed their friendship, and their discussions, going together to call on Herbert Spencer. 'Our thoughts were full of the great unsolved problems of the origin of life,' Wallace recalled, adding, enthusiastically if rather optimistically, 'and we looked to Spencer as the one man living who could give us some clue to it.'" (Peter Raby, *Alfred Russel Wallace*, Princeton University Press. Princeton, N.J., 2000. P. 167)

"In 1874, Spencer asked Wallace to look over the proofs of the first six chapters of *The Principles of Sociology* 'and give him the benefit of my criticisms, 'alike as naturalist, anthropologist, and traveller.'" Wallace found little requiring emendation, but "sent him a couple of pages of notes with suggestions on points of detail, which, I believe, were of some use to him" (Wallace [1905] 1969, 2:27).

"He [Alfred Russel Wallace] read books of more general interest, including one that would leave a powerful impact on him, Herbert Spencer's *Social Statics*, especially the chapter on 'The Right to Use the Earth.' The broad evolutionary flow of Spencer's arguments, and their application to social issues, seeped into Wallace's thinking to take an influential place beside the ideas of Robert Chambers's *Vestiges*." (Peter Raby, *Alfred Russel Wallace: A Life*. Princeton University Press. Princeton, N.J., 2000. P. 91)

"How dreadfully Herbert Spencer has fallen off in his *Justice* [1891] [part of his *Principles of Ethics*]. Parts of it are so weak and illogical as to be absolutely childish. You have no doubt seen H. George's criticism of it."


"For the rest of his life, except for a brief period when he was influenced by Herbert Spencer's ideas about free enterprise, Wallace remained an Owenite." (Amabel Williams-Ellis, Darwin's Moon, Blackie, London, 1966. P. 11)


"... in 1852 Herbert Spencer published his essay "The Development Hypothesis" contrasting the theories of Creation and Development with such/skill and logical power as to carry conviction to the minds of all unprejudiced readers ...." (Alfred Russel Wallace, The Wonderful Century, Dodd, Mead and Company, New York, 1909. Pp. 138-139)


"Spencer made an astute comment when he received a presentation copy of the book [Darwinism] from Wallace. He wrote Wallace that he regretted "that you have used the title 'Darwinism,' for notwithstanding your qualification of its meaning you will, by using it, tend greatly to confirm the erroneous conception almost universally current."" (Letter from Herbert Spencer to Alfred Russel Wallace, May 18, 1889. Quoted in Martin Fichman, An Elusive Victorian; The Evolution of Alfred Russel Wallace. University of Chicago Press. Chicago, 2004. P. 250)
"When Herbert Spencer read Wallace's 1864 paper "The Origin of the Races of Man," he immediately wrote Wallace and told him: "Its leading idea is, I think, undoubtedly true, and of much importance towards an interpretation of the facts.... I think it is quite clear, as you point out, that the smallest amounts of physical differences that have arisen between the various human races are due to the way in which mental modifications have served in place of physical ones."" (Michael Shermer, In Darwin's Shadow; The Life and Science of Alfred Russel Wallace. Oxford University Press. Oxford, 2002. P. 221)
"... Herbert Spencer is almost alone, among those really celebrated in their time, in being unread and having not even the ghost of a reputation." (A. O. J. Cockshut, The Unbelievers, Collins, London, 1964. P. 73)

"... much later in the nineteenth century, by which time Spencer was coming to seem an anachronism." (J. D. Y. Peel, Herbert Spencer on Social Evolution, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1972. P. xvi)

"Spencer's name is referred to less and less in books on philosophy." (Emanuel Radl, The History of Biological Theories, translated from the German by E. J. Hatfield, Oxford University Press, London, 1930. P. 372)


"To-day his volumes stand on the shelf beneath the dust of decades signifying oblivion. Of all the eminent Victorians he is the least read, for who would trouble even to confute him?" (Raymond Mortimer, "Books in General," The New Statesman and Nation, Vol. 24, pp. 411-412, 1942. P. 411)

"This curious and in many ways absurd philosopher [Herbert Spencer], whose theories of political society are now little more than academic dodos preserved in American university courses ....." (Margaret Cole, Beatrice Webb, Longmans, Green and Co., London, 1945. P. 16)

"The reputation of Herbert Spencer, once regarded as Britain's most penetrating and significant social philosopher follows an easily chartable graph—straight up and then straight down." (Terry M. Perlin, Review of Herbert Spencer: The Evolution of a Sociologist by J. D. Y. Peel, Society [formerly Transaction], Vol. 10, No. 1, pp. 119-122, Nov.-Dec., 1972. P. 119)
"... from the depths of his own mind, he has formulated the laws of the universe, not merely in the simpler and better known departments of astronomy and physics, but throughout the new and unexplored realms of life, mind, and action." /Remarks prepared by Lester F. Ward for the Spencer Farewell Dinner, but left unspoken because of lack of time--the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher, who preceded Ward on the program, spoke longer than expected./ Quoted in /Edward L. Youmans, editor/ Herbert Spencer on The Americans and the Americans on Herbert Spencer, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1883. P. 77)
"Everywhere the wars between societies originate governmental structures, and are causes of all such improvements in those structures as increase the efficiency of corporate action against envirorning societies." (Herbert Spencer, The Principles of Sociology, Vol. 1, 1st ed., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1878. P. 540)

"Such advantages, bodily and mental, as the race derives from the discipline of war, are exceeded by the disadvantages, bodily and mental, but especially mental, which result after a certain stage of progress is reached." (Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1891. P. 199)

"From war has been gained all that it had to give." (p. 664)
"Thus, that social evolution which had to be achieved through the conflicts of societies with one another, has already been achieved; and no further benefits are to be looked for." (p. 665) (Herbert Spencer, The Principles of Sociology, Vol. 2, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1899)

"... the occupation of all that portion of mankind who are not under external restraint is at first chiefly military, but society becomes progressively more engrossed with productive pursuits, and the military spirit gradually gives way to the industrial ...." (John Stuart Mill, A System of Logic, Harper & Brothers, Publishers, New York, 1846. P. 584)

"Warfare among men, like warfare among animals, has had a large share in raising their organization to a higher stage.... The killing-off of relatively-feeble tribes, or tribes relatively wanting in endurance, or courage, or sagacity, or power of co-operation, must have tended ever to maintain, and occasionally to increase, the amounts of life-preserving powers possessed by men." (Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1891. P. 193)

"Knowledge of the miseries which have for countless ages been everywhere caused by the antagonisms of societies, must not prevent us from recognizing the all-important part these antagonisms have played in civilization. Shudder as we must at the cannibalism which all over the world in early days was a sequence of war--shrink as we may from the thought of those immolations of prisoners which have, tens of thousands of times, followed battles between wild tribes--read as we do with horror of the pyramids of heads and the whitening of bones of slain peoples left by barbarian invaders--hate, as we ought, the militant spirit which is even now among ourselves prompting base treacheries and brutal aggressions; we must not let our feelings blind us to the proofs that inter-social conflicts have furthered the development of social structures." (Principles, Vol. II, p. 231. N.Y., 1899)
"For we here see that in the struggle for existence among societies, the survival of the fittest is the survival of those in which the power of military cooperation is the greatest; and military cooperation is that primary kind of cooperation which prepares the way for other kinds. So that this formation of larger societies by the union of smaller ones in war, and this destruction or absorption of the smaller un-united societies by the united larger ones, is an inevitable process through which the varieties of men most adapted for social life, supplant the less adapted varieties." (Principles, Vol. II, p. 280. N.Y., 1899)

