"I wanted to say how successful and how important I thought was your presentation [at the farewell dinner to Spencer at Delmonico's] of the dual aspect, theological and ethical, of the Evolution doctrine. It is above all things needful that the people should be impressed with the truth that the philosophy offered to them does not necessitate a divorce from their inherited conceptions concerning religion and morality, but merely a purification and exaltation of them." (Letter from Herbert Spencer to John Fiske, November 24, 1882. Quoted in Ethel F. Fisk [sic], The Letters of John Fiske, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1940. P. 479)

"the bare, hard logic of Spencer, the greatest English authority on evolution, leaves no place for this compromise, and shows that the theory, carried to its legitimate consequences, excludes the knowledge of a Creator and the possibility of his work." (? Dawson, quoted by Asa Gray in Darwiniana: Essays and Reviews Pertaining to Darwinism. P. 249.

"Joseph Cook, who was a great figure in the religious world in the years 1874–80, though forgotten now, was listened to by the crowds in Tremont Temple which he endeavored to furnish a scientific demonstration of the truths of religion. I procured his volumes as they were published and read them with care, and what seemed to me his failures confirmed me in the conclusion to which Herbert Spencer compelled me--that I must choose between agnosticism and spiritual faith ...." (Lyman Abbott, Reminiscences, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1915. P. 450)

"I find from my correspondence that in 1866 I was studying Herbert Spencer .... As my boyhood's study of Jonathan Edwards had established my faith in the freedom of the will, so my study of Herbert Spencer confirmed my rejection of the rationalist philosophy ...." (p. 285) "I read Herbert Spencer's "First Principles," and they convinced me that all that science could possibly do was to show us a probably God / and a probable immortality, if it could do so much as that." (pp. 449-450) (Lyman Abbott, Reminiscences, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1915)

The Rev. George Matheson, D.D., a Scottish Presbyterian minister, wrote a book entitled Can the Old Faith Live with the New? (William Blackwood and Sons, Edinburgh and London, 1885. He says in the preface that two works stimulated him to write this book: Joseph John Murphy's The Scientific Bases of Faith, and Henry Drummond's Natural Law in the Spiritual World. Matheson quotes Spencer frequently, and bases a good deal of what he says on Spencer's authority. He takes full advantage of Spencer's "Unknowable." Spencer found it a clever reconciliation, and thought it would be useful to introduce evolution to "believers" in a congenial and sympathetic way. He even asked Youmans about the possibility of reprinting it in the United States. (See Edward Livingston Youmans)
"It would be hard to over-estimate the influence of this great man /Spencer/. From an immense intellectual elevation he has surveyed the world of thought. He has rendered absurd the idea of special providence, born of the egotism of savagery. He has shown that the "will of God" is not a rule for human conduct; that morality is not a cold and heartless tyrant; that by the destruction of the individual will, a higher life cannot be reached, and that after all, an intelligent love of self extends the hand of help and kindness to all the human race." (Robert G. Ingersoll, Preface to Prof. Van Buren Denslow's Modern Thinkers /1879/, pp. 7-23 in The Works of Robert G. Ingersoll, 12 Vols., The Ingersoll Publishers, Inc., New York, 1900. Vol. 12, pp. 11-12)

"... I think that the doctrine of evolution and its relations to the work of Mr. Spencer--which takes in that, but a great deal more besides--to speak in plain language, is going to revolutionize theology from one end to the other ...." (Rev. Henry Ward Beecher's Remarks at the Spencer Farewell Dinner, pp. 58-567. In Herbert Spencer on The Americans and The Americans on Herbert Spencer, /edited by Edward L. Youmans/, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1883, P.60)

"From this point of view /that of atheism, thinly disguised. Carnegie thinks, as agnosticism/ he /Col. Robert G. Ingersoll/ pronounced Spencer "the great manufacturer of raw material for superstition."
I knew, on the contrary, that the material my teacher supplied destroyed the superstitions of theology and produced in me purer, nobler, more reverent religious feelings than I ever could reach before." /The statement attributed to Ingersoll is difficult to reconcile with other statements (q.v.) made by Ingersoll about Spencer. Also, no such statement appears in Ingersoll's Collected Works (12 Vols.)/ (Andrew Carnegie, Miscellaneous Writings of Andrew Carnegie, edited by Burton J. Hendrick, 2 Vols., Doubleday, Doran & Company, Inc., Garden City, N.Y., 1933. Vol. 2, p. 303)

"The theorist /Spencer/ has unavowedly made an abstraction of religion/ which represents no known body of religious belief whatever, and which is the reverse of what is either tacitly or explicitly alleged by nearly every body of religious doctrine in the past.... we find that religious creeds, churches, communities, documents, always claim to give us a knowledge of the Power "behind the universe." Christians expressly claim that God has "revealed Himself." Every world-religion save Buddhism ... has professed to give information about God or the Gods. Greek and Roman and Semitic and Asiatic and African and Polynesian polytheisms alike proffer endless false information about the powers behind the universe. That was their very ground and function. To say that a million such profers of information are all logically or virtually reducible to the proposition that no such knowledge is possible is a strange pronouncement. Spencer has presented as the abstraction of Religion the one doctrine that no creed ever contained... and that most creeds explicitly and implicitly deny." (J. M. Robertson, Modern Humanists Reconsidered, Watts & Co., London, 1927. P. 177)
"The English school tend to repudiate, with growing intensity, that materialism which is accepted on the Continent and pronounce it gross and dangerous. They refuse to go further at present than Agnosticism, though many of them show themselves to be impatient of camping out permanently on that ground. The ablest thinker of them all, and the ablest man that has appeared for centuries, Herbert Spencer, seems to me to have passed the winter solstice, and to be in a dawning spring and summer. Should his life be spared, I should not wonder at finding him the ablest defender of the essential elements of a rightly interpreted Christianity that has arisen. Not that I regard every part of his system with like favor; not that I should regard every station which he has established and position which he maintains as true or safe. Not that.--And yet, when by and by the bounds of knowledge are widened, and the interior more perfectly surveyed and settled, I think that Herbert Spencer will be found to have given to the world more truth in one lifetime than any other man that has lived in the schools of philosophy in this world." (Henry Ward Beecher, Sermon: "Evolution and the Church," Sunday Morning, July 5, 1885, Plymouth Church, in Evolution and Religion, Fords, Howard, & Hulbert, New York, 1885. Pp. 125-126)

"The religious world, ... though perhaps a little too trusting and a little dull of thought, has very acute feelings, and a fine sagacity in apprehending the religious drift of a system of philosophy. It began to have suspicions, [The] that Spencer was a positivist but it was, nevertheless, anxious to see the truths of science reconciled with those of religion, and so it has continued to listen to Mr. Spencer." (Chauncey Wright, "The Philosophy of Herbert Spencer," in Philosophical Discussions, pp. 43-96, Henry Holt and Company, New York, 1877. P. 91. First appeared in The North American ReView, April, 1865)

"Herbert Spencer noted long ago the influence of dreams in forming a belief in immortality, but, being very rational himself, he extended to primitive man a quite alien quality of rationality. Herbert Spencer argued that when a savage has a dream he seeks to account for it, and in so doing invents a spirit world. The mistake here lies in the "seeks to account for it." Man is at first too busy living to have any time for disinterested thinking. He dreams a dream, and it is real for him. He does not seek to account for it any more than for his hands and feet. He cannot distinguish between a conception and a perception—that is all." (Jane Ellen Harrison, Alpha and Omega, Sidgwick & Jackson Ltd., London, 1915. P. 157)

"Herbert Spencer comes, in good faith, from what has been so long a hostile camp, bringing a flag of truce and proposing terms of agreement meant to be honorable to both parties. Let us give him a candid hearing, and perhaps the terms he offers, though we may not accept them in their first and full form, may lead to a better understanding, and open the way to a final adjustment." (Anonymous (C. C. Everett), "Spencer's Reconciliation of Science and Religion," a review of First Principles, Nos. I-IV, 1860-61, The Christian Examiner, Vol. 72, pp. 327-352, 1862. P. 340. Everett was Dean of Harvard Divinity School 1878-1900)
"Do you know Herbert Spencer's book, First Principles? He is a Comtian with a difference. I am not very practiced in such reading, but what I have read of his seemed very clear and candid and masterly. He seems to me quite wrong in his general result, which, as I understand it, hardly admits of a Theistic interpretation; though I understand that he does not feel himself that it is inconsistent with such a view. But as I said he is a very original and remarkable writer, and should be read ...." (Letter from Alexander Macmillan to Rev. Professor Salmon, Trinity College, Dublin, dated December 15, 1862. Quoted in George A. Macmillan, editor, Letters of Alexander Macmillan, Printed for Private Circulation /University Press, Glasgow/, 1908. P. 126)

"The philosopher has long observed that in proportion as knowledge, science, and intelligence spread among men, the strong religious spirit disappears. Some have argued that this tendency must eventually eradicate the religious sentiment from mankind, since already many of the truly greatest and best men have nearly or quite wholly renounced all atachment for, or belief in, any religious system. This idea was fast gaining acceptance until Mr. Spencer came forward with his famous "reconciliation," which showed that there is a limit at which this differentiation must stop, while the apparently innate sentiment of worship will ever possess an object in the Absolute, the Unconditioned, the Unknowable." (Lester F. Ward, Dynamic Sociology, 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. Vol. 1, p. 196)

"The theory here sketched [the ghost theory of religion], and which is elaborated with great care and skill by Mr. Spencer, is remarkable in a number of respects. In the first place, it is the first attempt ever made to trace the real history of religion to its original source in the phenomena of nature and the laws of thought. If true, it constitutes the genesis of religion, and explains all the most difficult facts connected with its existence and diffusion among men. In the second place, this effort is remarkable from the manner of its presentation. It is no mere theory elaborated out of the web of logic in the author's brain. In every particular he has allowed himself to drift with the current of accumulating facts. The great bulk of the volume is made up of citations of simple facts as gathered together from every available source." (Lester F. Ward, Dynamic Sociology, 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. Vol. 1, p. 206)

"If, moreover, the tendency undoubtedly exhibited in the previous course of philosophical inquiry can indicate any thing with reference to the future, we may infer that the Spencerian system of evolution, with all its extensive appropriations from the physical sciences, will, without losing any valuable material, be enlarged and corrected by the introduction of spiritualistic elements, and by the adoption of teleological and theistic modes of interpretation. The exalted views of Kant with reference to the fundamental consistency between law and design are sufficient to dispel any conceived opposition between natural order and divine supervision." (William C. Morey, "Herbert Spencer in the Light of History," Baptist Quarterly Review, Vol. 5, pp. 279-309, 1883. P. 308)
Mark Pattison (1813-1884), Rector of Lincoln College, Oxford, said, in connection with the depersonalization and spiritualization of the conception of God that took place in the latter half of the 19th century, and presumably including that attenuation of it into the Unknowable of Herbert Spencer, that the idea of deity has now been "defeated to a pure transparency." (Quoted by Frederic Harrison in "The Ghost of Religion," The Nineteenth Century, Vol. 15, n.s., pp. 494-506, 1884. Pp. 496-497)

"Spencer's true role among mid-Victorian scientists was not as an evolutionary thinker at all, but as a religious leader." (Mark Francis, "Herbert Spencer and the mid-Victorian Scientists," Metascience, Vol. 4, pp. 2-21, 1986. P.)

"The Reverend Chan / cellor of the University of New York is reported to have declared that, if the works of Herbert Spencer should be introduced into the institution over which he presides, he would resign his position." (Edward L. Youmans, "Sociology and Theology at Yale College," The Popular Science Monthly, Vol. 17, pp. 265-269, 1880. Pp. 268-269)

"Now, a God who has no intelligence, and no moral character, is no God at all. Hence, Spencer was not a Theist. It will scarcely do to say he was an Atheist, since he did not expressly deny the existence of a God, though the Unknowable would not seem to leave room for another being, especially a being superior to itself. Neither was Spencer an Agnostic. The Agnostic says he does not know whether the principle of the universe is a being or a quality or attribute of matter. But Mr. Spencer says he knows it to be a being, and that this knowledge is the most certain of all." (C. B. Waite, "Herbert Spencer," Liberal Review, Vol. 1, pp. 16-17, 1904. P. 17)

Spencer "... has succeeded in making theology conscious of the fact that there is much about the Infinite that theology does not yet know; in fact through Spencer's influence, theology has about come to acknowledge that what it knows about God is a very small fraction of what there is to know. Theology has, then, become more humble and teachable." (William Ivey Cranford [Professor of Philosophy at Trinity College], "Herbert Spencer and His Work," The South Atlantic Quarterly, Vol. 3, pp. 123-136, 1904. P. 132)

"... the religion of amity and the religion of enmity ...." (Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1891. P. 296)

"... a religious system is a normal and essential factor in every evolving society ...." (Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1891. P. 313)


"... while yet others (as I have repeatedly noticed in converse with those whom I have met during my lecturing tours in this country, America, and Australasia) appear to regard Mr. Spencer as chief among the opponents of religion." (Richard A. Proctor, "Herbert Spencer's Philosophy," The Gentleman's Magazine, Vol. 254, pp. 73-88, 1883. P. 73)

(Prof. J. D. Bell, "Religion and Science," The Modern Thinker, Vol. 1, pp. 121-147, 1870. (Apparent criticism of Spencer's ideas, especially on the origin of religion, and on the Unknowable, in the light of Comtean views on the subject. Translated and reprinted as "Religion et Science; examen de Herbert Spencer," La Philosophie Positive; Revue, Vol. 6, pp. 345-380, 1871))

"I see that Herbert Spencer is muddling away among books, instead of understanding men; and I perceive that a religion without divinity is no religion at all, whatever else it may be." (Letter from Alfred Lyall to Mrs. Mrs. Sybillia Lyall Holland, his sister, dated ?, 1873. Quoted in Sir Mortimer Durand, Life of the Right Hon. Sir Alfred Comyn Lyall, William Blackwood and Sons, Edinburgh, 1913. P. 171)

"... Mr. Alderman W. Winter, ... opposed in the Town Council a resolution of honour in memory of Spencer, who had given Derby its great distinction, because his views contradicted the antediluvian Scriptural account of the Creation ...." (George Jacob Holyoake, Bygones Worth Remembering, 2 Vols., T. Fisher Unwin, London, 1905. Vol. 2, p. 24)

"It would be hard to over-estimate the influence of this great man /Spencer/. From an immense intellectual elevation he has surveyed the world of thought. He has rendered absurd the idea of Special Providence, born of the egotism of savagery." (Robert G. Ingersoll, Introduction to Modern Thinkers, Principally Upon Social Science: What They Think and Why, 1880. P. xvii)
"... Spencer's metaphysical logic is made incoherent and fallacious by his purpose of effecting his futile "reconciliation" between Religion and Science ...." (J. M. Robertson, A History of Freethought in the Nineteenth Century, Watts & Co., London, 1929, p. 217)

"... the supercilious disdain with which he passes over all the cosmogonies of the men who like him have sought to construct a theory of the world's development, ...." (Noah Porter, "Herbert Spencer's Theory of Sociology: A Critical Essay," The Princeton Review, Vol. 56 (6 n.s.), pp. 268-296, 1880. P. 292)

"... great ... are the evils to which the undiscriminating devotees of Spencer are exposed in the weakening of their traditional faith in Christian theism and Christian ethics, ...." (Noah Porter, "Herbert Spencer's Theory of Sociology: A Critical Essay," The Princeton Review, Vol. 56 (6 n.s.), pp. 268-296, 1880. P. 292)


""I was never a Christian," he said to me once; "from my childhood I wanted to investigate everything."" (Grant Allen, "Personal Reminiscences of Herbert Spencer," The Forum, Vol. 35, pp. 610-628, 1904. P. 620)

"In the works of Spencer we have the rudiments of a positive theology ...." (Anonymous / C. C. Everett/, "Spencer's Reconciliation of Science and Religion," A review of First Principles, Nos. I-IV, 1860-61, The Christian Examiner, Vol. 72, pp. 337-352, 1862. P. 337) (Everett was Dean of Harvard Divinity School 1878-1900)

"The many volumes of the "Synthetic System of Philosophy," which follow the "First Principles," constitute a very elaborate attempt to give such an account of the Evolution of the Cosmos as shall dispense with the domination of the process by Infinite Intelligence and Will." (James Drummond /himself/, editor, The Life and Letters of James Martineau, 2 Vols., Dodd, Mead and Company, New York, 1902. Vol. 2, p. 363)

"Mr. [Minot] Savage had high hopes of evolving a "new religion" in terms of Spencerism, and his enthusiasm moved Spencer to write a letter looking forward to "something like a body of definite adherents who will become the germ of an organization." (Letter of Jan. 9, 1883, cited by Goblet d'Alviella, p. 220.) (J. M. Robertson, A History of Freethought in the Nineteenth Century, Watts & Co., London, 1929. Pp. 308-309)

"In recognition of an inscrutable power or energy, Spencer fancied he had found a basis for the reconciliation of science and religion. The terms proposed have been likened to those proposed by a husband to his wife, as the basis of domestic harmony, that he should take the inside of the house and she the outside." (Anonymous, "The Philosophy of Herbert Spencer," The Edinburgh Review, Vol. 199, pp. 352-373, 1904. P. 359)

Although apparently never a Christian, Spencer did at one time believe in God, and in Social Statics there are occasional references to Him. But during the 1850's Spencer abandoned the notion of God, or perhaps one might almost say that for Spencer the idea of God became much more remote and abstract, becoming finally the notion of the Unknowable, and "Infinite and Eternal Energy, from which all things proceed." --RLC

"A flood of light is thrown upon Spencer's treatment of religion by a remark he once made to the present writer, that he had never experienced the spiritual troubles of some of his contemporaries. He never rejected Christianity, he said, because he never accepted it. Christianity lay altogether outside of his mind." (Anonymous, "The Philosophy of Herbert Spencer," The Edinburgh Review, Vol. 199, pp. 352-373, 1904. P. 354)

"The progress of liberal thought is remarkable. Everybody is asking for explanations. The clergy are in a flutter. McCosh told them not to worry, as whatever might be discovered he would find design in it and put God behind it." (Letter from Edward L. Youmans to Herbert Spencer dated April 21, 1871. Quoted in John Fiske, Edward Livingston Youmans, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. P. 265)

"And we would commend to our readers this author [Spencer], too little known among us, as at once one of theclearest of teachers and one of the wisest and most honorable of opponents." (Anonymous [C. C. Everett], "Spencer's Reconciliation of Science and Religion," a review of First Principles, Nos. I-IV, 1860-61, The Christian Examiner, Vol. 72, pp. 337-352, 1862. P. 352. Everett was Dean of Harvard Divinity School 1878-1900)
"There is in Mr. Spencer (as it appears to me) too marked that theological tendency, which he himself so well condemns, to confound belief with evidence, and mistake the desire for a truth as a proof of the truth itself." (Henry Sewall, "Herbert Spencer As a Biologist," University of Michigan, Philosophical Papers, First Series, No. 4, pp. 1-13. § P. 12. Sewall was Professor of Physiology at the University of Michigan)

"I am a cordial Christian evolutionist. I would not agree by any means with all of Spencer, nor all of Huxley, Tyndall and their school. They are agnostic. I am not-emphatically. But I am an evolutionist and that strikes at the root of all medieval and orthodox modern theology," he wrote Dr. Kennard in 1883." (Paxton Hibben, Henry Ward Beecher: An American Portrait, George H. Doran Company, New York, 1927. P. 340)


