"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, Homewood, 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 redvergence, 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 indirectly through the pastoral stage ...." (Vol. II, p. 541).

"This work [by Ratzel] was followed by the world-wide assemblage through many scattered collaborators.) of data by Herbert Spencer. (Principles of Sociology (1880-96) /sic/. 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 Mair, 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 everf 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)
UNILINEAR EVOLUTION

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 unilinear 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 /sic/ 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 characters 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 Societude," 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[s]/ 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)
"... on comparing societies of all orders, those which differ widely in their structures are found to differ widely in the natures of their members, while those which are but little dissimilar do not present great dissimilarities of popular character." (Study, p. 375)

"... 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 preexisting 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," Ingenior (Ann Arbor, Michigan), Vol. 5, pp. 5-7, 14-18, 1968, Autumn. P. 7)

"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 DeGreeff, quoted in Edward Alsworth Ross, "Mot 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(7) (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" (i.e. 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" (i.e. the form of society) was different, as he might cogently have said, 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 Eddypus," 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 1922, 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 relented 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 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. GXCIII., 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 reverence towards 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. 144 n.)
"I pass by the section on the Unknowable [in First Principles], 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 Isis 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 unwearying 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 [Spencer] plant himself squarely upon utilitarian principles. Indeed, this book contains decidedly the best defense of utilitarianism that has yet been made. Its chief merit [the book is The Data of Ethics] 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 that 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) (Thorstein] 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.)

"... 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 warring 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 "unc- tuous;" 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."


"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] 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 ...."

"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.)
VISIT TO AMERICA

Spencer was shown through the Peabody Museum at Yale by O. C. Marsh on October 21, 1877.2

"Before he did so [leave New York for England], however, he was tendered a farewell banquet at Delmonico's on November 9 [1882], 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 1882 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, Archaetypes 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)." (Martin Fichman, *An Elusive Victorian; The Evolution of Alfred Russel Wallace*. University of Chicago Press. Chicago, 2004. P. 135)

"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." (Letter from Alfred Russel Wallace to Lester Ward, November 21,1893. Quoted in Martin Fichman, *An Elusive Victorian; The Evolution of Alfred Russel Wallace*. University of Chicago Press. Chicago, 2004. P. 239)


"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)

"Before he did so, however, he was tendered a farewell banquet at Delmonico's on November 9, 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)

"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)
"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 environing 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, 1845. 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)
WARFARE (AND THE STATE)

"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 abhorred autocracy and despotism, Spencer concluded that: "The evidence obliges us to admit that subjection to despotists 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 has 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 Athenæum, 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)

"A Miss Potter, tall, young, intellectual, daughter of a millionaire came with a card of introduction from E.K. [Emily Kislingbury], London. Insisted upon seeing me. Lived half her life in Herbert Spencer's family. Knows Huxley and Tyndall. Interested in theosophy, doubts Spiritualism. She and her EIGHT sisters all Materialists. Herbert Spencer read Isis [Unveiled, published in 1877] and found some beautiful pages and new original ideas. She is going to write to him about H.P.B. [Helene P. Blavatsky herself]." (Entry in Diary of Madame Helene P. Blavatsky for October 19, 1878. Quoted in H. P. Blavatsky, Collected Writings 1874-1878, Vol. 1, Theosophical Press, Wheaton, Illinois. P. 413)

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.)
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 airy 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 Cathedral] 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 scientists, 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 [Woodrow Wilson's] 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)
"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."

"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."

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 subserve, 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 defence. 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 brilliance 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 Mountstuart 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 [William] 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 2, 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 (Mairy Personal) of William Graham Sumner, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1933. P. 36)
"The style of his [Spencer's] 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 [Spencer] 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 Spencer's 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)

"... and in spite of the heaviness of his Spencer's style (due to the practice of dictation) ...." (L. F. Austin, "Herbert Spencer," The Illustrated London News, Vol. 123, p. 898, December 12, 1903. P. 898)

"His [Spencer's] 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 agree- able 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 handmaids always at hand which explained his principle. His repetitions do not tire, but are fresh assurances to the reader that he is following a continuous 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 by-ways left open, down which the wanderer 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 philosophical work which means / to live—and nothing can be more clear and forcible than the argument. The work in question is First Principles/ 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, 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)

"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. 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 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)
"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. Since I have a prevailing belief that dictation is apt to cause diffuseness, and I think the belief is well founded. I 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 today 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 [1867] 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. I, pp. 255-261) (Leonard Huxley, Life and Letters of Thomas Henry Huxley, 2 Vols., Macmillan and Co., Limited, London, 1900. Vol. I, 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 X 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 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 e- 
volutionist." (p. 29) "At the Art School he [Yeats] found a confe-
derate [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 Her-
bert Spencer,' Yeats angrily denied that Spencer had ever interest-
ed him." (p. 33) (Richard Ellmann, Yeats, The Man and the Masks, 

"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, 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 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. 20-48, 1874-75. P. 42.)
"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)

"... 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)

"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)