"... when he [Spencer] visited Philadelphia in 1882, [he] expressed his entire sympathy with the peace movement, and, during the Anglo-Saxon controversy over Venezuela some years later, declared that henceforth social progress was to be achieved only by cessation of / the antagonisms that kept alive brutal elements in human nature." (Merle Curti, Peace or War; The American Struggle, 1636-1936, W. W. Norton & Company, New York, 1936. Pp. 119-120)

"... kingship and slavery are institutions naturally arising in the course of social evolution, and necessary to be passed through on the way to higher social forms. So, too, it had to be reluctantly admitted that war, everywhere and always hateful, has nevertheless been a factor in civilization, by bringing about the consolidation of groups--simple into compound, doubly-compound, and trebly-compound--until great nations are formed. As, throughout the organic world, evolution has been achieved by the merciless discipline of Nature, 'red in tooth and claw'; so, in the social world, a discipline scarcely less bloody has been the agency by which societies have been massed together and social structures developed: an admission which may go along with the belief that there is coming a stage in which survival of the fittest among societies, hitherto effected by sanguinary conflicts, will be effected by peaceful conflicts." ("The Filiation of Ideas," in Duncan, p. 569)

"Subject races or subject societies, do not voluntarily submit themselves to a ruling race or a ruling society: their subjection is nearly always the effect of coercion." (Herbert Spencer, Facts and Comments, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1902. P. 159)

Although he personally abhored autocracy and despotism, Spencer concluded that: "The evidence obliges us to admit that subjection to despotism has been largely instrumental in advancing civilization." (Vol. II, p. 361).
"By force alone were small nomadic hordes welded into large tribes; by force alone were large tribes welded into small nations; by force alone have small nations been welded into large nations." (Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1891. P. 194)


"Evidently, therefore, from the very beginning, the conquest of one people over another has been, in the main, the conquest of the social man over the anti-social man; or, strictly speaking, of the more adapted over the less adapted." (Herbert Spencer, Social Statics, John Chapman, London, 1851. Pp. 416-417)

"Herbert Spencer was, perhaps, the first to make the discovery that the state arose through the forceful subjugation of one tribe by another." (Newell LeRoy Sims, Society and Its Surplus; A Study in Social Evolution. D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1924. P. 226n.)

Much as Spencer disliked war and militant societies, he nevertheless attributed to the effects of warfare many momentous developments in human society--e.g., the origin of class differences, of strong political leadership, the origin of private property in land, etc. Also, while decrying the coming of government control of many aspects of individual life, he nevertheless saw it as a more or less inevitable (check this). Thus we have in Spencer that exceedingly rare phenomenon: a theorist who does not permit his predilections to interfere with his conclusions.

"The struggle for existence between human individuals is murder, and the best are not selected thereby. The struggle for existence between bodies of men is warfare, and the best are not selected thereby. The law of natural selection, which Darwin and a host of others have so clearly pointed out as the means by which the progress of animals and plants has been secured, cannot be relied upon to secure the progress of mankind. Whenever mankind falls under the domination of the laws of animal evolution he himself becomes beastly and loses those attributes which make the human race immeasurably superior to the brute." (J. W. Powell, "Competition as a Factor in Human Evolution," The American Anthropologist, Vol. 1, pp. 297-323, 1888. P. 303)
The central point of much of Principles of Sociology—and certainly the central point of that part of it included here—is the enormous importance of warfare in the origin and evolution of the state. Yet almost no one observed or commented on this fact. How come? (Sorokin is an exception.)

It is interesting that Spencer saw clearly the importance of warfare and conquest in the evolution from tribe to state. Yet he was very much against the militant state, and favored the industrial state, in which individual liberties were held higher.

The struggle among the creatures of nature and the survival of the fittest, which Spencer alluded to as early as 1850 in his Social Statics, formed the core of his theory that much of the social structure arose as a response to competition between societies. E.g., "Habitual war, requiring prompt combination in the actions of parts, necessitates subordination. Societies in which there is little subordination disappear, and leave outstanding those in which subordination is great...." (Vol. I, p. 595)

"We must recognize the truth that the struggles for existence between societies have been instrumental to their evolution. Neither the consolidation and re-consolidation of small groups into large ones; nor the organization of such compound and doubly-compound groups; nor the concomitant developments of those aids to a higher life which civilization has brought; would have been possible without inter-tribal and inter-national conflicts." (Principles, Vol. II, p. 241. N.Y., 1899)

"It has always been true, just as Spencer contended, that societies given to conflict have undergone rapid and extensive structural development." (Newell LeRoy Sims, Society and Its Surplus, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1924. P. 158)

"Grasping the thought that habitual activity determines human character, just as habitual functioning reacts upon the bodily organ, Mr. Spencer perceived, what all interpreters of society before him had overlooked, the real significance of the great historical fact that, at the beginning of human progress, small groups were so situated in relation to one another and to a common food supply that they were almost continually engaged in relentless warfare, but that when, through successive conquests, small groups had been united in great states and national federations, it became possible for a majority of men to give up military pursuits and devote themselves to arts of peace." (Franklin H. Giddings, "Modern Sociology," The International Monthly, Vol. 2, pp. 536-554, 1900. P. 539)
"... the struggle for existence which has been going on between societies, and which, though in early times a cause of progress, is now becoming a cause of retrogression." (Herbert Spencer, "Evolutionary Ethics," The Athenaeum, No. 3432, pp. 193-194, August 5, 1893. P. 193)

After quoting a passage from Spencer indicating the positive influence of warfare in building up societies in the past, Greene asks: "But if progress had occurred in this way in the past, why should it not be generated in the same way in the future? And if the militant, highly-centralized form of society was better adapted to survival in the competition of races, what reason was there to regard the peaceable, industrial type as somehow higher or more evolved? Was not survival in the competitive conflict the test of superiority?" (John C. Greene, "Biology and Social Theory in the Nineteenth Century: August Comte and Herbert Spencer," in Critical Problems in the History of Science, ed. by Marshall Clagett, pp. 419-446, The University of Wisconsin Press, Madison, 1962. P. 439)