"There is a phase of thought bearing the name "evolution" which cannot by any possibility be reconciled with religion. It is subversive not only of theology, but equally of every high belief." (Rev. Francis H. Johnson, "Mechanical Evolution," The Andover Review, Vol. 1, pp. 631-649, 1884. P. 631)

"Mr. Spencer's attitude towards religion, again, is slightly paradoxical. Few men have paid it more sincere, explicit respect; and the part called "The Unknowable" of his "First Principles" celebrates the ultimate mysteriousness of things, and the existence of a Supreme Reality behind the veil, in terms whose emphatic character it is hard elsewhere to match." (William James, Herbert Spencer, The Critic, Vol. 44, pp. 21-24, 1904. P. 22)

"In fact, his Spencer's philosophy of religion is an illogical blend of reason and faith, which, as such, finds its proper place among the various schemes of compromise and conciliation characteristically put forward by English thought when the religious revolution had entered on its acute phase." (Alfred William Benn, The History of English Rationalism in the Nineteenth Century, 2 Vols, Longmans, Green, and Co., London, 1906. Vol. 2, p. 204)

Spencer's father was not a-religious, however. His letters, written to Spencer around 1840 "called my attention to religious questions and appealed to religious feelings--seeking for some response." (Auto., I, 150)
"He [Spencer] settled the territorial dispute between science and religion, and if the struggle between them still continues it is only because his award has not been universally accepted. This award, it is practically certain, will ultimately prevail, not, of course, because he made it, but because the facts of the case render it inevitable." (Arthur M. Lewis, An Introduction to Sociology, Charles H. Kerr & Company, Chicago, 1913. P. 73)

"... have you not saddled the Bostonians with a sin that does not belong to them? That God is an unrelated being, and cannot therefore be known to men, is taught by Herbert Spencer, but I have never heard it from the Boston oracles." (Letter from Gail Hamilton /Mary Abigail Dodge/ to George Wood /"Peter Schlemihl") dated November 21, 1864. Quoted in Gail Hamilton's Life in Letters, edited by H. Augusta Dodge, 2 Vols., Lee and Shepard, Boston, 1901. Vol. 1, p. 466)

"The Greatest philosopher of modern times, the master and teacher of all who shall study the process of evolution for many a day to come, holds that the con/scious soul is not the product of a collocation of material particles, but is in the deepest sense a divine effluence. According to Mr. Spencer the divine energy which is manifested throughout the knowable universe is the same energy that wells up in us as consciousness." (John Fiske, Destiny of Man, p. 117)

"If, therefore, the religious world persists in refusing to be limited to Spencer's "unknowable," and in clinging to the knowable unknown, there can be no cessation of "The Conflict Between Science and Religion" until science has added victory to victory and religion, reaping defeat upon defeat, is finally driven from the field." (Arthur M. Lewis, An Introduction to Sociology, Charles H. Kerr & Company, Chicago, 1913. P. 58)

"Anthropomorphism is an inevitable result of the laws of thought. We cannot take a step towards constructing an idea of God; we cannot even speak of a divine will without the ascription of human attributes, for we know nothing of volition, save as a property of our own minds." (Herbert Spencer, "The Use of Anthropomorphism," The Leader, Vol. 4, No. 189, pp. 1076-1077, November 5, 1853. P. 1076)

"They [Spencer's views] none the less replaced the personal and conscious God of the traditional theology by a Being deaf, blind, and indifferent to human misery, or at least so far removed from man that no direct relation could any longer be conceived to exist between the two terms of the religious equation; and thus there seemed to disappear that sentiment of a direct communication between the soul and its Author, which forms not only the central principle of Protestantism, but also the essential basis of Theism." (Count Goblet d'Alviella, The Contemporary Evolution of Religious Thought in England, America and India, translated by J. Moden, G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1886. P. 45)
"The philosopher has long observed that in proportion as knowledge, science, and intelligence spread among men, the strong religious spirit disappears. Some have argued that this tendency must eventually eradicate the religious sentiment from mankind, since already many of the truly greatest and best men have nearly or quite wholly renounced all attachment for, or belief in, any religious system. This idea was fast gaining acceptance until Mr. Spencer came forward with his famous "reconciliation," which showed that there is a limit at which this differentiation must stop, while the apparently innate sentiment of worship will ever possess and object in the Absolute, the Unconditioned, the Unknowable." (Lester Frank Ward, Dynamic Sociology, 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1883. Vol. 1, p. 196)

Maintaining that Spencer's occasional reference to "the naturally revealed end towards which the Power manifested throughout Evolution works," betrayed a suggestion of teleology, Everett said: "If a teleological element in the universe were admitted, it would remove one of the chief difficulties that many find in accepting the Synthetic Philosophy. If it were nowhere recognized, it would take from it one of the attractions which it has for many minds." (C. C. Everett, "The Data of Ethics," The Unitarian Review and Religious Magazine, Vol. 13, pp. 43-59, 1880. P. 50)

"... the next philosophy will be a reconciliation of the physical truths advocated by materialists and the rational truths held by idealists—a system which will ignore neither the laws of thought nor the laws of things. No fragmentary theories built upon the discovery of mere physical laws and forces can satisfy the highest reason of man, which must see in the progressive organization of the world the evidence of a supreme co-ordinating thought." (William C. Morey, "Herbert Spencer in the Light of History," Baptist Quarterly Review, Vol. 5, pp. 279-309, 1883. P. 309)

"This imposing positivistic edifice might have been totally unacceptable in America, had it not also been bound up with an important concession to religion in the form of Spencer's doctrine of the Unknowable. The great question of the day was whether religion and science could be reconciled. Spencer gave not only the desired affirmative answer, but also an assurance for all future ages that, whatever science might learn about the world, the true sphere of religion—worship of the Unknowable—is by its very nature inviolable." (Richard Hofstadter, Social Darwinism in American Thought, revised edition, The Beacon Press, Boston, 1955. Pp. 37-38)

"No one is more humble before the mystery of the Infinite Power of Nature, or more convinced that we have no warrant for dogmatizing upon the secrets of life than Herbert Spencer. If all his disciples were loyal to his spirit, they would stand in a constant attitude of expectant wonder; ready to receive ever fresh and more surprising revelations of the purpose of Nature." (Richard Heber Newton, Philistinism: Plain Words Concerning Certain Forms of Modern Scepticism, G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1886. P. 306. Newton was an Episcopal minister in New York who accepted evolution.)
"I am glad to see you still busy with your pen, and it seems to me with unflagging vigour. Judging from what I have seen in the notices (for I have not seen the book itself, which indeed I should not be able to read), you have done an important service by your Life of [Thomas] Paine alike in clearing his reputation and showing his merits, as also by re-emphasizing some of his views." (Letter from Herbert Spencer to Moncure D. Conway dated December 12, 1893. Quoted in Moncure Daniel Conway, Autobiography, Memories and Experiences, 2 Vols., Houghton, Mifflin and Company, Boston, 1904. Vol. 2, pp. 434-435)

"Even in these liberal circles [Unitarians and other liberal theologians in the United States] Spencer's philosophy was, of course, criticized and condemned as too materialistic and agnostic. But it was nevertheless taken seriously, and in the modified form preached by Fiske, the Spencerian conception of evolution was readily detached from his materialism, hedonism, and agnosticism, and was adapted to liberal theology and to the transcendentalist heritage." (Herbert W. Schneider, "The Influence of Darwin and Spencer on American Philosophical Theology," Journal of the History of Ideas, Vol. 6, pp. 3-18, 1945. P. )

"We might suggest in conclusion that with such a philosophy— the philosophy of Christian theism—Sociology may possibly become a far simpler science than is possible on the theory ... of antitheistical materialism which Spencer presents/. The province of Sociology in the service of Christian faith would be comparatively simple, for in all its inductions it would be guided by faith in the guidance of an instructing Providence and the inspiration of the living God." (Noah Porter, "Herbert Spencer's Theory of Sociology: A Critical Essay," The Princeton Review, Vol. 56 (6 n.s.), pp. 268-296, 1880. P. 296)

"This, then, is the conclusion in which the greatest authorities confirm the common sense of mankind. We are still in the presence of an awful mystery, infinite, eternal, sphereing all knowledge in ignorance, rimming all light with darkness; a mystery before which the mind and heart of man must, of necessity, continue ever to yield the worship of awe; ..." (Richard Heber Newton, Philistinism: Plain Words Concerning Certain Forms of Modern Scepticism, G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1886. P. 152. Newton was an episcopal minister in New York who accepted evolution.)

James Martineau said he was made to "wonder at the weakened faith so evident and so pathetic in the present day. I have faith that a happy reaction is sure to come. Already, in America, the leading exponent of Spencer, Professor Fiske of Harvard, has avowed his return, in spite of Evolution, to his belief in personal immortality. Depend upon it, the nobler minds cannot live on the resources contained within the penfold of this life, and will reclaim their birthright." (Letter from James Martineau to Thomas R. Russell dated October 11, 1885. Quoted in The Life and Letters of James Martineau, edited by James Drummond, 2 Vols., Dood, Mead and Company, New York, 1902. Vol. 2, p. 447)
"About this time I began to study Darwin's theory of zoological development, and absorbed, so far as suited me, from him and Herbert Spencer, the philosophy of evolution. With the metaphysical idea of that philosophy I was sufficiently acquainted through my readings in the works of the Greek sages, Bruno, Spinoza, Goethe, lastly Hegel. But I perceived at once how the latest aspect of the theory and the partial proof of it squared with my religion and gave it substance. I derived, as I suppose all men must do, only so much from these teachers as might feed a self-forged faith." (John Addington Symonds, A Biography: Compiled from His Papers and Correspondence)

Here is the religious effect of Spencer's First Principles on the British geologist, Edward Greenly: "On the shelves of the great reading-domed of the British Museum, early in 1885, I came upon Spencer's First Principles. I had heard much of Herbert Spencer, but had not read any of his works. The title, however, attracted me: "The principles of things in general: I should like to know what those are." So I read the famous first five chapters, and they gave me a new view of things. Now his doctrines of the Unknowable can, according to the nature of a reader, be assimilated in two quite different ways. Be the reader's bent materialistic, it leads him into Atheism. Be his bent of a spiritual kind, it leads him into Pantheism. My Nature was religious, so that was the effect on me." (Edward Greenly, A Hand Through Time, 2 Vols., Thomas Murby & Co., London, 1938, Vol. 2, pp. 600-601)

When G. W. Foote and William Ramsey, former "lieutenants" of Charles Bradlaugh, were convicted of blasphemy for their writings in their weekly journal, the Freethinker, "a memorial asking the Home Secretary to mitigate Foote's and Ramsey's sentences was signed by such men as T. H. Huxley, Herbert Spencer, Leslie Stephen, and Frederic Harrison." (Walter L. Arnstein, The Bradlaugh Case, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1965, P. 255)

"I am sure it will be generally acknowledged that our great teacher's services to religion have been no less signal than his services to science, unparalleled as these have been in all the history of the world." (Speech of John Fiske at the Spencer Farewell Dinner, pp. 50-58. In Herbert Spencer on the Americans and The Americans on Herbert Spencer, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1883, P. 58)

"Mr. Spencer has done immense harm. I don't believe that there is an active, thoughtful minister in the United States that has not been put in a peck of troubles, and a great deal more than that, by the intrusion of his views, and the comparison of them with the old views. I can not for the life of me reconcile his notions with those of St. Augustine. I can't get along with Calvin and Spencer both. Sometimes one of them is uppermost, and sometimes the other, and I have often been disposed to let them fight it out themselves, and not take any hand in the scrape." (Rev. Henry Ward Beecher's Remarks at the Spencer Farewell Dinner, pp. 58-57. In Herbert Spencer on The Americans and The Americans on Herbert Spencer, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1883, P. 58)
"... the philosopher whose authority is now invoked to deny to the masses any right to the physical basis of life in this world [a reference to Spencer's change of mind on land nationalization] is also the philosopher whose authority darkens to many all hope of life hereafter ...." (Henry George, A Perplexed Philosopher, Robert Schalkenbach Foundation, New York, 1965. P. xv)

"It is its protest against materialism, its assertion of the supremacy of the moral law, its declaration of God-given rights that are above all human enactments, that despite whatever it may contain of crudity and inconsistency make "Social Statics" a noble book, and in the deepest sense a religiously minded book." (Henry George, A Perplexed Philosopher, Robert Schalkenbach Foundation, New York, 1965. P. 114)

"This scheme of "Synthetic Philosophy" is the most pretentious that ever mortal man undertook, since it embraces no less than an explanation of mankind, without recourse to the hypothesis of Originating Intelligence ...." (Henry George, A Perplexed Philosopher, Robert Schalkenbach Foundation, New York, 1965. P. 110)

"And I have not named the fact, sufficiently manifest to all who are acquainted with my later works, that such teleological implications as are contained in the chapter of "The Divine Idea," [in the 1850 edition of Social Statics, and reprinted in the 1877 edition] I no longer abide by." (Herbert Spencer, Preface to the new edition of Social Statics, dated January 17, 1877. D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1883. P. xiv)

"The attempt to make so real and material a thing as Science rest on so transcendental a basis as Religion, gave rise, in the case of Mr. Spencer, ... to the most ingenious exhibition of intellectual sleight-of-hand that has been known in modern philosophy." (John Beattie Crozier, Civilization and Progress, Outlines of a New System, 3rd edition, Longmans, Green, & Co., London, 1893. P. 209)

"Nowhere is the strength of the alliance [between "scientific inquiry" and "the primal theistic impulse"] better exemplified than in the philosophy of Herbert Spencer ...." (Andrew C. Campbell) Armstrong, Transitional Eras in Thought, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1904. Pp. 120-121) (Armstrong was Professor of Philosophy at Wesleyan University)

Lyman Abbott quoted with approval Spencer's statement that "nothing is more certain than this, that we are ever in the presence of an Infinite and Eternal Energy from which all things proceed." To which he added, "It is an Energy that thinks, and creation is the expression of the thought of this / Infinite and Eternal Energy." (Lyman Abbott, The Evolution of Christianity, Houghton, Mifflin and Company, Boston, 1900. Pp. 245-246)

Strong speaks of the "... moral decadence under the influence of the general philosophical spirit of our day—a spirit of which Mr. Spencer's system is the most conspicuous and typical example." (Augustus Hopkins Strong, D.D., Philosophy and Religion, A. C. Armstrong and Son, New York, 1888. P. 56. This passage was written in 1878)

"The latter's [Spencer's] way of reconciling science and religion is, moreover, too absurdly naif. Find, he says, a fundamentally abstract truth on which they can agree, and that will reconcile them. Such a truth, he thinks, is that there is a mystery. The trouble is that it is over just such common truths that quarrels begin. .... Religion claims that the "mystery" is interpretable by human reason; "Science," speaking through Spencer, insists that it is not. The admission of the mystery is the very signal for the quarrel. Moreover, for nine hundred and ninety-nine men out of a thousand the sense of mystery is the sense of more-to-be-known, not the sense of a More, not to be known." (William James, Memories and Studies, Longmans, Green, and Co., New York, 1911. P. 129)

"He [Spencer] was putting in the forefront of a philosophic system which rejected all theistic hypotheses, a prolixion which sought to placate theists by assuring them that he was not an atheist. He was one in any natural sense of the term; and no professional Atheists of his time, so far as literature shows, stood on any other ground than his. His assumption that they professed to "explain" the Infinite Universe was wholly astray; and he was poorly misrepresenting them. At the same time, he was as materialistic as any other modern thinker; yet he seeks to repudiate Materialism in general at the expense of writers whom he does not name." (J. M. Robertson, Modern Humanists Reconsidered, Watts & Co., London, 1927. P. 178)

"I have read with much interest your clearly reasoned and eloquent exposition of the religious and ethical bearings of the evolution doctrines. I rejoice very much to see that those doctrines are coming to the front. It is high time that something should be done towards making the people see that there remains for them, not a mere negation of their previous ethical and religious beliefs, which, as you say, have a definite scientific and unshakeable foundation. I hope that your teachings will initiate something like a body of definite adherents who will become the germ of an organization. I have been long looking forward to the time when something of this kind might be done, and it seems to me you are the man to do it." (Letter from Herbert Spencer to Minot J. Savage, apparently quoted in The Christian Register, March 29, 1883. Quoted in Count Goblet d'Alviella, The Contemporary Evolution of Religious Thought in England, America and India, translated by J. Moden, G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1886. P. 220)
"Gradually as the limits of possible cognition are established, the causes of conflict between Religion and Science will diminish. And a permanent peace will be reached when Science becomes fully convinced that its explanations are proximate and relative; while Religion becomes fully convinced that the mystery it contemplates is ultimate and absolute." (Herbert Spencer, First Principles, fourth edition, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1896, pp. 109-110)

"But I had not been many days at sea en route to England from Canada, where he was born, before a cloud scarcely larger than a man's hand appeared on the horizon of my dreams, and gradually, overspreading the sky, deepened and darkened until it settled at last into absolute night; and behind it for a time all the ideals in which I lived, all the aims and ambitions which I held most dear, wasted as in a disastrous eclipse. This strange and to me most unexpected result arose on the perusal of Spencer's Principles of Psychology—the fourth volume in his System of Philosophy—which I had begun before leaving home probably shortly before 1872 and now just finished, especially of those portions where he explains the precise relation he conceives to exist between Mind and Brain, and between both and the great general laws of Matter, Motion, and Force." (John Beattie Crozier, My Inner Life, Being a Chapter in Personal Evolution and Autobiography, Longmans, Green, and Co., London, 1898, p. 252)


"In this age we have had two men of powerful intellect, who have sought to construct the universe without calling in God, an independent moral law, or the immortality of the soul. The one of these, J. S. Mill, I had the courage to oppose when his reputation was at its greatest height. His influence has diminished and is now chiefly in the spheres of Induction and Political Economy, on both of which he has thrown considerable light. The other Herbert Spencer has not so clear or acute a mind, but he is a more powerful speculator, and is more thoroughly conversant with biology, the promising science of the day. I place the two together in order to remark, that they both have brought thinking to a very blank issue." (p. 70) "I am sure that neither Mill nor Spencer meets the demands of our intellect, nor the cravings of our heart." (p. 71) (James McCosh, Herbert Spencer's Philosophy as Culminated in His Ethics, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1885)
"There has been published here a book entitled Can the Old Faith live with the New? by the Rev. George Matheson, D.D., evidently a Scotch Presbyterian, for he dates from Annelan, on the Frith [sic] of Clyde. It is really a very clever attempt to show that the evolution doctrine is not irreconcilable with the current creed. Accepting evolution in its widest extent as no longer to be gainsaid, and accepting also the metaphysics accompanying it--taking these, indeed, as established--the aim is, as I say, to show that the old faith may live with the new. It will, I think, therefore be an admirable means of introducing evolution doctrines into the ordinary mind. When you get back, pray get hold of it and see whether something cannot be done with it as a reprint. I should think Beecher would rejoice over it and take its doctrines as texts." (Letter from Herbert Spencer to Edward L. Youmans dated March 23, 1885. Quoted in John Fiske, Edward Livingston Youmans, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. P. 386)