"Why do such writers as Spencer and Bagehot, though fully recognizing the salutary part played by war in the making of civilized man, go on to assume that henceforth the struggle for existence will be radically transformed; since "industrialism," or "the age of discussion," or what not, will somehow persuade the lion and the lamb to sit down together to a peaceful if ruinous game of beggar-my-neighbour? The error—for it is an error of a fundamental kind in the eyes of the modern Darwinian—consists in thinking that, if one generation can gain a respite from war and develop peaceful habits, the next generation must tend to inherit by sheer force of biological descent a positive distaste for warlike avocations. As if the whelps of the tamed fox would not run after chickens." (R. R. Marett, Psychology and Folk-Lore, Methuen & Co. Ltd., London, 1920. Pp. 44-45)
"The last three weeks I have been trying to describe Herbert Spencer as an influence in my life. It is difficult to sum up in one short paragraph the greatness of his purpose and the nobility of his self-sacrifice and the pettiness of some of his little ways and the mean misery of those last years of declining strength. How much of this misery was due to a poisoned body, to unhealthy living: how much to loss of faith in the beneficent course of evolution and to the adoption of an impossible rule of conduct, it is difficult to say. Alike in physical and mental behavior he went down the wrong turning and ended in long-drawn-out disaster. He began life as a mystical optimist; he ended it as a pessimistic materialist; the cause of this transformation being that he allowed his creed to be determined by the findings of his reason working on fanciful data—he practiced neither the scientific method in the ascertainment of fact nor the will to believe in what is essential to the salvation of man. Human life is intolerable without Faith. Alas! these words mean something to me, but little or nothing to other people." (Beatrice Webb, entry for June 28, 1923, in Beatrice Webb's Diaries, 1912-1924, edited by Margaret I. Cole, Longmans, Green and Co, London, 1952. P. 245)

"Lester Ward and his wife at dinner [in Washington, D.C.]; the first a somewhat noted sociologist, former disciple of Herbert Spencer, now a collectivist. Should have thought him a dreadful bore if he had not been collectivist in thought!" (Beatrice Webb, entry for April 6, 1898, in Beatrice Webb's American Diary, 1898, edited by David A. Shannon, The University of Wisconsin Press, Madison, 1963. P. 17)


Beatrice Webb, who knew Spencer personally, wrote: "He taught me to look on all social institutions exactly as if they were plants or animals—things that could be observed, classified and explained, and the action of which could to some extent be foretold if one knew enough about them." (Beatrice Webb, My Apprenticeship. Longmans, Green and Co. London, 1926. P. 37.)
"The better known works of Herbert Spencer also stirred me up. When Herbert Spencer died I wrote for the Saturday Evening Post an account for of his life and works, one of the few things I ever asked George Lorimer, the magazine's editor, to print. Herbert Spencer, along with Whitman, Emerson and Dickens, became at the turn of the century one of my spiritual inspirations."

"But this new religion of the mystical Whitman, in harmony with post-transcendental thought, was deeply impregnated with the spirit of science. He was in the very fullness of his powers when the conception of evolution came to him and he greeted it gladly, weaving it into all his thinking and discovering in it a confirmation of his idealistic philosophy. It was the evolution of Herbert Spencer, it must be remembered, that Whitman accepted—teleological, buoyantly optimistic, dominated by the conception of progress, shot through with the spirit of the Enlightenment; and such an evolution was a confirmation and not a denial of his transcendental premises." (Vernon L. Parrington, Main Currents in American Thought, Vol. 3: The Beginnings of Critical Realism in America: 1860-1920, Harcourt, Brace & Co., Inc., New York, 1930. P. 80)
H. G. Wells' mother wanted him to become a draper, and at the age of 15 she apprenticed him to a draper and he went to work in a drapery store in Southsea. "One day an agry shop-walker [in the drapery store] found him hidden away in a corner of the cellar, reading Herbert Spencer." (p. 40) Wells had never received much religious instruction at home. Combined with this: "... there had been the influence of Hume and Humboldt, the books found at Uppark, the speculation in the drapery: no boy of sixteen can read Spencer's First Principles and remain orthodox!" (p. 44) (Geoffrey West, H.G. Wells, A Sketch for a Portrait, Gerald Howe Ltd, London, 1930)

"In close connection with his philosophical studies Westermarck was deeply interested in religious questions, and here he was greatly influenced by Spencer's First Principles and Mill's essays on religion which he read in a Swedish translation." (Morris Ginsberg, Essays in Sociology and Social Philosophy, Penguin Books, Baltimore, 1968. P. 209)
"The signatures to the appeal made to Dean Armitage Robinson, to admit a Spencer monument in Westminster Abbey, included those of ten Doctors of Divinity, heads of colleges." (p. 138) In refusing to allow a monument to Spencer to be erected in the Abbey, Dean Robinson "... held it "unnecessary to enter into the question whether Westminster Abbey as a place of Christian worship could appropriately receive the monument of a thinker who expressly excluded Christianity from his scheme of thought," "..." (p. 138) (J. M. Robertson, Explorations, Watts & Co., London, n.d. (ca. 1923).)

"He Dr. Armitage Robinson, then Dean of Westminster had also had to settle the question of commemorating Herbert Spencer. A group of admirers asked the Dean to allow a bust of Herbert Spencer to be erected in the Abbey. Dean Robinson took counsel; but of those whom he consulted, the philosophers said that Spencer was no philosopher though he might be a scientist, while the scientists said he was no scientist though he might be a philosopher. The Dean accordingly refused; and was glad to receive a word of commendation for his refusal from Lord Kelvin, who said to him one day at a party at Buckingham Palace, 'I am glad you did not put that fellow Spencer in the Abbey!'" (G. K. A. Bell, Randall Davidson; Archbishop of Canterbury, 2 Vols., Oxford University Press, New York, 1935, Vol. 2, pp. 1177-1178)

"With tremendous ideas and equal doubts in his mind he was a ravenous reader. During the next four years at Princeton, ca. 1874-1878 he revelled in Darwin, Spencer, Huxley, Bagehot, and Lecky, the most talked of English writers of the time." (Jennings C. Wise, Woodrow Wilson, The Paisley Press, New York, 1938, P. 14)
Smith said that The Data of Ethics was "... written in a most lucid and attractive style." (Goldwin Smith, "Has Science Yet Found a New Basis for Morality?", The Contemporary Review, Vol. 41, pp. 335-358, 1882. P. 340)


"He [Spencer] learnt to handle a good plain English of the frigid sort." (Jehu Junior, "Men of the Day.—No. CXCVIII., Mr. Herbert Spencer," Vanity Fair, April 26, 1879, p. 241. P. 241)

"There are parts of Mr. Spencer's writings, occupied with such exposition of the effect of scientific findings on metaphysical problems, which, for sheer scientific clearness, and adequacy of language to the matter, have all the effect of a poem." (David Masson, Recent British Philosophy, Macmillan & and Co., London, 1877. P. 166)

"That chastened intellectual emotion to which I have referred in connection with Mr. Darwin, is not absent in Mr. Spencer. His illustrations possess at times exceeding vividness and / force; and from his style on such occasions it is to be inferred that the ganglia of this Apostle of the Understanding are sometimes the seat of a nascent poetic thrill." (John Tyndall, Address delivered before the British Association for the Advancement of Science meeting in Belfast, August 19, 1874, in Fragments of Science, 6th edition, pp. 443-494, A. L. Burt Company, New York, n.d. Pp. 481-482)

"I have heard fools laugh at Spencer's style. That was because they did not understand that there are styles and styles, beyond their comprehension. A style is an instrument, an organon; and that is a good style which is best adapted to the object its author proposes to himself. Now, Spencer's style, both in speech and writing, was one of the most highly elaborated and perfectly adapted instruments ever invented by a human brain for a particular purpose. It did all that was wanted of it with admirable force, precision, and economy. To complain that it lacked picturesqueness or ornamental relief is to complain that a geometrical diagram is not a fresco by Fra Angelico, or that a treatise on algebra does not recall the imaginative wealth of a Shelley or a Victor Hugo." (Grant Allen, "Personal Reminiscences of Herbert Spencer," The Forum, Vol. 35, pp. 610-628, 1904. Pp. 616-617)
"Spencer has great clearness and compass, but there is nothing resonant in his style,—nothing that stimulates the imagination. He is a great workman, but the metal he works in is not of the kind called precious." (John Burroughs, The Writings of John Burroughs, Vol. 10, Literary Values and Other Papers, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1904. P. 230)