In objecting to Spencer's attempt to reconcile religion and science by assigning each its "proper" sphere, J. M. Robertson says: "His final consolation to the religious people is that there is only one of all their notions that is valid, and this solitary notion is one that turns out to be at bottom strictly scientific--the notion, namely, that the Universe is finally incomprehensible.... The one thing left to it is identification of itself with the final negative proposition of Science. That is to say, the "reconciliation" of Religion and Science consists in Religion, as such, disappearing: the "permanent peace" is attained when one combatant has eaten the other up, leaving not even the tail. All that ever constituted concrete or affirmative Religion has been consumed, while concrete or affirmative Science goes on continuously extending its limits. I do not know whether many people continue to call themselves religious who take satisfaction in that singular reconciliation." (John M. Robertson, Modern Humanists, Swan Sonnenschein & Co., London, 1891. P. 226)

"C. C. Everett added the prestige of his deanship of the Harvard Divinity School (1878-1900) to his sponsoring Spencer and the use of scientific ethics in literature. He sees Hegel and Spencer as boring from different sides into the same mountain of truth. Everett's article on "Spencer's Reconciliation of Science and Religion" sees his work as making proper allowances for the "mystery" of "true religion" and making "an immense step toward the perfection of the science of psychology" (Christian Examiner, LXXII, 337-52, May, 1862; See also his "Spencer's Data of Ethics." "Unitarian Review, XII, 43ff.) Having "spent a number of terms at the Bowdoin Medical College," Everett said that "if I honor anything in the present age, it is the spirit of scientific investigation. I accept with delight its revelation," as long as it does not deny the soul. (Harry Hayden Clark, "The Influence of Science on American Literary Criticism, 1860-1910, Including the Vogue of Taine," Transactions of the Wisconsin Academy of Sciences, Arts and Letters, Vol. 44, pp. 109-164, 1955. P. 115)
"Now, although Spencer explicitly rejects Pantheism equally with Theism and Atheism, his "indeterminate" conception of an "Absolute Reality," such that all the phenomena of nature are but its manifestation or veil, ends none the less, however little we may translate it into metaphysical terms, in a Pantheistic conception of the universe. It is true he drops the name of God and substitutes for it the term Unknowable, which affords him the double advantage of not being compromised by metaphysical associations and of constantly reminding him of the incomprehensible character of the Supreme Reality. But in rigidly refusing to define this Unknowable he treats it as Being and as Power: he ascribes to it immanence, unity, omnipresence, and unlimited persistence in time and space; he assigns to it the laws of nature as modes of action; and finally, with respect to both external and internal phenomena, he regards it as sustaining the relation of substance to manifestation, and even of cause to effect. If, therefore, Spencer deviates from pure and simple Pantheism, it is merely in so far as this confounds God with the universe, while our philosopher sees in the Unknowable not only the substance of the world and the immanent cause of all its phenomena, but, over and above this, a transcendent Power which surpasses all definition." (Count Goblet d'Alviella, *The Contemporary Evolution of Religious Thought in England, America and India*, translated by J. Moden, G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1886. Pp. 43-44)

"Theologians rejected his "reconciliation" of Science and Religion...." (pp. 210-211) "The Christian view of the world assumes that God is, and that God may be known." (p. 208) "We have no interest in an absolute, the infinite, the unconditioned. We have no interest in an absolute out of all relation, in an infinite which is the negation of the finite, or in an unconditioned which has no reference to conditions. We leave them all to Mr. Spencer to make of them what he pleases. For the God we seek to know is the God who has revealed and still reveals Himself in the universe, the Author of its being and its glory, the Preserver of its eternal order. The God of infinite purity and holiness we may know, and with this we are content. The living God we may know, and we do not care to think of Him as being out of all relations, or apart from all conditions. But we may think of Him as the Maker of heaven and of earth, and as the source and goal of all creation." (p. 209) (James Iverach, *Christianity and Evolution*, third edition, Hodder and Stoughton, London, 1900. Iverach was Professor of Apologetics and Exegesis of the Gospels in the Free Church College, Aberdeen)

Spencer never had any religious beliefs: "The acquisition of scientific knowledge, especially physical, had cooperated with the natural tendency thus shown a dislike of authority and ritual; and had practically excluded the ordinary idea of the super/natural. A breach in the course of causation had come to be, if not an impossible thought, yet a thought never entertained. Necessarily, therefore, the current creed became more and more alien to the set of convictions gradually formed in me, and slowly dropped away unawares. When the change took place it is impossible to say, for it was a change having no marked stages." (Auto. I, 152-3)
"Spirits and demons, as I have shown in the last essay, are only projections of man's own emotional impulses. He turns his emotional cathexis into persons, he peoples the world with them and meets his internal mental processes again outside himself...."
(p. 92) "If we may venture to exploit our hypothesis still further, we may inquire which essential part of our psychological structure is reflected and reproduced in the projective creation of souls and spirits. It could scarcely be disputed that the primitive conception of a soul, however much it may differ from the later, purely immaterial soul, is nevertheless intrinsically the same; that is to say, it assumes that both persons and things are of a double nature and that their known attributes and modifications are distributed between their two component portions. This original duality, to borrow an expression from Herbert Spencer (1893) /The Principles of Sociology, Vol. 1/, is identical with the dualism proclaimed by our current distinction between soul and body and by such ineradicable linguistic expressions of it as the use of phrases like 'beside himself' or 'coming to himself' in relation to fits of rage or fainting (ibid., 144) /The Principles of Sociology, Vol. 1, 3rd edition, p. 144/." (Sigmund Freud, Totem and Taboo, translated by James Strachey, W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., New York, 1952. Pp. 92,93)
"What is the Biological Sociology of Mr. Herbert Spencer but the application of Natural Law to the Social World?" (Henry Drummond, *Natural Law in the Spiritual World*, James Pott & Co., Publishers, New York, 1887. P. xiii)

"... many clear heads and trusting hearts felt a certain unacknowledged terror in the presence of that philosophy of science generally, and evolution in particular, which seemed to be sweeping away what was dearest to their faith ...." (Anonymous / C. C. Everett, "Spencer's Reconciliation of Science and Religion," in *A Review of First Principles*, Nos. I-IV, 1860-61, *The Christian Examiner*, Vol. 72, pp. 337-352, 1862. P. 337. Everett was Dean of Harvard Divinity School 1878-1900)

"So, the day is past, in our judgment, when thoughtful men can believe that there was a creative fiat of God at the introduction of every variety of vegetable and animal life. God may work by means, and a law of variation and of natural selection may have been and probably was the method in which his great design in the vast majority of living forms was carried out." (p. 45) "So we add to the truth of Creation, which ensures God's independence and sovereignty, the other truth of Superintendence, which is inseparable from his omnipresence and control. He is in the universe while he is above it,--immanent while he is transcendent,--able to work upon occasion by direct exercise of will, while his ordinary method of working is through natural law." (p. 46) (Augustus Hopkins Strong, D.D., *Philosophy and Religion*, A. C. Armstrong and Son, New York, 1888. This was written in 1878)

"Herbert Spencer is now, very properly, being seen, once more, as a well-respected and instructive critic (especially in his essays) of almost everything going on in his day." (M. J. S. Hodge, "England, Bibliographical Essay," in Thomas F. Glick, ed., *The Comparative Reception of Darwinism*, pp. 75-80, University of Texas Press, Austin, 1974. P. 79)
"Justus Buchler: "... the surprising thing is that we keep burying Herbert Spencer today; and one becomes rather suspicious why we have to bury him so often."

"Lyman Bryson: "He won't stay down!"

"Buchler: "He won't stay down. Just as every philosopher casts a net into the sea, Spencer casts his net into a very deep sea, and, while his net was not very subtle, it caught the big fish." (Justus Buchler, Mason Gross, and Lyman Bryson, discussion of Herbert Spencer's First Principles: Invitation to Learning. Vol. 1, No. 4, pp. 402-409, 1951-52. Pp. 408-409)

"... evolution has been revived in a strikingly Spencerian form ...." (J. D. Y. Peel, Herbert Spencer on Social Evolution, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1972. P. x)

"The definitive criticism of Spencer will come after Spencer is assimilated, not before ...." (J. M. Robertson, Explorations. Watts & Co., London, n.d. (ca. 1923) P. 117)

Perhaps quote from Steve Tobias' letter to show how heavily indebted to Spencer the Harvard seminar on cultural evolution was.


"In many ways, then, the contemporaneity of Spencer, like his achievement, is astounding." (Philip Abrams, The Origins of British Sociology: 1834-1914. The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1968. P. 72)

"There are many welcome signs that thoughtful men are beginning to open his Spencer's books again in the search for social and political guidance in these difficult and anxious days." (F. J. C. Hearnshaw, "Herbert Spencer and the Individualists." in The Social & Political Ideas of Some Representative Thinkers of the Victorian Age, ed. by F. J. C. Hearnshaw, pp. 53-83, George G. Harrap & Co., London, 1933. P. 55)

"... until a few years ago we should have been tempted to describe it Spencer's philosophy as ... out of date in content. Evidently it is not. Spencer's greatest contribution to philosophy was his Theory of General Evolution, and in recent years his ideas have come back to life, or been propped upright again, in the work of men as far apart as Julian Huxley and Father Teilhard de Chardin, to say nothing of the revival of evolutionary sociology and social anthropology." (Peter B. Medawar, The Art of the Soluble, Methuen & Co Ltd, London, 1967. P. 40)
"Certainly Robinson's general background and thought (the stuff of which he may have pulled out of the cultural atmosphere, rather than from textbooks) were in terms of New England transcendentalism, especially as formulated by Emerson. Against this he projected his concepts of materialism—more nearly Spencer's theory of evolution than Darwin's. The implications of materialism troubled him greatly, for this materialism negated Emerson's thought." (Estelle Kaplan, Philosophy in the Poetry of Edwin Arlington Robinson, Columbia University Press, New York, 1940, P. 31)

"Edwin Arlington Robinson was almost as loyal to the synthetic philosopher. He said in a letter written in 1898 to one of his Harvard friends: 'Professor James's book is entertaining and full of good things; but his attitude toward Spencer makes me think of a dream my father once had. He dreamed he met a dog. The dog annoyed him, so he struck him with a stick. Then the dog doubled in size and my father struck him again with the same result. So the thing went on till the universe was pretty much all dog. When my father awoke, he was, or rather had been, half-way down the dog's throat.'" (Malcolm Cowley, "Naturalism in American Literature." In Evolutionary Thought in America, edited by Stow Persons, pp. 300-333. George Braziller, Inc. New York, 1956. [Yale University Press. New Haven, 1950]. P. 304.)

"Of course, in a general way I quite understand and agree with
that Spencer has done but little service to science. But
I believe that he has done great service to thinking, and all the
mathematicians in the world would not convince me to the contrary,
even though they should all deliver their judgment with the magni-
ficent authority of a _______." (Letter from George J. Romanes to
Charles Darwin, dated February 6, 1880. Mrs. E. Romanes, The Life
and Letters of George John Romanes, Longmans, Green, and Co., Lon-
don, 1896. P. 96) /the unidentified person might be named in this
letter as published in Darwin's Life and Letters, where I believe
it is included also./

"I only got your note at Hereford--on my way home here,-- and I was so furious at your praising Herbert Spencer that I couldn't speak ...." (Letter from John Ruskin to Frederick Harrison dated March 26, 1884. Quoted in E. T. Cook and Alexander Wedderburn, editors, The Works of John Ruskin, Vol. 37. The Letters of John Ruskin, 1870-1889, George Allen, London, 1909. P. 479)

"... a hasty generalisation, such as Spencer's generalisation of evolution, is none the less hasty because what is generalised is the latest scientific theory." (Bertrand Russell, Our Knowledge of the External World, W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., New York, 1929. P. 255)

"Evolutionism, as I shall try to show, is not a truly scientific philosophy, either in its method or in the problems it considers. The true scientific philosophy is something more arduous and more aloof, appealing to less mundane hopes, and requiring a severer discipline for its successful practice." (Bertrand Russell, Our Knowledge of the External World, W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., New York, 1929. P. 12)

"... evolutionism must be reckoned as having had Herbert Spencer for its first philosophical representative; but in recent times it has become, chiefly through William James and M. Bergson, far bolder and far more searching in its innovations than it was in the hands of Herbert Spencer." (Bertrand Russell, Our Knowledge of the External World, W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., New York, 1929. P. 4)

"The typical Protestant freethinker has not the slightest desire to do anything of which his neighbors disapprove apart from the advocacy of heretical opinions. Home Life with Herbert Spencer, by Two (one of the most delightful books in existence), mentions the common opinion of that philosopher [that is, what was thought about Spencer] to the effect that "there is nothing to be said for him but that he has a good moral character." It would not have occurred to Herbert Spencer, to Bentham, to the Mills, or to any of the other British freethinkers who maintained in their works that pleasure is the end of life--it would not have occurred. I say, to any of these men to seek pleasure themselves ...." (Bertrand Russell, Why I Am Not a Christian, Simon and Schuster, New York, 1957. Pp. 124-125)
"There was much in both the thought and personality of Herbert Spencer to commend him to the radical intelligentsia of late 19th-century Russia. A nonconformist and an iconoclast, Spencer expressed a view which Nicholas Mikhailovsky heartily endorsed that:


"Only two volumes of publisher Nicholas Tiblen's projected seven-volume translation of Spencer's works appeared in Russia, because of Tiblen's flight abroad after the bankruptcy of the Contemporary Review. Spencer was amazed at the reception he received in Russia (see his Autobiography, London, 1926, ii. 126, 288, and esp. 308-9), and was apparently convinced by Tiblen that the latter's flight abroad was the result of charges of treason by the Russian authorities for distributing his (Spencer's) book: ibid., pp. 156-7." (James H. Billington, Mikhailovsky and Russian Populism, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1958. P. 189n.)

""But I want to read Spencer--Herbert Spencer. I have never been able to get his works."" [Said by [no first name given] Nazarenko, "the peasant deputy [to the Russian Duma, ca. 1906] for Karkoff," "... far the most remarkable of the peasant deputies." (Maurice Baring, The Puppet Show of Memory, Little, Brown, and Company, Boston, 1922. Pp. 343, 342, 342)

"Spencer's works were introduced into Russia in 1866, when the first of a projected seven-volume translation of Spencer's works was published in St. Petersburg. Nicholas Mikhailovsky systematically studied this latest prophet from the West in the early months of his forced withdrawal from St. Petersburg; two articles on Spencer, which appeared in July 1867, mark the beginning of this new interest." ["Literary Review," in Glasny Sud, Vol. X, pp. 425-442, July 11 and 20, 1867.] (James H. Billington, Mikhailovsky and Russian Populism, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1958. P. 30)

"Nicholas Mikhailovsky also saw in Spencer a man who sensed danger in the growing power of all authorities, especially that of the state." (James H. Billington, Mikhailovsky and Russian Populism, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1958. P. 30)

"In Russia the theory of Spencer's laissez faire principle appealed because it emphasized freedom, and in those days Russia was struggling for freedom." (Nicholas S. Timasheff, Sociological Theory; Its Nature and Growth, third edition, Random House, New York, 1967. P. 44)
"... his [I. M. Sechenov, the "father of Russian physiology"] desire to understand and explain psychical life on the basis of Spencer's general principles of organic evolution, by means of the "disintegration" and "integration" of characteristics." (Y. P. Frolov, Pavlov and His School, translated from the Russian by C. P. Dutt, Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co. Ltd., London, 1938. P. 9)

"We [Masters and Victor Yarros, a Russian Jew he met in Chicago] talked Kant and Schopenhauer; and he told me about the conditions in Russia, from which and from the police he had escaped after they had raided a meeting of young men where Spencer's System of Synthetic Philosophy was being read and discussed." (Edgar Lee Masters, Across Spoon River; An Autobiography, Octagon Books, New York, 1969. P. 184)


A Russian edition of the Epitome of the Synthetic Philosophy of Herbert Spencer, by F. Howard Collins, was published in 1892. (So indicated on the page facing the title page of The Epitome of the Synthetic Philosophy of Herbert Spencer, 4th edition, Williams and Norgate, London, 1897.)

In articulating his sociological theory, Mikhailovskii relied heavily on a minute criticism of two dominant currents in Western sociological thought: Comtian positivism and Spencerian evolutionism. He fully accepted Comte's interpretation of social progress in terms of the evolution of thought and secularization of wisdom, but he rejected Comte's unfavorable attitude toward the individualism of the eighteenth century philosophers. He endorsed Spencer's interpretation of universal evolution as a process leading to the increased diversification of nature and society, but he rejected the English philosopher's organismic model of society. (Alexander Vucinich, Social Thought in Tsarist Russia, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976, p.20)

Mikhailovskii criticized "the unscientific and crude habit" of transferring "simple truths of the natural sciences to the complex phenomena of culture and social life", a habit which was popular among the intelligentsia of the 1860s. He was largely responsible for a noticeable decline in Russia of the popularity of Spencer's "organic theory", which invited a treatment of human society as an organism and of various institutions as specific organs, and which made sociology a mere extension of biology. (Alexander Vucinich, Social Thought in Tsarist Russia, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976, p.22)
Petr Tkachev, the revolutionary Populist, was looking for a definition of happiness. Walicki writes:

"Looking for such a definition, Tkachev made use of the "excellent and universal", "scientific and objective" definition of life he had found in Spencer's Principles of Biology. This indicates, he concluded, that happiness consists in the reconciliation of harmonious balance of man's needs and the means he has at his disposal to satisfy them. The problem, as Tkachev saw it, was that human needs were very diverse and that some could only be satisfied at the expense of others. The artificial needs of the "highly developed individualities" of the privileged minority were satisfied at the expense of the working masses, who were denied even the bare necessities of life". (A. Walicki, A History of Russian Thought from the Enlightenment to Marxism (Stanford University Press: California, 1979)

Herbert Spencer accepted Kovalevskii's views on the emergence of private property in land as a result of successive partitions of land originally owned by individual clans. (Alexander Vucinich, Social Thought in Tsarist Russian, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1976, p.154)

Kareev argued that the Russian "subjective sociology" and Durkheim's "objective sociology" are not mutually exclusive. Both are united in their opposition to Spencer's insistence on keeping value judgements outside the realm of sociology. (Alexander Vucinich, Social Thought in Tsarist Russian, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1976, p.52)

In other, mostly theoretical, studies, Kovalevskii viewed the comparative method as the scientific tool for comparing institutions or communities existing in different societies but representing the same phases of universal evolution. He thought that Spencer erred in applying an organismic model to the study of human society but was absolutely correct in emphasizing the great scientific potential of the comparative method, the safest path to a scientific explanation of "the origin and development of human society". The basic weakness of the comparative method, as employed by both Spencer and Kovalevskii, was that it used "empirical evidence" exclusively as illustrative material for a priori abstractions and that it relied heavily on an uncritical use of social and cultural "survivals" (Alexander Vucinich, Social Thought in Tsarist Russia (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1976, p160)

"There was much in both the thought and personality of Herbert Spencer to commend him to the radical intelligentsia [of 19th century Russia]. A nonconformist and an iconoclast, Spencer expressed a view which Mikhailovsky heartily endorsed that: "To the true reformer no institution is sacred, no belief above criticism. Everything shall conform to equity and reason. Nothing shall be saved by its prestige." Spencer's faith in the individual personality as an end in itself and more than a mere economic entity appealed to Mikhailovsky's Proudhonist sentiments. Mikhailovsky also saw in Spencer a man who sensed danger in the growing power of all authorities, especially that of the state. Most important, Spencer's concept of progress as a continual process of dissociation from accepted norms, in a progression 'from homogenous to the heterogeneous', offered a convenient 'scientific' formula for a position already held by Mikhailovsky's associates." (James Billington, Mikhailovsky and Russian Populism, Oxford University Press, New York, 1958. P. 30)