"George W. Cable has been here, creating worshipers on all hands. He is a marvelous talker on a deep subject. I do not see how even Spencer, could unwind a thought more smoothly or orderly, and do it in cleaner, crisper English." (Letter from Mark Twain to William Dean Howells dated November 4, 1882. Quoted in Mark Twain-Howells Letters; The Correspondence of Samuel L. Clemens and William D. Howells, 1872-1910, 2 Vols., edited by Henry Nash Smith and William M. Gibson, The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1960. Vol. 1, p. 419)

Of Spencer writing style: "... a corresponding richness of diction, his style being clear and forcible, abounding in picturesque illustrations, aptly chosen for the purpose they are intended to subserv, and often possessing even a poetical beauty." (Anonymous, ["clearly by Mivart"—Herbert Spencer], Review article of Principles of Psychology, First Principles, and Essays, by Herbert Spencer, The Quarterly Review, Vol. 135, pp. 509-539, 1873. P. 509)


"I have just been reading two essays of Herbert Spencer's, one on the Nebular Hypothesis, the other on 'Illogical Geology,' which are masterly; subtle; convincing beyond anything of the kind I have ever read." (Letter from Anne Gilchrist to William Haines dated March 18, 1867. Quoted in Herbert Harlakenden Gilchrist, editor, Anne Gilchrist, Her Life and Writings. T. Fisher Unwin, London, 1887. P. 166)

"There is hardly a writer of English who makes himself more intelligible [than Herbert Spencer] .... Both these gentlemen [Spencer and Bagehot] write as the best talkers talk, without inversions or pomposity, and with abundant illustrations to make obscure points clear." ( Unsigned review of The Study of Sociology by Herbert Spencer, The Atlantic Monthly, Vol. 33, p. 238, 1874. P. 238)
"... Mr. Spencer, the most concise and succinct of writers, ..." (Grant Allen, "The Gospel According to Herbert Spencer," Part II, The Pall Mall Gazette, April 28, 1890, p. 3. P. 3)


Spencer's words "always expressed the actual state of his mind with perfect transparency and accuracy, because he had nothing to conceal." (C. R. Henderson, "Mr. Herbert Spencer's Final Volume," The Dial, Vol. 22, pp. 45-47, Jan. 16, 1897. P. 47)

"Resources of advanced physical science, such as Locke and Hume never knew, are marshaled in its defense. And to these Mr. Spencer adds a faculty of popular exposition such as no preceding thinker of his ability has possessed." (Augustus Hopkins Strong, D.D., Philosophy and Religion, A. C. Armstrong and Spn, New York, 1888. P. 40)


"I have always felt a wish to make both the greater arguments, and the smaller arguments composing them, finished and symmetrical. In so far as giving coherence and completeness is concerned, I have generally satisfied my ambition; but I have fallen short of it in respect of literary form. The aesthetic sense has in this always kept before me an ideal which I could never reach. Though my style is lucid, it has, as compared with some styles, a monotony that displeases me. There is a lack of variety in its verbal forms and in its larger components, and there is a lack of vigour in its phrases."
"For he [Spencer] is as brilliant in composition as Comte is dull and prosy. While Comte discourses on the vast theme of universal science with the dullness and tedium of a professor of mathematics, Spencer makes the august theme almost as interesting as a romance. This is one of the chief merits of Spencer—his brilliancy of thought and illustration in regard to obscure and abstruse themes. But we must not be blinded or dazzled by his brilliancy...." (Robert S. Hamilton, Present Status of Social Science, Henry L. Hinton & Co., New York, 1874. P. 246)

"You must allow me to thank you for the very great interest with which I have at last slowly read the whole of your work "Outlines of Cosmic Philosophy." I have long wished to know something about the views of the many great men whose doctrines you give. With the exception of special points, I did not even understand H. Spencer's general doctrine, for his style is too hard work for me." (Letter from Charles Darwin to John Fiske, December 8, 1874. Quoted in Ethel F. Fiske [sic], The Letters of John Fiske, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1940. P. 336)

"The style of Principles of Psychology, 1855, is clear, somewhat monotonous, but never equivocal or misty—the illustrations are numerous, and often felicitous.... For vigour of mind and logical consistency, there are few works which we could place above it...." (Anonymous (George H. Lewes), "Herbert Spencer's Principles of Psychology," The Saturday Review of Politics, Literature, Science, and Art, Vol. 1, pp. 352-353, 1856. P. 352)

"The love of completeness has been curiously shown from the beginning by the habit of summarizing every chapter. I could not leave a thing with loose ends: the ends must be gathered together and tied up. This trait has been further manifested in the tendency not to rest content with induction, but to continue an inquiry until the generalization reached was reduced to a deduction. Leaving a truth in an inductive form is, in a sense, leaving its parts with loose ends; and the bringing it to a deductive form is, in a sense, uniting its facts as all parts of one fact." ("The Filiation of Ideas," in Duncan, p. 535)
"And what he saw so clearly himself he had the faculty of explaining in language so simple, so lucid and elegant, that to read his writings is a positive pleasure." (C. B. Waite, "Herbert Spencer," The Liberal Review, Vol. 1, pp. 16-17, 1904. P. 16)

"Our Grant Duff, Trevelyan, Acton, etc., talk wandered to Herbert Spencer, and the evidence which he had given many years ago to the Copyright Commission. The view of some of the Commissioners was that, if there were no copyright, books would be cheap, and sold in much greater quantities. "No doubt," said the philosopher, "that might be the case with some books, as with a great many other articles; but however much you lowered the price of cod-liver oil, you would not largely increase the number of purchasers, and most people would much rather take a spoonful of cod-liver oil every day, than read one of my books." (Sir Mount-stuart E. Grant Duff, Notes from a Diary, 2 Vols., John Murray, London, 1905. Vol. 1, pp. 186-187)

"... Spencer's conversational style... was almost as concise and clear-cut as his writing. Every word told, and every clause was balanced. It was the speech of a man accustomed to think and write with the rigorous logicality of a proposition in Euclid." (Grant Allen, "Personal Reminiscences of Herbert Spencer," The Forum, Vol. 35, pp. 610-628, 1904. P. 616)

"When it comes to Spencer's style, I am afraid I cannot be quite so vehement in his defense. Still it is sincere (you will not admit this) and it intends to be dignified, while James's is forever prostituting itself to contemporary slang and slipshod affectations, by which he hopes, I suppose, to strike the popular chord and conceal its arrogance. This is pretty ungenerous criticism, but I cannot think for a minute that the man is unconscious of what he is doing. If he is not, there is certainly a smallness in him that I would not suspect, and a spiritual vulgarity not wholly unrelated to that of the Reverend Talmage." (Edwin Arlington Robinson, Selected Letters of Edwin Arlington Robinson, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1940. Letter from E. A. Robinson to John Hays Gardiner dated November 8, 1898. Pp. 16-17.