GEORGE SANTAYANA

"Your kind invitation to deliver the Herbert Spencer Lecture of this year, apart from the honour and pleasure it brings me, enables me to perform a small act of piety. On the whole, with qualifications which will appear presently, I belong to Herbert Spencer's camp; and I am glad of so favourable an opportunity to offer a grain of propitiatory incense to his shade, which I feel to be wandering in our midst somewhat reproachfully." (George Santayana, "The Unknowable," The Herbert Spencer Lecture for 1923, The Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1923. P. 3)
"Olive met Herbert Spencer, too, in London. Ever since making acquaintance with his writings in Basutoland, when "Waldo's Stranger" lent her First Principles, she had eagerly desired to meet him. She used to give a somewhat humorous description of the great man whom she so revered, and to whom she was under so great an intellectual debt. She said he was tall and lank, and walked about saying scornfully (apropos of some occurrence or remark, What was a lord to him? he cared nothing for lords! Olive's comment was that of course lords were nothing to him. How could they be anything to such a man? It was unnecessary for him to say so, much less to say so defiantly. Something had no doubt irritated the sensitive organization of the great man. He talked to her a little and asked her if she played bowls, which he said (in philosophical language, no doubt!) was a pretty good game. She came to the conclusion she had no wish to see him again or any other great person under such circumstances." (S. C. Cronwright-Schreiner, The Life of Olive Schreiner, Little, Brown, and Company, Boston, [1923]. Pp. 190-191)

"You ask me whether Spencer? (Near the end of Spencer's last illness, a friend of his read Olive's allegory, "The Hunter," to him as he lay very ill in bed.) is to me what he was. If one has a broken leg and the doctor sets it, when once it is set one may be said to have no more need of the doctor, nevertheless one always walks on his leg. I think that is how it is with regard to myself and Herbert Spencer. I have read all his works since, some three of four times, now I read him no more. He helped me to believe in a unity underlying all nature; that was a great thing. But he has nothing else to give me now." (Letter from Olive Schreiner to Havelock Ellis dated April 8, 1884. Quoted in S. C. Cronwright-Schreiner, The Life of Olive Schreiner, Little, Brown, and Company, Boston, [1923]. P. 82)

"The book that the Stranger gives to Waldo [In The Story of an African Farm] was intended to be Spencer's First Principles. When I was up in Basutoland [at the mission station of Hermon in June, 1871] with an old aunt and cousin, one stormy, rainy night, there was a knock at the door; they were afraid to go and open it, so I went. There was a stranger there like Waldo's Stranger exactly. There was no house within fifty miles, so he slept there; the next morning he talked with me for a little while and after that I saw him twice for half an hour; and then I never saw him again. [The stranger was a man named Willie Bertram, who died in 1878.] He lent me Spencer's First Principles. I always think that when Christianity burst on the dark Roman world it was what that book was to me. I was in such complete, blank atheism. [In about 1884, Havelock Ellis took down the following statement from Olive; it seems to qualify parts of the letter: "When Olive met Bertram, who was completely atheistic, she was still theistic though freethinking, and he rather shocked her." I did not even believe in my own nature, in any right or wrong, or certainty. I can still feel myself lying before the fire to read it. I had only three days." (She was 16 years, 3 months at the time,] S. C. Cronwright-Schreiner, The Life of Olive Schreiner, Little, Brown, and Company, Boston, [1923]. Letter from Olive Schreiner to Havelock Ellis dated March 28, 1884. Pp. 81-82, 82n.)"
"Early in January 1901 a number of friends in England, Herbert Spencer among them (also Dr. John Brown, whom I suspect to have been a prime mover), subscribed and sent her a sum of money (over £ 150, I think)." (She opposed the British in the war, and suffered accordingly.) (S. C. Cronwright-Schreiner, The Life of Olive Schreiner, Little, Brown, and Company, Boston, 1927, p. 325)

"Carl Schurz suggested that the Civil War might have been averted if the South had been familiar with his Social Statics: ..." (Richard Hofstadter, Social Darwinism in American Thought, revised edition, The Beacon Press, Boston, 1955. P. 48) (no reference to source given.)

"Nineteen years ago, after the battle of Missionary Ridge and an expedition to Knoxville for the relief of Burnside, I was with my command in a winter camp near Chattanooga, where, for some time, our horses suffered so much from want of food that many of them died, and where we had, at times, not salt enough to make our meat and crackers palatable. But I had Herbert Spencer's Social Statics with me, which, in the long winter nights in my tent, I read by the light of a tallow-candle, and in which I found at least an abundance of mental salt to make up for the painful absence of the material article." (Edward L. Youmans, editor, Herbert Spencer on The Americans and The Americans on Herbert Spencer, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1883. P. 41) (Remarks of Mr. Carl Schurz, pp. 40-45)

Schurz called Spencer "... a hero of thought, devoting his powers and his life to the vindication of the divine right of science against the intolerant authority of traditional belief ...." (Remarks of Mr. Carl Schurz, pp. 40-45, in Edward L. Youmans, editor, Herbert Spencer on The Americans and The Americans on Herbert Spencer, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1883. P. 45)
"Herbert Spencer was not a social scientist, he was a social philosopher." (David W. Noble, The Paradox of Progressive Thought. University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 1958. P. 80)

"Spencer was not a bad scientist; he was not a scientist at all." (A. O. J. Cockshut, The Unbelievers, Collins, London, 1964. P. 79)

"Spencer was not really a scientist at all, and devoted all his strength to a doomed effort to make a system of universal knowledge." (A. O. J. Cockshut, The Unbelievers, Collins, London, 1964. P. 10)

"First, Mr. Spencer had not a speculative genius, properly so-called, but he had in a remarkable degree a genius for generalisation and a power for expressing abstract ideas in concrete terms. It was by virtue of these qualities that he rendered conspicuous service to scientific speculation. He related and co-ordinated ideas that had grown up separately and had been allowed to dwell in separation." (A. M. Fairbairn, "Herbert Spencer," The Contemporary Review, Vol. 85, pp. 1-11, 1904. P. 10)

Spencer was remarkable for grasping the general properties of things and for gaining insights by comparing and contrasting broad ranges of phenomena.

"Now, the first characteristic mark of the Spencerian philosophy is that its vast superstructure is reared not independently of science, still less in spite of science, but out of the very materials that science itself has furnished." (William Henry Hudson, An Introduction to the Philosophy of Herbert Spencer, revised edition, Watts & Co., London, 1906. P. 44)

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

Spencer looked forward to the unification of knowledge, to "one science, which has for its object-matter the continual transformation which the universe undergoes." (Quoted by J. Arthur Thomson in Herbert Spencer. J. M. Dent & Co. London, 1906, p. 212).
SCIENTIFIC APPROACH

"No thinker surpasses him in the power of linking and coordinating ideas, and zeal for logical system." (Gabriel Compayré, Herbert Spencer and Scientific Education, translated from the French by Maria E. Findlayson, Thomas Y. Crowell & Co., New York, 1907. P. 15)

"The system of Herbert Spencer, the greatest exponent of the philosophy of evolution, is based wholly on the results of scientific investigation. It consists of a series of more or less broad and more or less probable deductions from the facts and laws already known." (David Starr Jordan, Foot-Notes to Evolution. D. Appleton and Company. New York, 1898. P. 66.)

"A friend who possesses extensive botanical knowledge, once remarked to that that, had I known as much about the details of plant-structure as botanists do, I never should have reached those generalizations concerning plant-morphology which I had reached." (Auto. I, 336)

"Spencer's philosophy of the known was monistic, cleansing, and destructive. It rested on a profound scepticism. It dismissed from knowledge the lady of the dreams of all the philosophers from Plato to Kant, whether they believed that the human mind had some intuitive grasp of truth, or whether, with Wordsworth, that it had fleeting memories of the immortal sea which brought us hither. But in the everyday world, Spencer held, the world of experiment and observation, there was an ever-growing body of relative but consistent truth, a body always comprehending more and more discrete facts in an orderly hierarchy of Causes, Effects, and Laws. It was a rational and determined system with no place in it for the undetermined and lawless." (Sir Peter Chalmers Mitchell, Materialism and Vitalism in Biology. The Herbert Spencer Lecture for 1930, The Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1930. P. 5.)

"... the failure of historians of science seriously to consider Spencer at all. Their books are symptomatic of the mutual isolation between the study of the history of science and the study of social theory, while their subject is someone who never made that distinction." (Robert M. Young, Darwin's Metaphor, Nature's Place in Victorian Culture, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1985. P. 185)

p. 17 "Spencer belonged in the tradition of empirical science rather than that of speculative philosophy." Somehow, I balk at this assertion. I would not want to classify Spencer with "speculative" philosophy--like, say, some of Plato's writings on society. But it seems to me that, if Spencer may properly be called a scientist, he was quite a different (kind?) of scientist than Darwin was. The Origin of Species and Principles of Sociology seem to me to be sufficiently different from the standpoint of science and philosophy that this difference should be stated. L. A. White
"Oddly enough, Spencer, who was no more a practicing scientist than [Samuel] Butler and who was in truth a far more deductive, a priori, unscientific mind, was gravely attended to by the official Darwinians." (Jacques Barzun, Darwin, Marx, Wagner: Critique of a Heritage. Revised second edition. Doubleday & Company, Inc. Garden City, N.Y., 1958. P. 110.)

"All along I have looked at things through my own eyes and not through the eyes of others. I believe that it is in some measure because I have gone direct to Nature, and have escaped the warping / influences of traditional beliefs, that I have reached the views I have reached ...." (Letter to Sr Leslie Stephen, July 2, 1899. Quoted in David Duncan, The Life and Letters of Herbert Spencer. Methuen & Co. London, 1908. pp. 418-419)

"He [Spencer] did a little amateur work in biology, but he never grasped scientific method. His scientific ideas are often derived from secondary sources without empirical verification. He generalises laws without proof, draws facts haphazardly from his own experience, and is fond of asserting his beliefs as 'obvious'." (Ann Low-Beer, Herbert Spencer, Education Thinkers Series, The Macmillan Company, London, 1959. P. 10)

It is no doubt significant in accounting for Spencer's contributions to science that, although familiar with data from many sciences, he was not encumbered with the overwhelming details of any one. Spencer did not fail to perceive and comment on this advantage: "A friend who possesses extensive botanical knowledge, once remarked to me that, had I known as much about the details of plant-structures as botanists do, I never should have reached those generalizations concerning plant-morphology which I had reached." 

Yet Spencer was much more of a scientist than Darwin in that he dealt with many more fields of science and was much more concerned with the philosophy of science and scientific method. And Spencer was much more of a sociologist than Marx in encompassing more human societies, in many more aspects, and societies over a much longer period of development.
"When Herbert Spencer in his later days expunged from his Social Statics the irresistible arguments for Land Nationalization by which he anticipated Henry George, we could not admit that the old Spencer had any right to do this violence to the young Spencer, or was less bound either to confute his position or admit it than if the two had been strangers to one another. Having had this lesson, we do not feel free to alter even those passages which no longer represent our latest conclusions." [Shaw wrote this in 1908 about essays being then reprinted but first published in 1889.] ([George] Bernard Shaw, Essays in Fabian Socialism, Constable and Company, Limited, London, 1962. P. 298)

"In reading this one is reminded of Mr Herbert Spencer's habit of assuming that whatever is not white must be black." ([George] Bernard Shaw, Essays in Fabian Socialism, Constable and Company Limited, London, 1932. P. 87)

"In the days when Herbert Spencer's brightest pupils, from Mrs. Sidney Webb to Grant Allen, turned from him to the Socialism in which he could see nothing but "the coming slavery," we could respect him / whilst confuting him. Today we neither respect our opponents nor confute them. We simply, like Mrs Stetson Gillman's prejudice slayer, "walk through them as if they were not there."" ([George] Bernard Shaw, Essays in Fabian Socialism, Constable and Company Limited, London, 1932. Pp. 293-294)

"Herbert Spencer quite naturally and unaffectedly lived the life of a great man, and played the great game all / through; and whoever does not see this and take off his hat to him, does not know a gentleman when he meets one. When Mr Havelock Ellis /Shaw appears to mean Hugh Elliot/ faces an ungrateful and ungenerous posterity, and calls for three cheers for Herbert Spencer, I cannot believe that any decent soul will refuse to hail his name with three times three if he really knows what Spencer did and how much the world owed to it in his time." (George Bernard Shaw, "Has Herbert Spencer Really Triumphed?", Review of Herbert Spencer by Hugh Elliot /from The Nation, March 17, 1917/, in The Works of Bernard Shaw, Vol. 29, Pen Portraits and Reviews, pp. 259-267, Constable & Co Ltd, London, 1931. Pp. 259-260)

"Next moment Mr Chesterton is himself Calvinistically scorning me for advocating Herbert Spencer's / notion of teaching by experience, and asks, with one of his great Thor-hammer strokes, whether a precipice can be taught by experience, to which I reply, in view of the new railway up the Jungfrau, that I should rather think it can." (George Bernard Shaw, "Chesterton on Shaw," review of George Bernard Shaw by Gilbert K. Chesterton, /from The Nation, August 25, 1909/, in The Works of Bernard Shaw, Vol. 29, Pen Portraits and Reviews, Constable & Co Ltd, London, 1931. Pp. 91-92)
Shaw says that Spencer "... would have been lynched if the common Englishman of his day had been intelligent or erudite enough to find out what he really believed and disbelieved--especially what he disbelieved." (George Bernard Shaw, "Has Herbert Spencer Really Triumphed?", Review of Hugh Elliot's Herbert Spencer [from The Nation, March 17, 1917], in The Works of Bernard Shaw, Vol. 29, Pen Portraits and Reviews, pp. 259-267, Constable & Co Ltd, London, 1931. P. 260)

"Even those who take no interest in his philosophy will feel a quaint affection for the man who, when he was not faithfully straightening out the tangled thought of his century, was inspiring himself with Meyerbeer's music; giving up his horse because, on its discovery of his intense dislike to coerce any living creature, it went slower than he walked, and finally grazed by the roadside without respect for the philosopher's pressing appointments; refusing the proffered affection of George Eliot because she was not as beautiful as the Venus of Milo; and, when his landlady objected to his describing her in the census paper as "the lady with whom Mr Herbert Spencer lives," pondered on her unaccountable recalcitrance for an hour, and then altered the entry to "the lady who lives with Mr Herbert Spencer." Speculative criticism may yet conjecture that he must have been the original of Wagner's Parsifal, "der reine Thor durch Mitleid wissend." All the horses in paradise are probably now struggling for the honor of carrying him at full gallop to whatever destination he may be seeking uncoercively." (George Bernard Shaw, "Has Herbert Spencer Really Triumphed?", Review of Herbert Spencer by Hugh Elliot [from The Nation, March 17, 1917], in The Works of Bernard Shaw, Vol. 29, Pen Portraits and Reviews, pp. 259-267, Constable & Co Ltd, London, 1931. P. 260)
"Obediently following Spencer, whom he never names, he [Georg Simmel] brings into line, one after another, the characteristic Spencerian concepts of differentiation and integration, individualization and environment, without which his metaphysical sociology would not exist ..." (James Collier, "Natural Selection in Sociology," The American Journal of Sociology, Vol. 14, pp. 352-370, 1908. P. 352)

"He spent a month in Cairo, again under the hospitable roof of Dr. Sandilands Grant, and diligently read Arabic with the friendly sheikh of the previous winter. At every turn "totem facts" crowded in upon him, "crying aloud to be registered." Though studying as hard as ever, he entered even more than before into the social life of the place, and saw something of many of the European visitors, including Mr. Herbert Spencer, whom we regret to learn he regarded as a very tedious person." (John Sutherland Black and George Chrystal, The Life of William Robertson Smith, Adam and Charles Black, London, 1912. P. 333)

"I am working at the development theory for my homily—a thesis he was preparing in one of his theology courses in New College, Edinburgh/. . . . In Spencer's book undoubtedly First Principles the fallacies are very obvious. The manner in which he contrives really to assume the materiality of the soul in particular (which of course is the foundation of the whole doctrine) is very ingenious, but contains an egregious petitio principii. Of course the doctrine of the correlation of physical forces forms a great feature in the argument. I think, however, / that I can show that the doctrine is not understood by the development school, and that the doctrine of the dissipation of energy directly disproves the theory of evolution. From this point of view I think I might bring into my homily something different from the common arguments...." (William Robertson Smith, quoted in John Sutherland Black and George Chrystal, The Life of William Robertson Smith, Adam and Charles Black, London, 1912. Pp. 80-81)
"But despite his reputation as a generalizer of natural selection, Spencer's conception of struggle was different from that of most Social Darwinists; and he continued to oppose the sanctification of colonial wars, although he had given war a great role in the past formation of society ...." (J. D. Y. Peel, Herbert Spencer on Social Evolution, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1972. P. xxxviii)


"Spencer was alive and active throughout this period, and so was his cosmic conception of evolution. A rival view was that of the social Darwinists who turned from the process of differentiation (basic in Spencer's thought) to stress the mechanisms of natural selection and survival of the fittest, whether individuals, groups, or social norms." (Nicholas S. Timasheff, Sociological Theory; Its Nature and Growth, 3rd edition, Random House, New York, 1967. P. 127)

"We raise questions of conduct in this matter [eugenics] very different from those raised by Mr. Herbert Spencer and the other first hasty generalizers about evolution, who seemed to suggest that if shopkeepers were encouraged to compete for business and clergymen for congregations, a process of the "survival of the fittest" would automatically set in, which would rapidly improve the race ...." (Note Wallas' narrow conception of Spencer's evolutionism.) (Graham Wallas, Men and Ideas, George Allen & Unwin Ltd, London, 1940. P. 90)

In a review of George Eliot, a Biography, by Gordon S. Haight, the anonymous reviewer in Time Magazine refers to Herbert Spencer as: "The notorious apostle of ethical Darwinism ...." (Time, October 11, 1968, pp. 108, 110. P. 108)

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

In Social Statics came Spencer's first full statement of that position which later became known as 'Social Darwinism,' but which with much greater justification should have been known as 'Social Spencerism.' (p. 322 of Social Statics).
"Foster the good-for-nothing at the expense of the good, is an extreme cruelty. It is a deliberate storing-up of miseries for future generations. There is no greater curse to posterity than that of bequeathing them an increasing population of imbeciles and idlers and criminals." (Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1891. Pp. 344-345)

"The proper application of the principle of natural selection to societies is to see a competition of societal forms for survival, but what Spencer sees is a competition for survival of the members of any society. Spencer sees society as properly a proving ground in which the "breed" is to be improved by the elimination of those members of society who fail in the competitive activities traditionalized in the society. "Social Darwinism," then, has nothing directly to do with societal evolution. It has to do with the continuing biological evolution of the human species, with "improving the breed," in which the proper function of society is to increase the selective pressure." (Gerald Weiss, letter of May 4, 1966)

"If we wish to father "social Darwinism" on any single figure of the time, a better choice by far than Darwin would be Herbert Spencer." (Krishan Kumar, "Sociological Darwinism," Biology and Human Affairs, Vol. 40, pp. 71-76, 1975. P. 73)

"When, at the close of the nineteenth century, the national aspirations were breaking upon foreign shores, John Fiske and others could invoke Spencerian formulas about the survival of the fittest to put the stamp of the cosmos upon the advance of the Anglo-Americans to world dominion over lesser breeds." (Donald Fleming, "Social Darwinism," in Paths of American Thought, ed. by Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., and Morton White, pp. 123-146, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1963. Pp. 126-127)

"... Eugenics, was foreshadowed by Spencer ...." (Victor Branford, Interpretations and Forecasts, Mitchell Kennerley, New York, 1914. P. 3)

"There is even some justification for the view that Spencer was more responsible than Darwin himself for the "social Darwinism" ...." (George Nasmyth, Social Progress and the Darwinian Theory, G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1916. P. 29)

It is necessary to distinguish between the operation of natural selection on societies and "Social Darwinism," the belief that is best not to relieve the condition of the poor and the suffering, since their rapid elimination will assist the process of social evolution. The former is a scientific principle, the latter a political doctrine. Spencer's advocacy of the second can be decried without it in any way affecting the validity of the first.
Those few social scientists who have taken the trouble to read Spencer have themselves been partisans of a social philosophy opposed to Spencer's, that they have been too concerned in refuting Spencer's philosophy of politics, than in separating from it and evaluating independently, his social science. Thus partisanship on the opposite side has been responsible for much of Spencer's contemporary oblivion. (RLC)


"... the once-universal, and still-general, belief that societies arise by manufacture, instead of arising, as they do, by evolution." (Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1891. P. 122)

"... a major tenet of Spencer's evolutionism--that the desirable is also inevitable--is utterly repudiated, and any theory of social change today must admit a large element of sheer contingency about the future." (J. D. Y. Peel, Herbert Spencer on Social Evolution, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1972. P. xliii)

"... for every society, and for each stage in its evolution, there is an appropriate mode of feeling and thinking; and ... no mode of feeling and thinking not adapted to its degree of evolution, and to its surroundings, can be permanently established. Though not exactly, still approximately, the average opinion in any age and country, is a function of the social structure in that age and country." (Study, p. 356)

"And yet as, for the carrying-on of social life, the old must continue so long as the new is not ready, this perpetual compromise is an indispensable accompaniment of a normal development." (Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1891. P. 396)

"Is it not a truism that without divergence from that which exists, whether it be in politics, religion, manners, or anything else, there can be no progress? And is it not an obvious corollary that the temporary ills accompanying the divergence, are out-balanced by the eventual good?" (Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1891. Pp. 238-239)
Radcliffe-Brown described himself as "one who has all his life accepted the hypothesis of social evolution as formulated by Spencer as a useful working hypothesis in the study of human society." ("Social Evolution," in Method in Social Anthropology; Selected Essays by A. R. Radcliffe-Brown, ed. by M. N. Srinivas, pp. 178-189. The University of Chicago Press. Chicago, 1958. P. 189.)

"In conformity with the law of evolution of all organised bodies, that general functions are gradually separated into the special functions constituting them, there have grown up in the social organism for the better performance of the governmental office, an apparatus of law-courts, judges, and barristers; a national church, with its bishops and priests; and a system of caste, titles, and ceremonies, administered by society at large." (Herbert Spencer, "On Manners and Fashion," Westminster Review, Vol. 1, pp. 185-189. April, 1854. Reprinted in Essays on Education, Etc., pp. 198-238. J. M. Dent & Sons Ltd. London, 1911. P. 238)


"... out of the properties of man, intellectual and emotional, there inevitably arise certain laws of social processes ...." (Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1891. P. 152)


"... there is no way from the lower forms of social life to the higher, but one passing through small successive modifications." (Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1891. P. 402)

"For development is far from inevitable; and we need a theory which foresees the search for universal mechanisms and concentrates instead on detailed analysis of historical situations." (J. D. Y. Peel, "Spencer and the Neo-Evolutionists," Sociology, Vol. 3, pp. 173-191, 1969. P. 188)
His objective was to seek "... the ultimate laws to which social phenomena conform." (Intro., p. xxv)

"... no teaching or policy can advance ... [social evolution] beyond a certain normal rate, which is limited by the rate of organic modification in human beings ...." (Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1891. P. 401)

"Spencer's theory of social evolution is one of the most securely based generalizations of sociology; and the disdain in which it is held by all those who never took the trouble to read it well shows how widespread is the addiction to fads in the study of society. Spencer conceived evolution as the general movement of human societies towards increasing differentiation and integration, and the concomitant increase in size. There can be no doubt about the existence of such a trend in the history of mankind; and as far as prehistory is concerned we have now archaeological proofs, whereas Spencer had to rely on deductions from the rudimentary ethnography of his day. Nor did Spencer ever maintain that all societies must pass through the same stages—the notion which was later baptized as the doctrine of unilinear evolution. On the contrary, the mechanism of evolution operates, according to him, through destruction and absorption of the simpler by the more complex entities." (Stanislaw Andreski, The Uses of Comparative Sociology, University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1969. Pp. 73-74)

"It is possible that Spencer might have gone some way to tackling new forms of industrialism if he had developed his neglected notion of integration, which was to accompany differentiation. But the integration he refers to is the growing internal cohesion of each differentiated part, not any higher integration or control of the whole system." (J. D. Y. Peel, Herbert Spencer on Social Evolution, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1972. P. xxxvi)

"Social evolution was a product of the infancy of sociology. It is much to be hoped that its attempted revival is not the symptom of a second childhood." (J. D. Y. Peel, "Spencer and the Neo-Evolutionists," Sociology, Vol. 3, pp. 173-191, 1969. P. 188)

"The grand intellectual sweep of Spencer's philosophy, which linked inorganic, organic, and superorganic (social) evolution, tended to be lost in the reaction to overgeneralization and in the special concerns of different scientific disciplines. Yet modern astrophysics, and particularly the works of scientifically oriented cosmologists, have made authoritative the conception of an "evolving universe."" (Wilbert E. Moore, Social Change. Prentice-Hall, Inc., Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1963. P. 117)

"But it ["the evolutionary style of social theory"] is profoundly anti-historical, for it aims to show us universal mechanisms of change, rather than the individual historical configurations out of which change comes about." [Of course, the latter are exemplifications of general mechanisms of change.—RIC] (J. D. Y. Peel, "Spencer and the Neo-Evolutionists," Sociology, Vol. 3, pp. 175-191, 1969, P. 183)

"Once more, we are liable to be led away by superficial, trivial facts, from the deep-seated and really-important facts they indicate. Always the details of social life, the interesting events, the curious things which serve for gossip, will, if we allow them, hide from us the vital connexion and the vital actions underneath. Every social phenomenon results from an immense aggregate of general and special causes; and we may either take the phenomenon itself as intrinsically momentous, or may take it along with other phenomena, as indicating some inconspicuous truth of real significance." (Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1891. P. 96)

"... Spencer declared that he demurred "entirely to the supposition, which is implied in the book [Henry George's Progress and Poverty], that by any possible social arrangement whatever, the distress that humanity has had to suffer in the course of civilization could have been prevented. The whole process, with all its horrors and tyrannies, and slaveries and wars, and abominations of all kinds, has been an inevitable one accompanying the survival and spread of the strongest, and the consolidation of small tribes into larger societies; ...."" (Martin Fichman, An Elusive Victorian; The Evolution of Alfred Russel Wallace. University of Chicago Press. Chicago, 2004. P. 221)

"Spencer's unsuccessful attempt to provide a theory of evolution (i.e. the mechanism of change by adaptation and the inheritance of acquired characteristics) has shown us how such a theory is impossible; Bellah and Parsons have revived some of the terminology without the determinacy which made Spencer's theory, in its time, a good one. Fundamentally a theory of social evolution is impossible because, whereas all determinate sociological theories include a tacit clause saying 'other things being equal' (thereby allowing continual modification), there are no 'other things' in a cosmic theory like that of evolution. The theory must either be a completely all-inclusive and correct 'theory of things,' or it is, as theory, worthless." (J. D. Y. Peel, "Spencer and the Neo-Evolutionists," Sociology, Vol. 3, pp. 173-191, 1969. P. 179)

"Nevertheless, if social evolution means anything definite, it means not only that things change but that they change in a definite direction, and Spencer is the only one who has tried to formulate that direction as one from the simple to the complex, from the homogeneous to the heterogeneous. The philosophic test of this is to ask, "What is inherently simple? Shall we deny that legal procedure today is simpler than in the barbarian codes, with their very elaborate and complicated rules? Shall we say that English syntax today is more complex than that of inflected Anglo-Saxon?" To ask these questions is to show the vagueness, if not the falsity, of the Spencerian formula. In the end, the adherents of the evolutionary philosophy of history justify themselves by saying that they mean only that everything in human affairs has a cause. But if this is so, what philosophy of history is not evolutionary?" (Morris Raphael Cohen, American Thought: A Critical Sketch, Collier Books, New York, 1962. P. 78/first published by Free Press, 1954)

"Our culture is an outgrowth of trial, error, and accident, controlled by broad evolutionary processes. Man has faced nature under widely different circumstances. His efforts to perpetuate life in all sorts of environments have impelled him to attack the problems of existence in a variety of ways. The result has been an impressive diversity of human institutions and folkways. In the conflicts of communities, nations, and races, these competing institutions and ideas have been subjected to the struggle for existence. Those relatively best adapted to a given people, time, and place have tended to survive. The others have perished, or they linger on in remote or protected areas where superior institutions did not penetrate thoroughly. All our so-called sacred human institutions are thus the naturalistic product of man's age-old struggle with nature to perpetuate his kind, and to protect them against suffering or extinction. It is, of course recognized that even races with the most creditable institutions and beliefs have preserved a vast baggage of archaic and often worthless convictions and folkways, which clutter up the social scene, produce inertia, and retard the progress of human well-being. The writer to whom we are indebted more than any other for the forceful statement of this thesis is Herbert Spencer." (Harry Elmer Barnes, Society in Transition, Prentice-Hall, Inc., New York, 1939. P. 53)
"... the value of the possible conclusions [of the science of sociology that Spencer proposes] becomes greatly impaired by their greatly increased generality." (Alexander Gibson, review of Herbert Spencer, *The Study of Sociology*, The Academy, Vol. 6, pp. 44-46, July 11, 1874. P. 46)

"As to Spencer; we admit he is the King of the Social Scientists; ..." (Robert J. Wright, *Principia or Basis of Social Science*, J. B. Lippincott & Co., Philadelphia, 1875. P. v)

"As will be seen, and indeed has already appeared, the following remarks have been conceived from the point of view of one who fully accepts the possibility of a social science, and who, to a large extent, concurs in Mr. Spencer's conception of the nature of that inquiry." (J. E. Cairnes, "Mr. Spencer on Social Evolution," *The Fortnightly Review*, Vol. 17, n.s., pp. 63-82, 1875. P. 63)

In his *Cours de Philosophie Positive* (1839-1842) Comte argued for the existence of a science of society, patterned after the science of physics. Social relations were to be thought of as phenomena. John Stuart Mill, the leading English Comtist, also argued for a social science in the 6th part of his *System of Logic* (1843). In the section, "The Logic of the Moral Sciences," he dealt with such basic questions as "Are human actions subject to the laws of causality?" This same issue was raised and discussed by Tylor in the Preface of his *Primitive Culture* (1871) and by Spencer in his *The Study of Sociology* (1873).

"There are those who deny that Sociological Science is possible, but the reasons for such denial are not satisfactory. Wherever there are phenomena that can be observed, or facts that can be distinguished and compared, or definite relations of coexistence and succession, or effects that are traceable to causes, or uniformities that result from the operation of natural laws, there is science--actual or possible. Human society is a sphere of facts and relations that are just as amenable, both to inductive and deductive study, as the other phenomena of Nature." (Edward L. Youmans, Preface to the American Edition, pp. v-vi, *Descriptive Sociology*, Vol. 1: English, Classified and Arranged by Herbert Spencer, D. Appleton and Company, New York, [1872]. P. v)

Even a critic of some aspects of Spencer's sociology found himself forced to admit: "Never before has the conception of a social science been put forth with equal distinctness and clearness; and never has its claim to take rank as a recognised branch of scientific investigation been placed upon surer grounds, or asserted with more just emphasis." (J. E. Cairnes, "Mr. Spencer on Social Evolution," *The Fortnightly Review*, Vol. 23, pp. 63-82, 200-213, 1875. P. 63)
"And now for the application of this general truth to our subject. The conceptions with which sociological science is concerned, are complex beyond all others." (Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, D. Appleton and Company, New York, P. 126)

"It is the aim of SOCIOLGY, or SOCIAL SCIENCE, to collect and organize the facts of social phenomena, and trace out the principles or laws by which they are governed. Much has passed under the name of Social Science to which it is wholly inapplicable. It is commonly used to cover all kinds of schemes and devices for the improvement of society, and it is often confounded with socialism, whereas its sole office is to give us knowledge, reduced to system, concerning the social state, in all its forms and stages. Sociology treats of the natural laws by which communities are governed, and is the science of which politics and philanthropic enterprise may be regarded as the dependent arts; but as tanning is not chemistry, so measures for the mitigation of evil in society are not Social Science. Projects of public improvement and reform, and social reconstruction, are not examples of Sociology, but belong, rather, to the province of social invention, which may or may not be guided by scientific principles." (Edward L. Youmans, Preface to the American Edition, pp. v-vi, Descriptive Sociology. Classified and Arranged by Herbert Spencer, Vol. 1: English. D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1872, P. v)

"... no English philosopher before him /Spencer/ has ever so forcibly insisted on the supreme place held in the intellectual synthesis by social science." (Frederic Harrison, The Philosophy of Common Sense, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1907, P. 263)

"There can be no complete acceptance of Sociology as a science, "so long as the belief in a social order not conforming to natural law, survives." (Study, p. 360)

"... Ecclesiastical Institutions and hierarchies, to whose structures and functions he /Spencer/ is the first to apply scientific treatment." (Grant Allen, "The Gospel According to Herbert Spencer," Part II, The Pall Mall Gazette, April 28, 1890, p. 3, P. 3)

J. E. Cairnes, a distinguished political economist of the day, while disagreeing with certain of Spencer's assertions in The Study of Sociology, observed of the work as a whole: "Never before has the conception of a social science been put forth with equal distinctness and clearness; and never has its claim to take rank as a recognised branch of scientific investigation been placed upon surer grounds, or asserted with more just emphasis." (J. E. Cairnes, "Mr. Spencer on Social Evolution," The Fortnightly Review, Vol. 17, n.s., pp. 63-82, 1875, P. 63)

"... Spencer's views upon public questions are not primarily the direct consequence of his evolutionary theories of the world and man. On the contrary, they represent a "set" of his mind established early in life." (Walter Greenwood Beach, The Growth of Social Thought, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1939. P. 117)

"If such coexistences and sequences as those of Biology and Sociology are not yet reduced to law, the presumption is, not that they are irreducible to law, but that their laws elude our present means of exploration. Having long ago proved uniformity throughout all the lower classes of relations, and having been step by step proving uniformity throughout classes of relations successively higher and higher, if we have not yet succeeded with the highest classes, it may be fairly concluded that our powers are at fault, rather than that the uniformity does not exist. And unless we make the absurd assumption that the process of generalization, now going on with unexampled rapidity, has reached its limit, and will suddenly cease, we must infer that ultimately mankind will discover a constant order even among the most involved and obscure phenomena." (Herbert Spencer, "On Laws in General, and the Order of Their Discovery," in Essays: Scientific, Political, & Speculative, 3 Vols., Williams and Norgate, London, 1891. Vol. 2, pp. 159-160)
"I think you once remarked to me that certain of your views had been considerably modified since the publication of Social Statics; but as you intimated that the change consisted in a divergence from the democratic views there expressed, the volume may be more acceptable to us in its present form than it would be after your revision. You will hence see the propriety of a republication here, when you might not choose to have it reissued in England. I think it is especially the book we need at the present time, and may do important service." (Letter from Edward L. Youmans to Herbert Spencer dated April 12, 1864. Quoted in John Fiske, Edward Livingston Youmans, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. P. 176)

"It is also a comparatively small matter that Mr[Edward] Clodd should speak of the "Social Statics" as if that were a "lasting contribution" to sociology as against the "Introduction" [to the History of Civilisation in England, by Buckle], when in point of fact it is in strict truth a series of tours de force, vitiated by deism, and so indefensible in some of its main positions, so irreconcilable in large part with its author's later teachings, that he long allowed it to remain out of print, and only republished it with qualifications." (John Mackinnon Robertson, Buckle and His Critics, Swan Sonnenschein & Co., London, 1895. P. 30)

"Nine years before The Origin of Species was published, Herbert Spencer, in the concluding chapters of Social Statics, had offered an explanation of society in terms of a progressive human nature, adapting itself to changing conditions of life. These chapters are the germ of that inclusive conception and theory of evolution which were elaborated in the ten volumes of the Synthetic Philosophy" (Franklin H. Giddings, Studies in the Theory of Human Society, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1926. P. 3)

"... anyone who glances at its contents will see that the aims of the work /Social Statics/ are primarily ethical." (Auto. I, 358)

"Respecting Social Statics, I gave you a somewhat wrong impression if you gathered from me that I had receded from any of its main principles. The parts which I had in view when I spoke of having modified my opinions on some points were chiefly the chapters on the rights of women and children. I should probably also somewhat qualify the theological form of expression used in some of the earlier chapters. But the essentials of the book would remain as they are. When you come to the reprinting of Social Statics, should that project be presevered in, I should like to put a brief prefatory note stating my present attitude toward it." (Letter from Herbert Spencer to Edward L. Youmans dated May 18, 1864. Quoted in John Fiske, Edward Livingston Youmans, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. Pp. 180-181)
"... Social Statics challenges comparison to an extent that perhaps no other writing does, with both The Republic of Plato and The Politics of Aristotle. It propounds the same problems which they discuss, and it offers solutions which, though not identical with theirs, are closely parallel to them. The object of human effort for Spencer is happiness; and as he conceives of happiness, it does not greatly differ from the joy of rational activity which was the "good life" for Plato. Happiness depends upon external conditions, which are, namely, liberty and justice. Justice, however, for Mr. Spencer, is that limitation of liberty which equalizes it among men, whereas for Plato it was that specialization of work and opportunity which enables every man to do what he can do best, and to be what he can be perfectly. Both writers agree that to establish justice is the proximate purpose, or function, of society." (Franklin H. Giddings, Studies in the Theory of Human Society, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1926. P. 111)

"Spencer's Social Statics .... 1850, had been out nearly a year. In the Leader, 22 February 1851, p. 178, Lewes said: "We remember no work on ethics since that of Spinoza to be compared with it." and he devoted three articles to reviewing it: 15, 22 March and 12 April 1851." (Gordon S. Haight, The George Eliot Letters, 7 Vols., Yale University Press, New Haven, 1954. Vol. I, p. 364n.)

"... in his [Spencer's] Social Statics when he denied the right of private ownership in land, and thus unintentionally committed himself to pure socialism so far as land is concerned. To his surprise and mortification a generation later he found himself claimed by socialists as great authority for their doctrine, quoting the ninth chapter of Social Statics as the unanswerable statement of their case. This was so conclusive, and yet so contrary to his real intention, that he felt compelled to suppress his first edition of Social Statics, and tried to modify his position in a subsequent volume.* "Appendix B, Principles of Ethics (Justice) 1893." (Unsigned, probably by George Gunton himself, "Spencer's Last Book," Gunton's Magazine, Vol. 12, pp. 291-304, 1897. P. 298, 298n.)