"... a great deal of Spencer's writing, is prolix and wearisome, ..."). (Arthur M. Lewis, Evolution, Social and Organic, Charles H. Kerr & Company, Chicago, 1908. P. 137)

"There is a record of a conversation between W. E. H. Lecky and Herbert Spencer: "We talked much about style in writing ... about the bad writing of Addison, about the especial atrocity of Macaulay, whose style 'resembles low organisations, being a perpetual repetition of similar parts'"." No reference is given. This passage must come from something written by Lecky, with the part in single quotes undoubtedly having been said by Spencer. (/L. M. Angus-Butterworth, Ten Master Historians, The University Press, Aberdeen, 1961. P. 110)

"The psychologist's debt to Spencer has been grudgingly paid. The reason is, perhaps, this, that with an / unexampled programme for the science, and an equally unexampled wealth of plausible and research-exciting hypotheses, in this as in other sciences, Spencer combined a semi-deductive method, a speculative and ultra-logical manner, and a dry unattractive style." (James Mark Baldwin, History of Psychology, 2 Vols., G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1913. Vol. 2, pp. 98-99)

"Herbert Spencer is difficult reading himself, and less for content than manner ...." (Gertrude Atherton, Adventures of a Novelist, Blue Ribbon Books, Inc., New York, 1932. P. 314)


Of Spencer: " ... his prose style, now very old-fashioned, heavy, unsalted with humor ...." (Crane Brinton, "Spencer's Horrid Vision," Foreign Affairs, Vol. 15, pp. 695-706, 1937. P. 702)

"Like Thomas Henry Huxley, he [Herbert Spencer] was a popularizer of science, particularly of evolution. But since he could not write like Huxley, he has not earned a similar place in the domain of literature." (Homer A. Watt and William W. Watt, A Dictionary of English Literature, Barnes & Noble, Inc., New York, 1945. P. 263)

"Spencer, it is true, dictated all his books after the first, but it has seemed to many of us that he would have done better if he had not been obliged to dictate, for, despite his clarity, there is an irritating monotony about his style, akin, remotely perhaps, to the over-regular meter of Pope. And Spencer is, at least occasionally and despite his fecundity of thought, expansive and even wordy." (Albert G. Keller, Reminiscences (Mainly Personal) of William Graham Sumner, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1933. P. 36)
"The style of his writing shows the public orator turned heavy thinker. That Spencer was sensitive to matters of style we know from his essay on that subject. His great popular following and the immense influence he wielded show that he knew how to write attractively as well as clearly. One has only to read certain of his essays, such as the early Haythorne paper on "The Development Hypothesis," to feel his power and to see how his effects are attained. Some of this skill is present in "First Principles," but much is sacrificed to the need of discussing "realities that cannot be comprehended." (Julian M. Drachman, Studies in the Literature of Natural Science, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1930. P. 246)

"He knew how to write with verve and vividness. When aiming to reach the public, or when treating of subjects with much of the pictorial in them, Spencer could and did make his work replete with specific, vital illustration and visualizable reality as anyone could wish, but when he wanted to dumbfound the world with the profundity of his system, he swung to the opposite extreme, wallowing in abstract thought and in elaborately technical language." (Julian M. Drachman, Studies in the Literature of Natural Science, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1930. P. 360)


"... he wrote some of the clearest and best balanced prose in the English language, which may read for sheer pleasure, regardless of the thought ...." (p. 243) "... his exposition is extremely logical and clear." (p. 246) (L. L. Bernard, Herbert Spencer: The Man and His Age, The South Atlantic Quarterly, Vol. 21, pp. 241-251, 1922)

"... Spencer, in his own way, and on his less savourful topics, took as much trouble as Macaulay to be crisp, concrete, and comprehensible by all who cared to do any thinking at all. Metaphors he never much affected; but many times he catches his reader with some pithy opening apologue or illustrative vignette. Whatever he may have thought of average judgment, he took no little pains to be as interesting as his subject admitted of." (J. M. Robertson, Modern Humanists Reconsidered, Watts & Co., London, 1927. P. 174)
"... his books being most carefully thought out and organized with a thoroughness and precision which have characterized the works of but few authors. He brought to each period of composition well digested material which expressed itself with an admirable lucidity, rendering his books the most fascinating reading of modern philosophers." (L. L. Bernard, "Herbert Spencer's Work in the Light of His Life," The Monist, Vol. 31, pp. 1-35, 1921. P. 20)

"Let the careful reader of the "Principles of Psychology" ask himself whether that could have been on the whole better written, in point at once of clearness and conciseness. I doubt whether he will say it could, even if he demurs to any of the reasoning. Certainly no one else in Spencer's day could have written it so well. In the next generation William James certainly writes far more brilliantly, but he stands on Spencer's shoulders, and in his case the thinking is assuredly not impeccable. Good writing, on scientific themes, is not a matter of epigram, or titillation of the literary sense." (J. M. Robertson, Modern Humanists Reconsidered, Watts & Co., London, 1927. P. 174)

"... his [Herbert Spencer's] writing is at once polemical and as dry as biscuit." (Amabel Williams-Ellis, Darwin's Moon, Blackie, London, 1966. P. 176)

"... where he [Spencer] does not become too recondite and too prolix, his charming eloquence of diction ..." (Van Buren Denslow, Modern Thinkers Principally upon Social Science, Belford, Clarke, & Co., Chicago, 1880. P. 214)

The "ponderous volumes" of Spencer were "... couched in a singularly condensed and not very attractive style ..." (William Henry Hudson, An Introduction to the Philosophy of Herbert Spencer, Chapman and Hall, London, 1897. P. vi)

"... Spencer's splendid occasional articles on social and political topics--cantankerous to the point of obsession, indignant and testy, well written (quite different from the leaden measures of the Principles) in a vigorous sardonic prose, full of odd testimonies and snippets of curious fact." (J. D. Y. Peel, Herbert Spencer on Social Evolution, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1972. P. 11)

"Mr. Spencer is one of the fortunate writers who, after spending years with the patience of a Benedictine friar in preparing enormous learned compendiums, can yet wield, as if for sport, a facile pen in the composition of sparkling articles for reviews." (Gabriel Compayré, Herbert Spencer and Scientific Education, translated from the French by Maria E. Findalyson, Thomas Y. Crowell & Co., New York, 1907. P. 18)
"... his powerful, hideous prose—the writing of a man who, lacking and perhaps contemptuous of the stylistic graces, is absolutely determined to be understood." (Peter B. Medawar, *The Art of the Soluble*, Methuen & Co Ltd, London, 1967. P. 43)


"His style, as may be supposed, is singularly easy and fluent. In his earlier essays it was also vigorous and redeemed by flashes of humour. But later on it became less fluid: it hardened into an almost deadly monotony, and an outward symbol of the wooden dogmatism into which he gradually sank. But it always remained exceedingly lucid. As William James truly remarked of his mind, it had not the lights and shades of an ordinary style, it was a remorseless glare throughout. The oratorical passages which occur from time to time are often powerful, and arose from profound conviction and intense feeling of the truth of what he wrote." (Hugh Elliot, *Herbert Spencer*, Constable & Company, Ltd, London, 1916. P. 64)

It perhaps would not be out of place here to comment on the style in which *Principles of Sociology*, as well as Spencer's other works, are written. By modern standards Spencer's syntax seems intricate and sometimes even tortuous, but his mode of expression is always precise, and his meaning is always clear. There is never any vagueness or ambiguity. His style, moreover, is compact; not one superfluous word is to be found. To condense his writing without losing any of its meaning would be almost impossible. Indeed, were Spencer's works to be rewritten in modern idiom, they would surely be made substantially longer.