"We remember no work on ethics since that of Spinoza to be compared with it [Spencer's Social Statics] in the simplicity of its premises, and the logical rigour with which a complete system of scientific ethics is evolved from them. This is high praise; but we give it deliberately." (Anonymous [George Henry Lewes, "Literature," The Leader, Vol. 2, p. 178, No. 48, February 22, 1851. P. 178)

"Soberly, the original volume has with this year been withdrawn from publication, to give place to a new "Social Statics," dated January, 1892, and published in February. This volume, which is, of course, now to pass in the publisher's lists as "Social Statics," has for full title, "Social Statics, abridged and revised, together with 'The Man versus the State.'" It consists of disjointed fragments of the old "Social Statics," which, in order to make some approach to the bulk of the original, is padded out with the magazine articles before referred to. The "First Principle" /Chapter VI, which enunciates: "Every man has freedom to do all that he wills, provided he infringes not the equal freedom of any other man." is left, but everything large or small relating to land is omitted. The only allusion to land is in the caviling at Locke, which is retained, and that what was originally Section 3, Chapter X., now converted into a chapter, headed "Socialism," is left by careless editing to begin, as in the original: ...." (Henry George, A Perplexed Philosopher, Robert Schalkenbach Foundation, New York, 1965. P. 106)

Spencer objected that a reviewer in the British Quarterly Review (Vol. 63, pp. 1-20, January, 1876) "... had represented Social Statics, which simply contains an ethical doctrine with political corollaries, as embodying my sociological views--deliberately ignoring the published programme of the Principles of Sociology...." (Herbert Spencer, Preface to the 1877 edition of Social Statics, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1883. Pp. xv-xvi)

"The work referred to--"Social Statics"--was intended to be a system of political ethics--absolute political ethics, or that which ought to be, as distinguished from relative political ethics, or that which is at present the nearest practicable approach to it." (Herbert Spencer, Letter to The Times of London, November 7, 1889. Quoted in Henry George, A Perplexed Philosopher, Robert Schalkenbach Foundation, New York, 1965. P. 74)

"Spencer's Social Statics was written to illustrate the conditions essential to human happiness. We do not think that we are asserting too much when we say, that, from this work, will date modern Social Science; as it holds the same relation to the indefinite speculations that were called Social Science anterior to its publication, that Adam Smith's "Wealth of Nations" holds to that which was called Political Economy, prior to 1776." (Unsigned /probably Alexander Delmar or Simon Stern/, "Herbert Spencer," The New York Social Science Review, Vol. 1, pp. 67-82, 1965. P. 70)

(George Henry Lewes devoted three review articles (after an initial notice in the issue of February 22, 1851 in a "Literature" column) to Herbert Spencer's Social Statics. The title was "Spencer's Social Statics," and they appeared in The Leader, Vol. 2, No. 51, pp. 248-250, March 15, 1851; No. 52, pp. 274-275, March 22, 1851; and No. 55, pp. 347-348, April 12, 1851. Lewes quoted very extensively from Statics; in fact, the greater part of the review articles consisted of quoted passages.)
"SOCIAL STATICS"

Spencer notes that his first book, *Social Statics*, "as more extensively, as well as more favourably, noticed, than any one of my later books," adding, wryly, "a fact well illustrating the worth of current criticism." (Auto, I, 365)


"It is implied [In a pamphlet of the Land Restoration League] that I, at present, advocate resumption of direct ownership of the land by the community, whereas it is perfectly well known by those who have issued this leaflet that I have, in a considerable measure, changed my opinion. I originally thought that, after due compensation had been made to existing landowners, the community would benefit by taking the land into its own hands; whereas I have since then concluded that the transaction would be a losing one for the community. If due compensation were made, there would not be a balance of gain but a balance of loss." (Herbert Spencer, letter to the London Daily Chronicle, August 20, 1894. Reprinted in "Mr. Herbert Spencer and the Land Restoration League," Land Restoration Tract, No. 1, Office of the English Land Restoration League, London, December, 1894. P. 3)

"Comte used the term "social statics" in a merely rhetorical way, as a name for social order, and "social dynamics" as a name for progress. Mr. Spencer, more scientific, adheres to precise physical notions. Social statics is for him an account of social forces in equilibrium. Perfect equilibrium is never reached in fact, because of disturbing changes, themselves a consequence of an equilibration of energy between society and its environment. Actually, however, the static and the kinetic tendencies are themselves balanced, and the result, in society, as in the solar system and in the living body, is a moving equilibrium. All this, obviously, is a physical explanation of social forms and metamorphoses, and Spencerian sociology in general, whether formulated by Mr. Spencer, or by other writers under the influence of his thought, is to a large extent a physical philosophy of society, notwithstanding its liberal use of biological and psychological data." (Franklin H. Giddings, The Principles of Sociology, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1911. P.9)

"Also in 1851, Herbert Spencer published his book, *Social Statics*, that included the explanatory phrase "survival of the fittest" (which Charles Darwin himself later used)." (H. James Birx, Interpreting Evolution; Darwin & Teilhard de Chardin, Promethius Books, Buffalo, 1991. P. 139)

"The New York law establishing a ten-hour day for bakers was invalidated in the famous *Lochner Case* (1905), 198 U.S. 45. It is in this case that Justice Holmes made his celebrated observation: "The Fourteenth Amendment does not enact Mr. Herbert Spencer's *Social Statics.*" (William Seagle, The History of Law. Tudor Publishing Co. New York, 1946. P. 417n.)
"Regarded thus, civilization no longer appears to be a regular unfolding after a specific plan; but seems rather a development of man's latent capabilities under the action of favourable circumstances; ..." (Herbert Spencer, Social Statics, John Chapman, London, 1851. P. 415)
"Increase in the bulk of a society inevitably leads to changes of structure ...." (Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1891. P. 347)

"He called the functions which certain parts of the population of a society perform, and which are considered essential for the existence of the society, institutions. This term is still widely used. Spencer listed six institutions which he found in all societies: two of them, ceremonial and professional, are now usually left out, but the other four--domestic, industrial, political, and ecclesiastical--are listed in most present textbooks, though under somewhat different names." (Florian Znaniecki, Social Relations and Social Roles, Chandler Publishing Company, San Francisco, 1965. P. 10)

"Social structure" is one of the central concepts of sociology, but it is not employed consistently or unambiguously. Herbert Spencer, who was one of the first writers to use the term, was too much fascinated by his biological analogies (organic structure and evolution) to make clear what he meant by the structure of a society." (T. B. Bottomore, Sociology, George Allen & Unwin Ltd, London, 1962. P. 109)

"Tout récemment, M. Gurvitch a fait une autre "découverte" qu'il se dit "impatient de communiquer aux lecteurs des Cahiers, en guise de postface à notre son étude sur le Concept de structure sociale" c'est que Spencer serait "une source oubliée des concepts de "structure sociale," "fonction / sociale" et "institution"." (Cahiers internationaux de sociologie, vol. 23, cahiers double, 1957, pp. 111-121). Mais, à l'exception de M. Gurvitch lui-même, on ne voit pas qui a "oublié" Spencer et la paternité, qui lui revient, de ces notions; certainement pas, en tout cas, les modernes utilisateurs de la notion de structure, qui n'ont jamais manqué à ce point de mémoire." (Lévi-Strauss then refers to passages in Binney, Evans-Pritchard, and Radcliffe-Brown which refer to Spencer.) (Claude Lévi-Strauss, Anthropologie Structurale, Librairie Plon, Paris, 1958. Pp. 353n.-354n.)
"Spencer introduced even the term social system, which he used interchangeably with social organism in his Principles of Sociology." (Pitirim A. Sorokin, Sociological Theories of Today, Harper & Row, Publishers, New York, 1966. P. 156n.)

Spencer was always interested in social systems. The specific fact was always used as an illustration of a general principle.

"We have called such an organized combination of actions of cooperating agents a social system. This term was introduced by Spencer who considered society as a whole to be a system." (Florian Znaniecki, Social Relations and Social Roles, Chandler Publishing Company, San Francisco, 1965. P. 18)

"To Spencer evolutionism and the notion that societies are systems, or to use his own terms, analogous to organisms, were inseparable." (J. W. Burrow, Evolution and Society, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1966. P. 193)
"... if Mr. Herbert Spencer desires to have his philosophical merits uncontested, let him keep from meddling with scientific Socialism and social questions, let him confine himself to the compiling of confused, ponderous and unreadable books, surcharged with unimportant facts, ill-studied and selected without discrimination." (Paul Lafargue, "A Few Words with Mr. Herbert Spencer," To-day, Vol. 1, pp. 416-427, 1884. P. 427)

"In his "The Coming Slavery" Mr. Spencer gives an excellent example of his shopkeeper-like evolutionism, which, let it be said in passing, is the only kind of evolutionism known and practiced by a large number of Darwinian evolutionists." (p. 421) "The great philosopher piles up his facts in evolutive series, much like a shopkeeper piles up his goods upon the shelves of his shop, according to their most obvious qualities; he puts pants with pants, socks with socks, shirts with shirts, etc., never caring one straw to know what materials his goods are made of, and how and where they were manufactured." (p. 421) (Paul Lafargue, "A Few Words with Mr. Herbert Spencer," To-day, Vol. 1, pp. 416-427, 1884)

"We are on the highway to communism, and I see no likelihood that the movement in that direction will be arrested. Contrariwise, it seems to me that every new step makes more difficult any reversal, since the reactive por/tion of the public seems likely to become weaker and weaker." (Letter from Herbert Spencer to Edward L. Youmans dated October 3, 1883. Quoted in John Fiske, Edward Livingston Youmans, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894. Pp. 360-381)

Grant Allen, who was in sympathy with almost all of Spencer's political beliefs, once wrote to him: "... I sometimes feel as though in political matters you must almost be discouraged; almost be wearied of your task as a voice crying in the wilderness ...." (Letter from Grant Allen to Herbert Spencer dated April 17, 1882. Quoted in Edward Clodd, Grant Allen, A Memoir, London, 1900. P. 120)

Acute thinkers like George Bernard Shaw and H. G. Wells, who were enthusiastic supporters of socialism, saw in Herbert Spencer only the towering champion of individualism and laissez faire, and therefore as an enemy and a fit object for attack. Seeing him as the author of Social Statics and The Man vs. The State, they did not regard him as a social scientist, and therefore left largely or entirely unread his Study of Sociology and Principles of Sociology. Being activists, if not revolutionaries, they had little interest in Spencer's slow, long range social evolution, which had brought present conditions into being out of past ones. They were instead concerned with what they deemed to be social and economic inequalities in England, and how they could be changed.

Spencer wrote of "the drift towards Socialism, now becoming irresistible ..." (Auto. I, 221)
"Spencer predicted The Coming Slavery; it is here, and we are not even aware of it." (Crane Brinton, "Spencer's Horrid Vision," Foreign Affairs, Vol. 15, pp. 695-706, 1937. P. 705)

"Before very long, however, the book [The Man versus the State] became a sort of rallying-center for resistance to socialism. Conservatives who once had thought of Spencer as a shocking, godless reformer were delighted to discover through him that Science and Evolution were agreed that socialism not only was undesirable but was also in the long run impossible." (Crane Brinton, "Spencer's Horrid Vision," Foreign Affairs, Vol. 15, pp. 695-706, 1937. P. 701)

"All careful students of the works of the "Synthetic" philosopher, eventually recognize the dual personality of Mr. Spencer; the "Dr. Jekyll" of evolution, and the "Mr. Hyde" of Individualism." (Arthur M. Lewis, Evolution, Social and Organic, Charles H. Kerr & Company, Chicago, 1908. P. 150)

Does Spencer ever take note of Karl Marx or of any of the specific events in the radical, revolutionary labor movement of his day? The Paris Commune?

Spencer speaks of "... my horror at the increasingly rapid drift towards Socialism." (Letter from Herbert Spencer to John Piske dated January 3, 1884. Henry E. Huntington Library Cat. No. HM 13745. Unpublished)

Speaking of the slight progress the socialist movement was making in England, Morris commented: "I think we must ... / console ourselves for the slowness with which things move by listening to the wails of Herbert Spencer on the advance of Socialism." (Letter from William Morris to William Allingham dated November 26, 1884 or 1885. Quoted in H. Allingham and E. Baumer Williams, editors, Letters to William Allingham, Longmans, Green and Co., London, 1911. Pp. 235-236)

"These leaders of the socialist movement in England, like Ruskin, William Morris, Bernard Shaw, Annie Besant, Graham Wallas and Sidney Webb, were generally ignorant of scientific philosophy and they had been misled by Herbert Spencer's Individualism into a belief that biological science was anti-socialist." (H. G. Wells, Experiment in Autobiography, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1934. P. 192)
"In the days when Herbert Spencer's Brightest pupils, from Mrs Sidney Webb to Grant Allen, turned from him to the Socialism in which he could see nothing but "the coming slavery," we could respect him whilst confuting him. Today we neither respect our opponents nor confute them. We simply, like Mrs Stetson Gillman's prejudice slayer, "walk through them as if they were not there." (George Bernard Shaw, "Fabian Essays Twenty Years Later," (Preface to the 1908 edition), in The Collected Works of Bernard Shaw, Vol. 30, Essays in Fabian Socialism, pp. 299-311, Wm. H. Wise & Company, New York, 1932. P. 306)

"When Herbert Spencer in his later days expunged from his Social Statics the irresistible arguments for Land Nationalization by which he anticipated Henry George, we could not admit that the old Spencer had any right to do this violence to the young Spencer ...." (George Bernard Shaw, "Fabian Essays Twenty Years Later," (Preface to the 1908 edition), in The Collected Works of Bernard Shaw, Vol. 30, Essays in Fabian Socialism, pp. 299-311, Wm. H. Wise & Company, New York, 1932. P. 311)

"... my faith in free institutions, originally strong (though always joined with the belief that the maintenance and success of them is a question of popular character), has in these later years been greatly decreased by the conviction that the fit character is not possessed by any people, nor is likely to be possessed for ages to come. A nation of which the legislators vote as they are bid, and of which the workers surrender their rights of selling their labour as they please, has neither the ideas nor the sentiments needed for the maintenance of liberty. Lacking them, we are on the way back to the rule of the strong hand in the shape of the bureaucratic despotism of a socialist organisation, and then of the military despotism which must follow it; if, indeed, some social crash does not bring this last upon us more quickly." (Herbert Spencer, "The Late Professor Tyndall," The Fortnightly Review, Vol. 61, pp. 141-148, 1894. P. 145)
"Society has nothing to do with protection. It is simply the gregarious condition of the human race, endued with their natural passions and affections." (p. 219, Vol. 2) "Civilized man is undoubtedly a social being, but this quality has been the result of a long and severe experience by which a great change has been produced in his constitution. Not only so, but he is utterly incapable of social existence in a native state, unless protected in his life, his liberty, and his property by an artificial system of government." (Vol. 2, p. 221) (Lester F. Ward, Dynamic Sociology, 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1894)

"... the very possibility of a society depends on a certain emotional property in the individual." (Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1891. P. 52)

"And since the resistances to be overcome in satisfying the totality of their [Individuals'] desires when living separately, are greater than the resistances to be overcome in satisfying the totality of their desires when living together, there is a residuary force that prevents separation." (Herbert Spencer, First Principles, 6th edition, Thinker's Library edition, Watts & Co., London, 1937. P. 460)

"Creatures whose conditions of existence in relation to food or shelter or enemies are such as make it conducive to their preservation that they should live more or less constantly and closely in presence of one another, inevitably acquire through inherited habit, aided by survival of the fittest, a sociality that increases up to that point at which some counteracting disadvantage checks it." (Herbert Spencer, The Principles of Psychology, 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1883. Vol. 2, p. 575)

"A little consideration show us, for instance, that the very existence of society, implies some natural affinity in its members for such a union." (Herbert Spencer, Social Statics, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1883, P. 28)

"Evidently the aboriginal man must have a constitution adapted to the work he has to perform, joined with a dormant capability of developing into the ultimate man when the conditions of existence permit. To the end that he may prepare the earth for its future inhabitants—his descendants, he must possess a character fitting him to clear it of races endangering his life, and races occupying the space required by mankind. Hence he must have a desire to kill, for it is / the universal law of life that to every needful act must attach a gratification, the desire for which may serve as a stimulus (p. 19) [this page ref. in original]7. He must further be devoid of sympathy, or must have but the germ of it, for he would otherwise be incapacitated for his destructive office. In other words, he must be what we call a savage, and must be left to acquire fitness for social life as fast as the conquest of the earth renders social life possible." (Herbert Spencer, Social Statics, John Chapman, London, 1851. Pp. 410-411)
"That there is a real analogy between an individual organism and a social organism, becomes undeniable when certain necessities determining structure are seen to govern them in common." (Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1891. P. 330)

"In using the terms morphology and physiology, I may seem to be returning to the analogy between society and organism which was to popular with medieval philosophers, was taken over and often misused by nineteenth century sociologists, and is completely rejected by many modern writers. But analogies, properly used, are important aids to scientific thinking and there is a real and significant analogy between organic structure and social structure." (A. R. Radcliffe-Brown, Structure and Function in Primitive Society, Oxford University Press, London, 1952. P. 195)

"The principles of organization are the same; and the differences are simply differences of application." (Herbert Spencer, "The Social Organism," The Westminster Review, Vol. 73, pp. 90-121, 1860. P. 99.)

"The leading facts insisted upon [In Social Statics] were, that a social organism is like an individual organism in these essential traits:--that it grows; that while growing it becomes more complex; that while becoming complex its parts acquire increasing mutual dependence; and that its life is immense in length compared with the lives of its component units. It was pointed out that in both cases there is increasing integration accompanied by increasing heterogeneity; to which I might have added increasing definiteness, had my ideas at that time been fully matured." (Auguste Comte, System of Positive Polity, 4 Vols., translated by John Henry Bridges, Longmans, Green and Co., London, 1875. Vol. 2, p. 239)

"We have thus established a true correspondence between the Statical Analysis of the Social Organism in Sociology, and that of the Individual Organism in Biology. But this analogy must not be pushed too far; for the former is capable of being resolved into its component parts, whilst the latter is not. The elements of social life are not destroyed by being separated: those of individual life are." (Auguste Comte, System of Positive Polity, 4 Vols., translated by John Henry Bridges, Longmans, Green and Co., London, 1875. Vol. 2, p. 239)

"The attempt, for example, very current at one time through the influence of Spencer to interpret social organization by strict analogy with the physical organism, is now discredited." (James Mark Baldwin, Darwin and the Humanities, Review Publishing Co., Baltimore, 1909. P. 40)
"Here is the great contradiction. Spencer, the great biologist, says the brain is to the animal what the Government is to a society. (1) The more effectively and completely the brain controls the members composing the animal body, the higher its place in the organic scale. (2) The less effectively and completely the Government controls the members of the body politic the better will be the society." (Arthur M. Lewis, Evolution, Social and Organic, Charles H. Kerr & Company, Chicago, 1908. P. 159)

"In the chapters of Spencer's "Sociology," treating of "Social Structures," "Social Functions," "Systems of Organs," etc. (Part II), the phenomena of organic life are always presented first, then those from social life are described. But the two sorts are kept distinct. There is no confusion. If the reader should omit the biological similes, the presentation of the sociological phenomena would be all the clearer. (Ludwig Gumplowicz, The Outlines of Sociology, Translated by Frederick W. Moore, American Academy of Political and Social Science, Philadelphia, 1899. P. 30n.)