"There is not a line of Mr. Spencer's which is not worth reading. Alike clear and comprehensive, there is in his system a degree of completeness, an all-embracing perception of the facts to be considered, which confers upon his writings a peculiar fascination not to be found in those of any other thinkers with whom we are acquainted. This charm is not wanting to the volume before us ...." (Viscount Amberley, Review of Spencer's "Study of Sociology," The Examiner, January 10, 1874, pp. 37-38. P. 37)

"His [Spencer's] fame was certainly not due to any command of style. For all his range and force, he expressed himself with banal repetition." (John Bowle, Politics and Opinion in the Nineteenth Century, Jonathan Cape, London, 1954. Pp. 224-225)

"It was largely through Spencer's influence that literary language itself developed scientific metaphor, and his influence on the naturalistic writers in the United States during the latter half of the 19th century was direct." (Robert E. Spiller, Willard Thorp, Thomas H. Johnson, and Henry Seidel Canby, Literary History of the United States, Vol. 3: Bibliography, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1948. P. 326)

"... to all his other gifts the author of Education, Herbert Spencer, adds an excellent style, a feature which has certainly contributed to the success of this book. If the course of studies proposed by him in a spirit of scientific exclusiveness is such as would hinder the acquisition of literary power amongst students adopting it, Mr. Spencer is far from despising literary qualities himself. The art of exposition and of setting forth abstract ideas in order, clearly, fully, and easily, has never been carried to a higher point by any philosopher. Ingenious comparisons, brilliant similes and figures of speech brighten the heavy mass of solid thought." (Gabriel Compayre, Herbert Spencer and Scientific Education, translated from the French by Maria E. Findlayson, Thomas Y. Crowell & Co., New York, 1907. P. 17)

"Let me add that some difference has been made by the practice of dictation. Up to 1860 my books and review-articles were written. Since then they have all been dictated. There is a prevailing belief that dictation is apt to cause diffuseness, and I think the belief is well founded. It was once remarked to me by two good judges—the Leweses—that the style of Social Statics is better than the style of my later works, and, assuming this opinion to be true, the contrast may I think be ascribed to the deteriorating effect of dictation." (Herbert Spencer, Facts and Comments, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1902. P. 110)
Spencer "... contributed nothing to Victorian literature, and his want of literary faculty made his work anything but agreeable to some of the men like Jowett who were foremost in their appreciation of Mill." (A. M. Fairbairn, "Herbert Spencer," The Contemporary Review, Vol. 85, pp. 1-11, 1904. P. 7)

"Here, perhaps, I may fitly say of my own style that from the beginning it has been unpremeditated. The thought of style considered as an end in itself, has rarely if ever been present: the sole purpose being to express ideas as clearly as possible and, when the occasion called for it, with as much force as might be." (Herbert Spencer, Facts and Comments, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1902. P. 110)

"The fascination of Mr. Spencer's pages to the pulpit-wearied inquirer was, that they took him straight to Nature. Mr. Spencer seemed to write with a magnifying pen which revealed objects unnoticed by other observers. His vision, like a telescope, descried sails at sea invisible to those on shore. His pages, if not poems, gleamed with the poetry of facts. His facts were the handmades always at hand which explained his principle. His repetitions do not tire, but are fresh assurances to the reader that he is following a continous argument. A pedestrian passing down a long street is glad to meet the recurrence of its name, that he may know he is still upon the same road. In Spencer's reasonings there are no byways left open, down which the stjourner may wander and lose himself. When cross-roads come in sight, fingerposts are set up telling him where they lead to, and directing him which to take. Mr. Spencer pursues a new thought, never loses sight of it, and takes care the reader does not. No statement goes before without the proof following closely after." (George Jacob Holyoake, Bygones Worth Remembering, 2 Vols., T. Fisher Unwin, London, 1905. Vol. 2, pp. 35-36)

Goldwin Smith found Spencer's The Data of Ethics to be written "... in a most lucid and attractive style." (Goldwin Smith, "Has Science Yet Found a New Basis for Morality?", The Contemporary Review, Vol. 41, pp. 335-358, 1882. P. 340)
"I return your proofs by this post. To my mind nothing can be better than their contents, whether in matter or in manner, and as my wife arrived, independently, at the same opinion, I think my judgment is not one-sided. There is something calm and dignified about the tone of the whole—which eminently befits a philosophi- cal work which means / to live—and nothing can be more clear and forcible than the argument. (The work in question is First Princi- ples) I rejoice that you have made a beginning, and such a begin- ning—for the more I think about it the more important it seems to me that somebody should think out into a connected system the loose notions that are floating about more or less distinctly in all the best minds." (Letter from Thomas Henry Huxley to Herbert Spencer dated September 3, 1860. Quoted in Leonard Huxley, Life and Letters of Thomas Henry Huxley, 2 Vols., Macmillan and Co., Limited, London, 1900. Vol. 1, pp. 212-213)

"... to all his other gifts the author Of Education, Her- bert Spencer/ adds an excellent style, a feature which has cer- tainly contributed to the success of this book. If the course of studies proposed to him in a spirit of scientific exclusive- ness is such as would hinder the acquisition of literary power amongst students adopting it, Mr. Spencer is far from despising literary qualities himself. The art of exposition and of setting forth abstract ideas in order, clearly, fully, and easily, has never been carried to a higher point by any philosopher. Ingen- ious comparisons, brilliant similes and figures of speech bright- en the heavy mass of solid thought." (Gabriel Compayre, Herbert Spencer and Scientific Education, translated from the French by Maria E. Findlayson, Thomas Y. Crowell & Co., New York, 1907. P. 17)

"In connection with the further development of Spencer's think- ing some notice should also be given of the apparent softening of statement [in the 6th edition of First Principles] which at times accompanies the improvement in diction. References to 'inexorable logic' almost disappear, as do many strong adjectives and adverbs, such as 'absolutely,' 'positively,' 'rigorously,' 'inevitably' and the like, of which he formerly made abundant use. 'And this assump- tion is made by the immense majority of philosophers, past and pre- sent,' becomes more simply--'most philosophers' [4th ed., p. 33; 6th ed., p. 27]." (Frank C. Becker, "The Final Edition of Spencer's 'First Principles: Part I'," The Journal of Philosophy, Vol. 3, pp. 287-291, 1906. P. 289)