Spencer succumbed "... to the temptation to render the biological analogy in terms of specific (and quite incomparable) structures." (Marvin Harris, The Rise of Anthropological Theory, Thomas Y. Crowell Company, New York, 1968. P. 63)

"In short, in accepting and developing the dogma of the organic nature of society, Spencer, while he put the crown upon his system of synthetic philosophy, cut the ground from under the feet of his political individualism." (F. J. C. Hearnshaw, "Herbert Spencer and the Individualists," in The Social & Political Ideas Of Some Representative Thinkers of the Victorian Age, ed. by F. J. C. Hearnshaw, pp. 53-83, George G. Harrap & Co. Ltd., London, 1933. P. 82)

"The more we should try to follow out the admirable attempt which Herbert Spencer has made in this direction of employing the organicist view as a working hypothesis, the more we should become convinced that our real insight into the lines along which social evolution branch is more hampered than promoted by that method of biological analogies." (Ferdinand Tönnies, "The Present Problems of Social Structure," The American Journal of Sociology, Vol. 10, pp. 569-588, 1905. P. 584)

"It has indeed become a reproach against Spencer [In which Branford evidently concurs] that he led sociologists into a blind alley—always the narrowest and most perplexing kind / of wilderness—by the elaboration of his "organic analogy."" (Victor Branford, Interpretations and Forecasts, Mitchell Kennerly, New York, 1914. Pp. 399-400)
"A still more remarkable fulfilment of this analogy is to be found in the fact, that the different kinds of organization which society takes on, in progressing from its lowest to its highest phase of development, are essentially similar to the different kinds of animal organization. Creatures of inferior type are little more than aggregations of numerous like parts—are moulded on what Professor Owen terms the principle of vegetative repetition; and in tracing the forms assumed by successive grades above these, we find a gradual diminution in the number of like parts, and a multiplication of unlike parts. In the one extreme there are but few functions, and many similar agents to each function; in the other, there are many functions, and few similar agents to each function." (Herbert Spencer, Social Statics, John Chapman, London, 1851. P.451)

"Spencer uses biological principles only to a very limited extent in investigating sociological laws. Social facts and phenomena keep reminding him of similar biological facts, as is proper; but he always connects the two distinct species by a plan "similarly it happens," without identifying them at all. It is this quiet objectivity which makes him so superior to other sociologists. Schaeffle and Lilienfeld, for example, took these analogies seriously. They followed these will-o'-the-wisps over treacherous ground. But Spencer does not confuse the nature of social and organic phenomena for an instant, notwithstanding anything which the title "Society is an Organism" might imply. Every fact presented as common to both classes of phenomena is so general that we may concede it without detracting from the lucidity of the thought." (Ludwig Gumplowicz, The Outlines of Sociology, Translated by Frederick W. Moore, American Academy of Political and Social Science, Philadelphia, 1899. Pp. 29-30)

"If real isomorphism can be traced between the functioning of living organisms and of political systems (e.g., self-maintenance, growth, evolution) then the comparison is more than allegorical. It carries elements of real "homologies" quite as the analogy between an engine burning fuel and an organism digesting food." (Anatol Rapoport, "Some System Approaches to Political Theory," in Varieties of Political Theory, ed. by David Easton, pp. Prentice-Hall, Inc., Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1966. P. 139)

"Of course, I do not say that the parallel between an individual organism and a social organism is so close, that the distinction to be clearly drawn in the one case may be drawn with like clearness in the other. The structures and functions of the social organism are obviously less specific, far more modifiable, far more dependent on conditions that are variable and never twice alike." (Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1891. P. 38)

"... he [Spencer] was very definitely taken prisoner by the ghost he had invoked [the organic analogy]." (Nicholas S. Timasheff, Sociological Theory: Its Nature and Growth, third edition, Random House, New York, 1967. P. 39)
"... Spencer can not in justice be accused of having overdrawn the analogy, for he has always remained cognizant of the fact that in one essential particular at least, there was a fundamental contrast between the two kinds of organism." (Alexander A. Goldenweiser, "Spencerian Philosophy in 1920," The Freeman, Vol. 1, pp. 228-230, May 19, 1920. P. 228)

"Leviathan is a masterpiece, but it suffers from many grave logical defects the most important of which is the assumption that the analogy between the State and a living creature can be taken quite literally. Most of the stock fallacies of sociological reasoning derive from this mistake ...." (Edmund Leach, "Ignoble Savages," The New York Review of Books, Vol. 11, No. 6, pp. 24-29, October 10, 1968. P. 29)

"The truth is that the conception of society as an organism cannot be made to accord with the radical laissez-faire individualism of Spencer." (F. J. C. Hearnshaw, "Herbert Spencer and the Individualists," in The Social & Political Ideas of Some Representative Thinkers of the Victorian Age, ed. by F. J. C. Hearnshaw, pp. 53-83, George G. Harrap & Co. Ltd., London, 1933. P. 81)

"As we have seen, Spencer carries the analogy between the living society and the living individual very far. But he stops short at a point which makes his whole analogy a mere metaphor.... But if the organic theory is only a metaphor, it can hardly pretend to be a theory. All the toil and trouble of evolution has but produced a figure of speech. The fact is that, like Bentham, Spencer was a determined nominalist. He could never bring himself to admit that the individual is merged by his emotions, his intellect, and his imagination with a group possessing a life of its own." (Crane Brinton, English Political Thought in the Nineteenth Century, Ernest Benn, Ltd., London, 1933. P. 237)

"... Spencer's whole system of social science was built up from his laws of evolution in general .... This is incomparably more important in Spencer's sociology than his development of the organic analogy, though most critics of his sociology have dwelt almost exclusively upon the latter." (Harry Elmer Barnes, "Some Typical Contributions of English Sociology to Political Theory," The American Journal of Sociology, Vol. 27, pp. 289-324, 1921. P. 296)

"The fact that, in developing the organic interpretation of society, biological terms are often used in a figurative sense, must not conceal the fact that there are certain relationships precisely parallel, as such, with certain relationships in animal bodies. In the working portion of this manual, a large number of illustrations will be cited." (Book III of this volume is entitled "Social Anatomy," and Ch. 3 of this section is entitled "Social Aggregates and Organs ..." and Ch. 4 is subtitled "The Social Nervous System.") (Albion W. Small and George E. Vincent, An Introduction to the Study of Society, American Book Company, New York, 1894. P. 92)

"Hence we are warranted in considering the body as a commonwealth of monads, each of which has independent powers of life, growth, and reproduction; each of which unites with a number of others to perform some function needful for supporting itself and all the rest; and each of which absorbs its share of nutriment from the blood. And when thus regarded, the analogy between an individual being and a human society, in which each man, whilst helping to subserve some public want, absorbs a portion of the circulating stock of commodities brought to his door, is palpable enough." (Herbert Spencer, Social Statics, John Chapman, London, 1851. P. 451)

"At least his scientific instincts have preserved him from such obvious exaggerations as others have made in consequence of false analogies between biology and sociology. Although he even affirmed such analogies in principle, he never based anything essential upon them, he never went so far but that the core of his sociology remained sound. Whenever he used biological terms, he treated them as similes rather than as analogies." (Ludwig Gumplowicz, The Outlines of Sociology, Translated by Frederick W. Moore, American Academy of Political and Social Science, Philadelphia, 1899. P. 29)

"This analogy of the social organism was by no means original with Spencer, as it is to be found in Plato, Aristotle, St. Paul, and many of the early Christian Fathers; it was common throughout the Middle Ages (see Gierke, Political Theories of the Middle Ages (trans., by Maitland), pp. 22-30, and notes 66-100, and has been considerably elaborated among others by Comte, Krause, and Ahrens. It was reserved for Spencer, however, to present the first systematic development of the theory." (Harry Elmer Barnes, "Some Typical Contributions of English Sociology to Political Theory," The American Journal of Sociology, Vol. 27, pp. 289-324, 1921. P. 298)

"Herbert Spencer's Principles of Sociology, and Schaeffle's four volumes on the structure and life of society (Bau und Leben des socialen Körpers) /1875-78; 2nd ed., 2 Vols., 1896/ were attempts to state objective facts of human experience in terms of physiological analogies. They were ridiculed by a hundred academic men to everyone who was willing to consider them seriously. For several years my lectures were elaborations of Schaeffle, with one eye constantly on Spencer and Ward. This is a deliberate confession that during those years these writers about social phenomena got between me and reality itself." (Albion W. Small, "Fifty Years of Sociology in the United States," The American Journal of Sociology, Vol. 21, pp. 721-864, 1916. P. 773)

"A sociocultural system is like a biological organism in many respects. Both are thermodynamic systems; both maintain themselves by harnessing free (available) energy. Biological evolution and the evolution of sociocultural systems proceed by increasing the concentration of energy incorporated within their respective systems. Both processes of evolution are characterized by progressive diversification of structure and specialization of function. And both develop structural means of coordinating parts and functions and of regulating (controlling) the behavior of the whole; both move toward higher levels of integration." (Leslie A. White, "Nations as Sociocultural Systems," Ingenor (Ann Arbor, Michigan), Vol. 5, pp. 5-7, 14-18, Autumn, 1968. P. 15)

Speaking of the organic analogy: "... we are not here dealing with a figurative resemblance, but with a fundamental parallelism in principles of structure." (Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1891. Pp. 332-333)

But Spencer does not merely assert an analogy between biological organisms and human societies, he demonstrates it.

"Herbert Spencer—to take the most famous exponent of this approach—explicitly stated that although he conceived his sociological theories by contemplating this analogy, he upheld them solely on the basis of inductive confirmation. It cannot be denied that the organicist point of view led to some valuable insights: it taught sociologists to view society as a system of finely balanced interdependent parts, which function or undergo transformations only under certain specific conditions; it also introduced the idea of function." (Stanislaw Andreski, The Uses of Comparative Sociology, University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1969. P. 23)
SOCIETY AS AN ORGANISM

"... if the resemblance between the body physiological and the body politic, are any indication, ... the real force of the analogy [Spencer's organic analogy] is totally opposed to the negative view of State function." (Thomas Henry Huxley, "Administrative Nihilism," The Fortnightly Review, Vol. 16, pp. 525-543, 1871. P. 534)

"I have used the analogies elaborated, but as a scaffolding to help in building up a coherent body of sociological inductions. Let us take away the scaffolding: the inductions stand by themselves." (Principles, Vol. I, p. 614. 3rd ed. N.Y., 1901; 1st ed. 1878)

During his lifetime Spencer was attacked on numerous occasions for allegedly maintaining that society was an organism. Spencer felt the need and took the pains to defend himself against this accusation, by pointing out that the relationship of a society to an organism was a useful analogy only—but an analogy that had many terms. The countless examples of analogous structures, functions, and developments that Spencer brought forth in his Principles of Sociology certainly bears this out. One may weary of them, but he cannot deny that they are not relevant and illuminating.

"Here let it once more be pointed out that there exist no analogies between the body politic and a living body, save those necessitated by that mutual dependence of parts which they display in common. Though, in foregoing chapters, comparisons of social structures and functions to structures and functions in the human body, have in many cases been made, they have been made only because structures and functions in the human body furnish the most familiar illustrations of structures and functions in general." (Principles, Vol. I, p. 613. 3rd ed. N.Y., 1910)

"To speak with Mr. Spencer of social atoms and organs, of organic processes and centres, of nerves of primary and secondary order, etc., after analogy with the physiological organism, is nothing short of violence to the nature of the material of social science. What can be done with such critical phenomena in social theory as imitation, generalization, invention, tradition, social and pedagogical sanction, on such a crude analogy as that? To force these things into biological moulds is simply to deform them." (James Mark Baldwin, Social and Ethical Interpretations in Mental Development, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1906. P. 549)

Spencer makes it clear that the concept of an organism differentiated and specialized in its parts, but with its actions coordinated and integrated, was arrived at by analogy from the concept of the division of labor coming from political economy. (The Study of Sociology, Ann Arbor edition, p. 305)
SOCIETY AS AN ORGANISM

"... Spencer, who became so enamored of the analogy between organism and society that he came almost to believe it an identity." (Albert Galloway Keller, "Societal Evolution," in The Evolution of Man, ed. by George Alfred Baitsell, pp. 126-151, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1922. P. 129)

"... society is a growth and not a manufacture ...." (p. 321)


"Of course these analogies between the phenomena presented in a physically coherent aggregate forming an individual, and the phenomena presented in a physically incoherent aggregate of individuals distributed over a wide area, cannot be analogies of a visible or sensible kind; but can only be analogies between the systems, or methods, of organization. Such analogies as exist result from the one unquestionable community between the two organizations: there is in both a mutual dependence of parts. This is the origin of all organization; and determines what similarities there are between an individual organism and a social organism. Of course the similarities thus determined, are accompanied by transcendent differences, determined, as above said, by the unlikeliness of the aggregates." (Herbert Spencer, "Specialized Administration." The Fortnightly Review, Vol. 16, pp. 627-654, 1871. P. 634.)
Spencer was one of the first social scientists to explicitly set forth the doctrine that it is the prevailing cultural forces rather than great individuals as such which bring about social change.

"The most general conclusion [to be reached about the preservation and prosperity of a species] is that, in order of obligation, the preservation of the species takes precedence of the preservation of the individual. It is true that the species has no existence save as an aggregate of individuals; and it is true that, therefore, the welfare of the species is an end to be subserved only as subserving the welfares of individuals. But since disappearance of the species, implying disappearance of all individuals, involves absolute failure in achieving the end, whereas disappearance of individuals, though carried to a great extent, may leave outstanding such number as can, by the continuance of the species, make subsequent fulfilment of the end possible; the preservation of the individual must, in a variable degree according to circumstances, be subordinated to the preservation of the species, where the two conflict." (Herbert Spencer, The Principles of Ethics, Vol. 2, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1904. P. 6)
"As written, the Principles of Sociology suffer from a number of defects. In the first place Spencer stressed too much what is now called cultural anthropology, which is only a division of general sociology. Secondly, Spencer was far too interested in the origin of institutions, primitive habits and the survival of ancient customs, to give much attention to the actual working of institutions and their functional character in modern society." (Jay Rumney, Herbert Spencer’s Sociology, An Atheling Book, Atherton Press, New York, 1966. P. 22)

"He knew next to nothing of modern industrial society. His anthropological bias (anthropology was then accepted method of approach to sociology) circumscribed his social viewpoint to the barbarian cultures." (L. L. Bernard, "Herbert Spencer: The Man and His Age," The South Atlantic Quarterly, Vol. 21, pp. 241-251, 1922. P. 248)

"Spencer’s intense concern with ethnographic data casts a curious shadow over Lowie’s History of Ethnological Theory, from whose index Spencer’s name is absent." (Marvin Harris, The Rise of Anthropological Theory, Thomas Y. Crowell Company, New York, 1968. P. 161)

"Evidently Spencer’s use of the term "sociology" in his titles reassures many anthropologists (like Lowie, cited just before) that Spencer can safely be ignored by a discipline that emphasizes primitive and peasant sociocultural systems as opposed to modern Euro-American societies. What then are we to make of the complaint by J. Rumney (1934:22), Spencer’s scientific executor, that Principles of Sociology was too much involved with primitive ethnography to qualify as sociology?" (Marvin Harris, The Rise of Anthropological Theory, Thomas Y. Crowell Company, New York, 1968. P. 161)

(Hornell Hart, "The History of Social Thought: A Consensus of American Opinion," Social Forces, Vol. 6, pp. 190-196, 1927. Hart devised an index of relative importance to the development of social thought of more than 100 sociologists and thinkers, based on the number of times their works were cited in certain selected sociology texts and taught in certain university courses in sociology. On the basis of this index, Spencer finished first with an index of 27, Comte was second with 25, and Lester Ward third with 24. The index scores of another hundred or so thinkers are given.)

"Evidently Spencer’s use of the term "sociology" in his titles reassures many anthropologists that Spencer can safely be ignored by a discipline that emphasizes primitive and peasant sociocultural systems as opposed to modern Euro-American societies." (Marvin Harris, The Rise of Anthropological Theory, Thomas Y. Crowell, New York, 1968. P. 161)
"Does the rest of the world agree with the British school in regarding psychological and subjective elements as fundamental in religious history? Of course no one in their senses—not even a theorist defending a thesis—would deny that subjective elements are there to be taken stock of, or that, when taken stock of, they have a certain value in revealing ultimate conditions. But a profound distrust of the subjective as providing altogether too shifting a base for the philosophy of the human sciences exists both here and abroad. Indeed, if British anthropologists (from amongst whom Spencer may for our present purpose be excluded as founder of a distinct school of his own) have acquiesced in purely psychological results, might not the reason be that, busy with their beloved facts, they have not troubled to look beyond the ends of their noses? Hence, both here amongst admirers of the Synthetic Philosophy, and abroad where system is more of a cult, determined efforts of all sorts have been made to reduce the psychological to its presumed non-psychological and objective conditions." (R. R. Marett, The Threshold of Religion, Methuen & Co. Ltd., London, 1914. Second revised edition. Pp. 124-125)

"... after occupying themselves with primitive arts and products, anthropologists have devoted their attention mainly to the physical characters of the human races ...." (Herbert Spencer, "The Comparative Psychology of Man." Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute, Vol. 5, pp. 301-316, 1875. P. 314.)

"Thus my acquaintance with Mr. Tylor and his great book /Primitive Culture/ began thirty-five years ago /in 1872/, when he, beside Sir John Lubbock, already towered above all British anthropologists, like Saul above his people.... If England possesses an unofficial school of anthropologists, despite the public indifference to man not fully 'up to date', she owes it to the examples of Mr. Tylor and Lord Avebury." (Andrew Lang, "Edward Burnett Tylor," in Anthropological Essays Presented to Edward Burnett Tylor, pp. 1-15, The Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1907. P. 1)

"Though, after occupying themselves with primitive arts and products, anthropologists have devoted their attention mainly to the physical characters of the human races ...." (Herbert Spencer, "The Comparative Psychology of Man," Vol. 1, pp. 351-370, Williams and Norgate, London, 1891. P. 369)

"He /E. B. Tylor/ has never been a man of controversy; his discussion with Mr. Herbert Spencer (Mind, 1877) had a foredoomed end. With all respect to Mr. Spencer, he took up anthropology as a παρεπιγραφή; he was less familiar with facts than fertile in conjectures, and much of his reading was done by proxy, an impossible method." (Andrew Lang, "Edward Burnett Tylor," In Anthropological Essays Presented to Edward Burnett Tylor, pp. 1-15. The Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1907) (p. 14)
"Anthropology, in dealing with man--i.e., with a particular being / or species of animal--is primarily a descriptive science. It is not concerned with laws or principles, but with material facts. Sociology, on the contrary, deals primarily with association and whatever conduces to it or modifies it. But association is not a material thing; it is a condition, and the science that deals with it is chiefly concerned with the laws and principles that produce and a effect that condition. In short, while anthropology is essentially a concrete science, sociology is essentially an abstract one." (Lester F. Ward, Outlines of Sociology, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1898. Pp. 65-66)

"Anthropology is the term now applied to the general science of man. It, therefore, comprehends many things, and has, perhaps, not yet reached its / full and final definition. It embraces men's physical, mental, and moral characteristics; their religious conceptions, mythology and traditions; their mental traits and development; their civil and political organizations and institutions; their language, literature, arts, and monuments; their customs and modes of life." (Edward L. Youmans, "Anthropology and Ethnology," The Popular Science Monthly, Vol. 1, pp. 498-500, 1872. Pp. 498-499)

"... the life's work of Herbert Spencer was essentially an anthropological work ...." (E. W. Brabrock, Obituary of Herbert Spencer, Man, Vol. 4, pp. 9-12, 1904. P. 9)

"In my ministry Theology was naturally replaced by Anthropology. This science had not in 1863 been recognized by the British Association; the facts with which it was concerned were brought out in other sections, and the society in London discussing the negro /this was the Anthropological Society/ with an eye to America had not yet merited recognition. But my combat about the negro in that society was the means of giving me a place in the Anthropological Institute when it arose. The works of Tylor and Lubbock and the generalizations of Herbert Spencer concerning primitive man breathed on all the dry bones in the museums, and Anthropology presently leaped into the front tank of sciences." (Moncure Daniel Conway, Autobiography, Memories and Experiences, 2 Vols., Houghton, Mifflin and Company, Boston, 1904. Vol. 2, p. 333)

"The evolutionist explanation of the natural world as applied to sociology found its fullest exponent in Herbert Spencer (1820-1903), who studied the anatomy of the social frame. He derived the principles of sociology from those of psychology and of biology, and regarded social development as a super-organic evolution." (p. 126) (Alfred Millard Haddon--History of Anthropology. The Thinker's Library, No. 42. Watts & Co. London, 1945)

"... Herbert Spencer ... has never been recognized to belong to the true tradition of British anthropology, simply because he uses his vast collections of facts to illustrate rather than to test his preformed opinions." (R. R. Marett, Tylor, John Wiley & Sons, Inc. New York, 1936. P. 69.)