"... limited truths discernable in the various phases of lit- erature may, nay, in order to be understood even as limited truths, must be grouped round certain central facts of comparative perma- nent influence. Such facts are climate, soil, animal and plant life of different countries; such also is the principle of evolution from communal to individual life which we shall hereafter explain at length. The former may be called the statical influences to which literature has been everywhere exposed; the latter may be called the dynamical principle of literature's progress and decay." [Spencer not mentioned specifically, but this formulation seems to reflect him.] (Hutcheson Macaulay Posnett, Comparative Literature, Kegan Paul, Trench & Co., London, 1886. P. 20)
"Nevertheless, style is one thing and diction is another. If some one should compel me by force to explain the difference between the two, my answer would be something like this: Diction is the body—the flesh and bone—and style is the spirit. But some years ago, that able Heathen, Mr. Herbert Spencer, had something he wanted to say about diction, and so he wrote it out and called it An Essay on Style, and ever since then the Heathens, the Pagans, and not a few who still call themselves Christians, have persisted in referring to diction as style ...." (Letter from Joel Chandler Harris to his daughter Lillian, dated May Day, 1898. Quoted in Julia Collier Harris, The Life and Letters of Joel Chandler Harris, Constable & Co. Limited, London, 1919. P. 394)

"Let me add that some difference has been made by the practice of dictation. Up to 1860 my books and review-articles were written. Since then they have all been dictated. There is a prevailing belief that dictation is apt to cause diffuseness, and I think the belief is well founded. It was once remarked to me by two good judges—the Leweses—that the style of Social Statics is better than the style of my later works, and, assuming this opinion to be true, the contrast may I think be ascribed to the deteriorating effect of dictation." (Herbert Spencer, Facts and Comments, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1902. P. 110)


"... Spencer, in his own way, and on his less savourful topics, took as much trouble as Macaulay to be crisp, concrete, and comprehensible by all who cared to do any thinking at all. Metaphors he never much affected; but many times he catches his reader with some pithy opening apologue or illustrative vignette. Whatever he may have thought of average judgment, he took no little pains to be as interesting as his subject admitted of." (J. M. Robertson, Modern Humanists Reconsidered, Watts & Co., London, 1927. P. 174)

"That chastened intellectual emotion to which I have referred in connection with Mr. Darwin, is not absent in Mr. Spencer. His illustrations possess at times exceeding vividness and force; and from his style on such occasions it is to be inferred that the ganglia of this Apostle of the Understanding are sometimes the seat of a nascent poetic thrill." (John Tyndall, Address delivered before the British Association for the Advancement of Science meeting in Belfast, August 19, 1874, in Fragments of Science, 6th edition, pp. 443-494, A. L. Burt Company, New York, n.d. Pp. 481-482)
"... the article on The Philosophy of Style ... should be by all means included /in the collection of Spencer's essays being prepared/, as it has great value and is much admired. Bancroft was to-day eulogizing it to me in very high terms." (Letter from Edward L. Youmans to Herbert Spencer dated December 14, 1863. Quoted in John Fiske, Edward Livingston Youmans, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. P. 169)

"Here, perhaps, I may fitly say of my own style that from the beginning it has been unpremeditated. The thought of style considered as an end in itself, has rarely if ever been present: the sole purpose being to express ideas as clearly as possible and, when the occasion called for it, with as much force as might be." (Herbert Spencer, Facts and Comments, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1902. P. 110)

"It was largely through Spencer's influence that literary language itself developed scientific metaphor, and his influence on the naturalistic writers/in the United States during the latter half of the 19th century/was direct." (Robert E. Spiller, Willard Thorp, Thomas H. Johnson, and Henry Seidel Canby, Literary History of the United States, Vol. 3: Bibliography, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1948. P. 326)

"... he [Spencer] wrote a valuable essay on style, and the admonition that made the deepest impression on me, when I read that little book in my nonage, was that style should vary with the subject ...." (Gertrude Atherton, Adventures of a Novelist, Blue Ribbon Books, Inc., New York, 1932. P. 314)
"Aye! I fear the X has gone to pieces by spontaneous fission, save as you say for a summer gathering, it would be hardly worth our while to attempt meeting together. Hirst's departure made a great gap." (Letter from John Tyndall to Joseph D. Hooker dated December 27, 1892. Quoted in Life and Work of John Tyndall by A. S. Eve and C. H. Creasey, Macmillan & Co. Ltd, London, 1945. P. 277)

"It [The X Club] consisted of Busk, Hirst, Hooker, Huxley, Lubbock, Herbert Spencer, Spottiswoode, Tyndall, and myself. Of these nine members, three have been Presidents of the Royal Society, and four others Presidents of other learned societies; whilst four were corresponding members of the Paris Academy of Sciences, and one Foreign Associate of that Academy. All these colleagues of mine occupied some of the highest positions in the scientific world, and were of one mind on theological topics." (Sketches from the Life of Edward Frankland, edited by His Two Daughters, M.N.W. and S.J.C., Spottiswoode & Co. Ltd., London, 1902. P. 51)

"This year [1861] his [Thomas Henry Huxley's] friend Hooker moved to Kew to act as second in command to his father, Sir William Hooker, the director of the Botanical Gardens. This move made meetings between the two friends, except at clubs and societies, more difficult, and was one of the immediate causes of the foundation of the x Club." (For an account of the origin and history of the x Club see Vol. 1, pp. 255-261) (Leonard Huxley, Life and Letters of Thomas Henry Huxley, 2 Vols., Macmillan and Co., Limited, London, 1900. Vol. 1, p. 232)

"It has long been too obvious to me [Huxley wrote Hooker as early as 1883], that the relations of some of us at the X have been very strained. Strong men as they get old seem to me to acquire very much the nature of apes [?], and tend to become dangerous to one another and run amuck at everything that does not quite suit their fancy. I am conscious of the tendency myself. It is hateful to me and where I have time to think I put it down at all costs." (Unpublished letter, June 30, 1883, Huxley Papers, II, 250. Quoted in William Irvine, Apes, Angels and Victorians, McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., New York, 1955. Pp. 318-319)

"This "X Club", that I dined with last Thursday, is the most powerful and influential scientific coterie in England. It consists of Spencer, Tyndall, Spottiswoode, Hirst, Hooker, Busk, Frankland, Lubbock, and Huxley. Those are all. Well, they have dictated the affairs of the British Association for three years past. Hooker is President of the Royal Society; Huxley is Secretary; and Spottiswoode is Treasurer. So you see they are an influential set of chaps, and there are ever so many fellows in England who would have thought it a great thing to be invited to dine with them. They are exclusive enough, and not lavish with their compliments to folks." (Letter from John Fiske to Abby Morgan, December 8, 1873. Quoted in The Letters of John Fiske, edited by Ethel F. Fisk, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1940. P. 283)
On November 3 of the following year [1864] was started the "X Club": the only name being the mathematical symbol for an unknown quantity, and the only rule to have none." (Vol. 1, p. 63) The original number of the "X Club," nine, was never added to; though guests were often invited. Of the nine, 5 received the Royal Medal of the Royal Society; 3 the Copley; 1 the Rumford; 6 were Presidents of the British Association; 3 Presidents of the Royal Society; 5 Associates of the Institute of France; and they included a Secretary, Foreign Secretary, and Treasurer of the Royal Society. Their numbers remained unbroken for nineteen years until the death of Mr. Spottiswoode in 1883." (Vol. 1, pp. 63-64) (Horace G. Hutchinson, The Life of Sir John Lubbock, Lord Avebury, 2 Vols. Macmillan and Co., Limited, London, 1914)