"If Herbert Spencer did not create sociology, he at least raised it into life and started it on its grand career." (Lester F. Ward, "Herbert Spencer's Sociology," The Independent, Vol. 56, pp. 730-734, 1904. P. 730)

"... I do not hesitate to say that Mr. Spencer should be regarded as the true founder of a scientific sociology, and I as its greatest constructive thinker." (Franklin H. Giddings, "The Greatness of Herbert Spencer," The Independent, Vol. 55, pp. 2959-2962, December 17, 1903. P. 2961)

"Except in his treatment of the family, where he could not think freely, Herbert Spencer made substantial contributions to our understanding of society, which have by no means been nullified by later thinkers. Indeed, it is surprising how the theories of the great sociologists of the past—who more often than not either ignored or rejected each other's views—dovetail if we sift them judiciously." (Stanislav Andreski, The Uses of Comparative Sociology, University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1969. P. 74)

Like no other writer on comparative sociology, Spencer was aware of the unity of culture, and selected his examples more broadly than any: from simple societies, medieval history, chiefdoms, kingdoms, early empires, Classical Antiquity, 14th century England, etc.
"The indirect influence of Mr. Spencer's Sociology must be large and lasting. He has set a high standard for the descriptive social sciences. He has taught the method of observation and generalization in brilliant examples. He / has arranged known social facts in such order that they make further observation and arrangement easier. He has proposed conclusions, which may be uncertain, but a safer philosophical structure than Mr. Spencer's must use a large part of the foundation which he has laid." (Albion W. Small and George E. Vincent, An Introduction to the Study of Society, American Book Company, New York, 1894. Pp. 46-47)

"... even the elementary principles of this branch of inquiry have yet to be formulated." (J. E. Carines, "Mr. Spencer on Social Evolution," The Fortnightly Review, Vol. 23, pp. 63-82, 200-213, 1875. P. 63)

"Whether or not, then, Mr. Spencer has created a science of sociology, he has at least demonstrated that social phenomena can be studied with scientific seriousness, and that if we do not thereby establish positive laws of social causation we shall, at least, attain to broader and truer views of social organization ...." (Franklin H. Giddings, Review of Spencer's Principles of Sociology, Vol. 3, Science, n.s., Vol. 5, pp. 732-733, 1897. P. 733)

"Yet Mr. Spencer's sociology is of the past, not of the present. It has a permanent place in the development of sociological thought. Present sociology, however, is neither Spencerian nor is it dependent upon anything Spencerian." (Albion W. Small, Review of Spencer's The Principles of Sociology, Vol. 3; American Journal of Sociology, Vol. 2, pp. 741-742, 1897. P. 742)


"He has command of more material than any one save Bastian; and he is enough of a positivist to test its complicated mass objectively, calmly, without prejudice, drawing conclusions regardless of metaphysical prepossessions. This has made Spencer the real founder of sociology and he will long remain its most powerful champion." (Ludwig Gumplowicz, The Outlines of Sociology, Translated by Frederick W. Moore, American Academy of Political and Social Science, Philadelphia, 1899. P. 32)

"... the great sociological system put forth by a master mind (Spencer), to which all other modern systems of sociological thought, and all more special sociological studies, in one or another way are related." (Franklin H. Giddings, "Modern Sociology," The International Monthly, Vol. 2, pp. 536-554, 1900. P. 543)
"... if sociology is now in a fair way of reaching the scientific stage, to Herbert Spencer is due the main credit." (Anonymous, "The Philosophy of Herbert Spencer," The Edinburgh Review, Vol. 199, pp. 352-373, 1904. P. 372)

"Our thesis is that the central line in the path of methodological progress [in sociology], from Spencer to Ratzenhofer, is marked by gradual shifting of effort from analogical representation of social structures to real analysis of social processes." (Albin W. Small, Preface, General Sociology, 1905) (check)

"The problem that presents itself to sociologists today cannot be expressed in terms that sufficed a generation ago. Our present demand is for a way of explaining what is taking place among people, with literal values for the different terms which we find concerned in human experience. We want an explanation, not of men's crystal-line formations, not of their machineries, not of their institutional remains. We want an account of the intimate process of their lives, in terms that will assign their actual meaning and value to the chief and subordinate factors concerned in the process." (Albin W. Small, General Sociology, [no page ref. given]. Quoted in Arthur M. Lewis, An Introduction to Sociology, Charles H. Kerr & Company, Chicago, 1913. P. 65)

"I think you have evaluated Spencer's position in true historical perspective. Personally, too, I am quite of the opinion that by far the most important of his books was the Biology, and, indeed, when I ask myself what first rate contribution—contribution of a magistral kind—he made to Sociology, I find it hard to reply." (Letter from Victor V. Branford, Honorary Secretary of the Sociological Society of London, to Lester F. Ward dated February 2, 1909. Quoted in Lester F. Ward, Glimpses of the Cosmos, Vol. 6, G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1918. P. 302)

"It is all very well to say that Spencer's sociology is out of date. That is only true in a little larger degree than would be the assertion that the astronomy of Copernicus, or the physics of Galileo, are out of date. Spencer's sociology is one of the rungs of the ladder by which his successors have been able to climb. As no science can be completely mastered apart from its history, the student of sociology must thoroughly study the works of its two greatest fore-runners—Comte and Spencer." (Arthur M. Lewis, An Introduction to Sociology, Charles H. Kerr & Company, Chicago, 1913. P. 88)

"If Herbert Spencer did not create sociology, he at least raised it into life and started it on its grand career. It required courage to do this and to embody it in a great scientific system on an equal footing with biology, psychology and ethics at a time when others passed it by and disdained to speak its name. This brave act will always be regarded as more than atoning for any shortcomings that the most critical will ever find in Herbert Spencer's sociology." (Lester F. Ward, "Herbert Spencer's Sociology," Glimpses of the Cosmos, Vol. 6, pp. 171-177, G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1918. P. 171)
"... viewed from the standpoint of the historical development of the subject, Spencer's contribution was the most far-reaching in its influence that has yet been made." (Harry Elmer Barnes, "Some Typical Contributions of English Sociology to Political Theory," The American Journal of Sociology, Vol. 27, pp. 289-324, 1921. P. 300)

"He [Spencer] must be viewed as the first great systematizer of concrete sociological data and, therefore, as the real founder of sociology. Comte gave the science its name; Spencer first gave it an enormous collection of systematically arranged data together with a broad and more or less consistent body of theory." (Frank Hamilton Hanks, "Sociology," in Harry Elmer Barnes, editor, The History and Prospects of the Social Sciences, pp. 255-332, Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1925. P. 302)

"Mr. Spencer organized sociology as a science, and he demonstrated principles which must always hold a central place in sociological theory, whatever its further development may be." (Franklin H. Giddings, Studies in the Theory of Human Society, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1926. P. 114)

"Spencer's demonstration of the validity of the evolutionary viewpoint as applied to the study of human society had a tremendous influence upon the subsequent development of sociology, yet his distinctively sociological contributions affected but little the growth of sociology in England." (Harry Elmer Barnes, "The Fate of Sociology in England," American Sociological Society, Papers and Proceedings, Vol. 21, pp. 26-46, 1926. P. 26)

"While there were many factors which account for this strange lack of influence of Spencer upon English social science, it would seem that the following are the most important: (1) the type of English mind which tended towards calm reflection and broad generalization in the field of social science was still under the spell of the arid a priori metaphysics of Thomas Hill Green and the Stoic dialecticians; (2) the specialists were too narrow or too absorbed professionally to interest themselves in Spencer's sweeping generalizations and dogmatic formulas; (3) the reformers and uplifters were repelled by Spencer's harsh, uncompromising, and mechanical individualism. Hence, Spencer remains a gargantuan, but nevertheless a loney and isolated figure in English social science." (Harry Elmer Barnes, "The Fate of Sociology in England," American Sociological Society, Papers and Proceedings, Vol. 21, pp. 26-46, 1926. P. 34)

"... one of the greatest was Herbert Spencer—a name for ever honourable, and one of the founders of sociology." (F. Müller-Lyer, The Family, translated from Die Familie, Munich, 1912, by F. W. Stella Browne, Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1931. P. 316)
... en la Sociología propiamente dicha no surgió en Inglaterra la escuela spenceriana, e incluso declinó la Sociología como ciencia británica independiente, para lo que Spencer la había habilitado. América recogió la herencia y hoy nos hallamos en presencia del hecho extraño, y deplorado por/ los cultivadores de nuestra ciencia, de que carece Inglaterra en la actualidad de una Sociología viva y sistemática." (Leopold Von Wiese, Sociología, Colección Labor, Sección VIII, No. 323, Editorial Labor, Barcelona, 1932. Pp. 81-82)

"Herbert Spencer (1820-1903) was, for an older generation, simply the sociologist, and about the end of the nineteenth century any theory of society other than Spencer's seemed impossible. It need not be decided here whether those who call him the greatest philosopher of the Victorian age are correct; an any case, his bulky System of Synthetic Philosophy, to which his sociology belongs, is an intellectual achievement of the first rank." (Leopold von Wiese, Systematic Sociology on the Basis of the Beziehungslehre and Gebildelehre, adapted and amplified by Howard Becker, John Wiley & Sons, Inc., New York, 1932. P. 687)

"If the evolution of German sociology down to the present can be summed up in the phrase: "From encyclopedic to special social science," the same statement is valid even to a greater degree of American sociology. How little has survived of the "universal" pretensions of the Spencer-Ward school! No more than ten years after the appearance of Dynamic Sociology there began in America, too, the sceptical discussion of questions of method." (Leopold von Wiese, Systematic Sociology on the Basis of the Beziehungslehre and Gebildelehre, adapted and amplified by Howard Becker, John Wiley & Sons, Inc., New York, 1932. P. 691)


"Herbert Spencer emphasized social processes in his application of the general theory of evolution and dissolution to society, but the processes which he emphasized--integration, differentiation, dissipation (disintegration), aggregation (societal growth), and adaptation (adjustment to environment)--have in considerable measure dropped out of sociological terminology. They have a mathematical, physical, or biological rather than a sociological flavor." (Quincy Wright, A Study of War, 2 Vols., University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1942. Vol. 2, p. 1437n.)
"The clearly visible fact is that the prehistory of sociology--as represented, for example, in the speculations of a Comte or a Spencer, a Hobhouse of a Ratzenofer--is very far from cumulative." (Robert K. Merton, Social Theory and Social Structure, The Free Press, Glencoe, Illinois, 1949. P. 5)

"Spencer's influence is today extinct. No intellectually respectable person would wish to be caught in the company of the 'synthetic philosophy,' or--since Professor Giddings and Professor Sumner, both men of great intellectual distinction, passed from the scene--in the company of the Spencerian sociology. It is true that there is still a social science which calls itself 'sociology,' but it is a very different affair from the Spencerian product. It is no longer greatly intrigued by the general notion of evolution. Indeed, it is often more than a little doubtful as to progress--at least, there is no progress without conscious and planned effort. It, therefore, studies specific situations, and is especially interested in questions of environment, 'ecology,' 'demography,' social statistics and the like. This sociology owes little to Spencer except the idea that society, or 'social groupings,' are something of a definite, tangible nature enough to be made subjects of 'scientific' investigation. In brief, sociology today owes most of its problems and procedures to Darwinian ideas rather than to Spencerian." (Edward S. Corwin, "The Impact of the Idea of Evolution on the American Political and Constitutional Tradition," in Evolutionary Thought in America, ed. by Stow Persons, pp. 182-199, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1950. P. 187)


"It was types of societies, not the history of isolated institutions or culture traits, which interested him [Spencer]. In this sense he was a thorough sociologist, not a historian, and still less an antiquarian." (J. W. Burrow, Evolution and Society, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1966. P. 192)

"There is no need here to examine the logic of Spencer's sociology. Much of it could, I think, be rescued from the criticisms usually made of it." (Philip Abrams, The Origins of British Sociology: 1834-1914, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1968. P. 73)

"Modern British sociology was built, more than anything else, as a defense against Spencer." (Philip Abrams, The Origins of British Sociology: 1834-1914, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1968. P. 67)
"The first effort to place sociology in the British university system had been made by Herbert Spencer in 1880. Martin White's success twenty years later had a great deal to do with the newness of the University of London and with the particular interests of the Webbs. But it is suggestive that of the available candidates it was Hobhouse, the philosopher, who was chosen." (Philip Abrams, The Origins of British Sociology: 1834-1914, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1968. P. 147)

"Spencer's scheme .... is not a system of speculative conceptions. It is an attempt to represent in language the literal facts of society in the relations in which they actually occur in real life." (In other words, Spencer does not deal in "ideal types" as German sociologists, like Max Weber, often did.) (Albion W. Small, General Sociology, p. 130) (Small is referring here to Spencer's Principles of Sociology.)

"Many of [George] Fitzhugh's [1806-1881] articles for the [Richmond] Examiner were re-published in a book, Sociology for the South (1854) as the first American book to use the new word "sociology" in its title. Obviously, it was pure proslavery propaganda rather than social science, and in it Fitzhugh argued, as the selection shows, that the innate inferiority of the Negro required a slave system." (Harvey Wish, editor, Slavery in the South, Farrar, Straus and Company, New York, 1964. P. 273)

"Why does a writer of Mr. Spencer's eminence lend the sanction of his authority to the barbarous compound "Sociology" [sic]? The word, we believe, was coined in jest, and was certainly not fitted to enter into our serious language." (Viscount Amberley, Review of Spencer's "The Study of Sociology," The Examiner, January 10, 1874, pp. 37-38. P. 37)

"... sociology, in the barbarous name to tell the truth--...." (Emile Durkheim, Montesquieu and Rousseau, Forerunners of Sociology, The University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor, 1965. P. 1)

There were many doubters. For example, Parke Godwin wrote in a letter to the Editor of the Popular Science Monthly, "... I should be disposed to doubt whether they [biology, psychology, and sociology] are yet to be ranked as more than inchoate sciences." (p. 106) "As to Sociology, the name for which was invented only a few years since by Comte, it is still in a chaotic condition; and, unless Mr. Spencer, whose few introductory chapters are alone made public, succeeds in giving it consistency and form, it can hardly be called more than a hope." (Parke Godwin, "The Sphere and Limits of Science," The Popular Science Monthly, Vol. 3, pp. 105-111, May, 1873.)
"In one respect, however, Mr. Spencer's present volume, and we hope still more his larger work, will assist in dissipating prejudices against sociology. The public have been too much accustomed to associate the name of social science with isolated crotchets. They have been addressed in the name of science by writers who are soon detected as pamphleteers in a scientific skin, pressing for reconstruction and immediate legislation upon arguments which no one can perceive to be more scientific in their character than the average leading article." (Alexander Gibson, review of Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, The Academy, Vol. 6, pp. 44-46, July 11, 1874. P. 46)

Herbert Spencer "... was not just a sociologist but only came to sociology as wider ethical and philosophical concerns prompted him." (J. D. Y. Peel, Herbert Spencer on Social Evolution, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1972. P. vii)

"Herbert Spencer (1820-1903) was the first and probably remains the greatest, person to have written sociology, so-called, in the English language." (J. D. Y. Peel, Herbert Spencer on Social Evolution, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1972. P. vii)

"... Herbert Spencer, who is now acknowledged to be the foremost living expositor of pure scientific sociology." (Edward L. Youmans, "Editor's Table," The Popular Science Monthly, Vol. 2, pp. 240-243, December, 1972. P. 240)

"Spencer's voice is prominent among those who maintain that sociology can truly be, in all essentials, a science of society as there are sciences of nature." (J. D. Y. Peel, Herbert Spencer on Social Evolution, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1972. P. vii)

"There can be no complete acceptance of Sociology as a science, so long as the belief in a social order not conforming to natural law, survives." (Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1891. P. 394)

"SOCIIOLOGY" (THE TERM)

"For the Science of Society, the name "Sociology" was introduced by M. Comte. Partly because it was in possession of the field, and partly because no other name sufficiently comprehensive existed, I adopted it. Though repeatedly blamed by those who condemn the word as a "barbarism," I do not regret having done so." (Herbert Spencer, Preface to The Principles of Sociology, Vol. 1, 1st ed., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1878. P. v)

"The word Sociologie was first used by Comte in 1839 as an equivalent of the expression, social physics, previously in use, and was introduced, he said, to describe by a single term that part of natural philosophy which relates to the positive study of the fundamental laws of social phenomena." (Benjamin Kidd, "Sociology," Encyclopaedia Britannica, 11th ed., Vol. 25, pp. 322-331, 1911. P. 322)

"The heterogeneity of our speech is already so great that nearly every thought is expressed in words taken from two or three languages. Already, too, it has many words formed in irregular ways from heterogeneous roots. Seeing this, I accept without much reluctance, another such word: believing that the convencience and suggestiveness of our symbols are of more importance than the legitimacy of their derivation." (Herbert Spencer, Preface to The Principles of Sociology, Vol. 1, 1st ed., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1878. P. v)

"Hence the actions of man in society are the subject of a further kind of study, which is now commonly called Sociology. The word is offensive to scholars as being a barbarously formed hybrid; and although it is too late to quarrel with anybody for using it, I should prefer Economy as a general name for the study of man's common life short of specific reference to the State." (p. 7) "If such a Latin word could exist at all, it could only mean a science of partnerships or alliances. One must not push these objections too far, however. Suicide, as was once pointed out at Cambridge by the opponent of a Latin thesis, "Recte statuit Paleius de suicidis," could as a Latin word mean nothing but killing swine." (p. 7n.) (Frederick Pollock, An Introduction to the History of the Science of Politics, new and revised edition, Macmillan & Company, Ltd., London, 1911)

"Probably the name [sociology] must be accepted now, though barbarously formed and scarcely justified by necessity." (p. 217) "For the word "Sociology"—which, even if such hybrid formations were allowable, would not naturally convey the meaning it is intended to convey ...." (p. 217) (Anonymous, "Spencer's Descriptive Sociology," The Saturday Review of Politics, Literature, Science, and Art, Vol. 36, pp. 217-218, 1873)

"Spencer's title, 'Descriptive Sociology, killed the work to which it was applied."[This because the word 'sociology' was a 'popularly repulsive' term.] (Edward L. Youmans to Lester F. Ward, letter of March 18, 1886. In Preface to 2nd ed. of Lester F. Ward, Dynamic Sociology, 2 Vols., D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1926. Vol. 1, p. v)