The next year [1873] I went to England and spent most of a year in London. Then I saw much of Tyndall, as well as of Spencer and Huxley. I dined with them once at their famous X Club, of which the six other members were Hooker, Busk, Frankland, Lubbock, Hirst, and Spottiswoode. As Spencer says, "out of this nine [he himself] was the only one who was fellow of no society and had presided over nothing." It was a jolly company. They dined together once a month, and the ordering of a dinner was usually entrusted to Spencer, who was an expert in gastronomy, and as eminent in the synthesis of a menu as in any other branch of synthetic philosophy." (John Fiske, "John Tyndall," pp. 241-248, in Essays Historical and Literary, 2 Vols., The Macmillan Company, New York, 1902. Vol. 2, p. 247)

But the detail of most interest about the Club which Professor Huxley has not given, concerns a certain supplementary meeting which, for many years, took place after the close of our session. This lasted from October in each year to June in the next, and towards the close of June we had a gathering in the country to which the married members brought their wives: raising the number on some occasions to fifteen. Our programme was to leave town early on Saturday afternoon, in time for a ramble or a boating / excursion before dinner; to have on the Sunday a picnic in some picturesque place adjacent to our temporary quarters; and, after dinner that evening, for some to return to town, while those with less pressing engagements remained until the Monday morning. Two of our picnics were held under Burnham Beeches, one or more on St. George's Hill, Weybridge, and another in Windsor Forest. As our spirits in those days had not been subdued by years, and, as we had not the added pleasure of ladies' society, these gatherings were extremely enjoyable. If Tyndall did not add to the life of our party by his wit he did by his hilarity." (Herbert Spencer, "The Late Professor Tyndall," The Fortnightly Review, Vol. 61, pp. 141-148, 1894. Pp. 145-146)
"But my special motive for naming these rural meetings of the X is that I may mention a fact which, to not a few, will be surprising and perhaps instructive. We sometimes carried with us to our picnic a volume of verse, which was duly utilised after the repast. On one occasion, while we reclined under the trees of Windsor Forest, Huxley read to us Tennyson's "Enone," and on another occasion we listened to Tyndall's reading of Mrs. Browning's poem, "Lady Geraldine's Courtship." The vast majority of people suppose that science and poetry are antagonistic. Here is a fact which may perhaps cause some of them to revise their opinions." (Herbert Spencer, "The Late Professor Tyndall," The Fortnightly Review, Vol. 61, pp. 141-148, 1894. P. 146)
"John Eglinton, then at High School too, has written that Yeats would talk about Huxley and Spencer and avow himself a complete evolutionist." (p. 29) "At the Art School he [Yeats] found a confederate [George Russell] even more determined in his opposition to the world of Herbert Spencer and Zola." (p. 33) "When John Eglinton reminded him that he had once said at the High School that 'Only two people can write an essay now-a-days: Matthew Arnold and Herbert Spencer,' Yeats angrily denied that Spencer had ever interested him." (p. 33) (Richard Ellmann, Yeats, The Man and the Masks, Macmillan & Co. Ltd, London, 1949)

"I am an ultra and thoroughgoing American. I believe there is great work to be done here for civilization. What we want are ideas --large, organizing ideas--and I believe there is no other man whose thoughts are so valuable for our needs as yours are. It is pleasant to find myself less and less alone in my estimate of the case and in my efforts...." (Letter from Edward L. Youmans to Herbert Spencer dated December 14, 1863. Quoted in John Fiske, Edward Livingston Youmans, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. Pp. 169-170)

"Youmans became the scientific adviser of the house [Appleton], and brought to it so many of the important books on the great questions of that epoch, as to place the house first on those subjects, and the rest nowhere." (Henry Holt, Garrulities of an Octogenarian Editor, Houghton Mifflin, Boston, 1923. P. 48)
Nineteen years ago, after the battle of Missionary Ridge and an expedition to Knoxville for the relief of Burnside, I was with my command in a winter camp near Chattanooga, where, for some time, our horses suffered so much from want of food that many of them died, and where we had, at times, not salt enough to make our meat and crackers palatable. But I had Herbert Spencer's "Social Statics" with me, which, in the long winter nights in my tent, I read by the light of a tallow-candle, and in which I found at least an abundance of mental salt to make up for the painful absence of the material article." (Edward L. Youmans, editor, Herbert Spencer on The Americans and The Americans on Herbert Spencer, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1883. P. 41) (Remarks of Mr. Carl Schurz, pp. 40-45)

"I have turned up a new thing with regard to Spencer. He has heard that Emerson characterized him as a "stock writer," which means a "job writer." His disgust is unspeakable; he has been for the past week gathering up the proofs that he has had one method from the beginning, that he has never written a single article proposed by anybody else; that he had the law of evolution worked out as the basis of a philosophy before Darwin or Wallace ever published a line about it." (Letter from Edward L. Youmans to his sister, Eliza A. Youmans, dated September 13, 1871. Quoted in John Fiske, Edward Livingston Youmans, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. P. 283)

"His system is not a digest, but an organon; not merely an analytic dissection, but a grand synthetic construction; not a science, but a coordination of the sciences; not a metaphysical elaboration, but a positive body of doctrine conforming to verifiable facts, and based upon the most comprehensive principle of Nature yet arrived at by the human mind." (Edward L. Youmans, "Herbert Spencer and the Doctrine of Evolution." The Popular Science Monthly, Vol. 6, pp. 20-48, 1874-75. P. 43.)

"Dr. Thomas Hill, president of the college [Harvard], told me that he was not a subscriber to the serial and had not read First Principles; but he had prepared a sermon directed against its doctrines (no names being mentioned), which he considered but a reproduction of the French atheism of the last century." (Letter from E. L. Youmans to Herbert Spencer dated November 23, 1863. Quoted in John Fiske, Edward Livingston Youmans, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. P. 164)

"In newness of conception, unity of purpose, subtlety of analyses, comprehensive grasp, thoroughness of method, and sustained force of execution, this series of labors, I believe, may challenge comparison with the highest mental work of any age." (Edward L. Youmans, "Herbert Spencer and the Doctrine of Evolution." The Popular Science Monthly, Vol. 6, pp. 20-48, 1874-75. P. 42.)
"Prof. Wm. B. Rogers, who has constant fights with Agassiz about the development hypothesis, was another of those appreciative friends who acknowledged the value of your labours and expressed a desire to be of assistance to our project." (Letter from Edward L. Youmans to Herbert Spencer dated November 23, 1863. Quoted in John Fiske, Edward Livingston Youmans, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. P. 165)

"... Mr. Spencer has given the world an amount of original exposition and of new and valuable truth that are probably without a parallel in the history of human thought." (Remarks prepared by Edward L. Youmans for the Spencer Farewell Dinner, but not uttered for lack of time, pp. 67-76. In Herbert Spencer on the Americans and The Americans on Herbert Spencer, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1883. P. 68)

"On my first visit to Massachusetts, in May, 1860, I fell upon a copy of that same prospectus of Spencer's series, in the Old Corner Bookstore, in Boston, and read it with exulting delight, for clearly there was to be such an organization of scientific doctrine as the world was waiting for." (John Fiske, Edward Livingston Youmans, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. P. 167)