



Principles of Sociology

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PRINCIPLES OF SOCIOLOGY.

There has at last appeared an American work on the Principles of Sociology,* written by one who holds the chair of sociology in one of the leading universities of the country. Heretofore, so far as I am aware, only two works (exclusive of articles and reviews) containing the word sociology in their titles have been issued in America. One of these appeared thirteen years ago, and though even larger than the present one, did not profess to deal with the whole subject, but only with one of its most advanced phases. The other work, emanating from the same institution as this one, treats of sociology from the standpoint of statistics.

The present work purports to cover the whole ground of sociological science and is adapted for use as a text-book in the higher institutions of learning. Issuing as it does from one of the greatest publishing houses of the world representing the reading public of both hemispheres, there can be no

*"The Principles of Sociology. An Analysis of the Phenomena of Association and of Social Organization." By FRANKLIN HENRY GIDDINGS, M. A., Professor of Sociology in Columbia University in the City of New York. Pp. 476. Price \$3.00. New York and London: Macmillan & Co., 1896.

(1)

doubt that it will command the attention of serious people everywhere.

The book has been anxiously waited for during many months, so that its arrival is no surprise. Speculation as to its contents has been rife among those most interested, and not a few have freely expressed their estimate of its merits in advance. Some have felt sure that it would present an entirely new system hitherto undreamed of in anyone's philosophy, while all expected a great display of originality at least, whatever might be the grounds of justification therefor. It is safe to say that nearly all guessed wrong, as the eminently sober and practical treatise before us is as far as possible removed from a *coup de théâtre*. Neither will it be the target at which some perhaps have hoped to hurl the lance of criticism. It cannot be called a brilliant effort. The genius it displays is of the kind described by Carlyle as consisting of an unlimited capacity for work—the *attention suivie* of Helvetius and the *longue patience* of Buffon. It is certainly a laborious, and, it should be added, an important and valuable book. The author has worked for others and seems to have made good use of exceptional opportunities. It is furthermore a careful work, painstaking and faithful in just those dry and unattractive appointments that almost everyone shuns and neglects. Every chapter seems to have been worked over and over until made as perfect as circumstances would permit, and no amount of rummaging among musty volumes has been deemed too great if only one more fact could thereby be added to the bulky evidence.

Some one has said that the number of times a book will be read depends on the number of times it has been written. This hyperbole well expresses the truth that the books that live are those upon which the greatest labor and research have been bestowed. Those impatient and feverish productions that only contain crude and undigested thoughts, that quote at random or from memory if at all, and that merely

spin the web that is secreted from the brains of their writers, have no permanent value, make no deep impression upon their readers, are skimmed over as carelessly as they were written, and are shoved aside and forgotten along with the very names of their authors. But, assuming that the theme is worth the labor, those works that are elaborated with care, toil, and patience, that embody much well-directed research, and that not merely contain the thought but leave behind it a luminous trail to mark the steps in the protracted quest—such works are immortal, since it is through them that the present is cemented to the past and the structure of human knowledge is slowly and laboriously reared. It is in this latter class, if I mistake not, that Professor Giddings' "Principles of Sociology" is destined to be placed.

Such being the general character of the work, it certainly deserves a respectful treatment, and I would not have anyone mistake such strictures as I shall make upon other aspects of it, whether special or general, for a lack of appreciation of the thoroughly scientific spirit that has presided over its preparation. It is a remarkably even book, denoting a continuous purpose throughout. The style is dignified and strong, and is free from anything that tends to divert the reader's attention from the matter and fix it on the manner, thereby correspondingly diminishing the force of the idea. Although manifestly intended for use as a text-book for advanced students, the subject is not needlessly staked off into a multitude of subordinate parts, often supposed necessary to help students to think; nor is it otherwise disfigured by scholastic features so common in text-books, but which only have the effect of making them forbidding. The book is simply divided into chapters whose length depends upon the amount of treatment the several subjects require. This imparts to the work a solid and virile appearance and relieves it of that air of elementariness which often repels the serious student.

Notwithstanding all these obvious merits it cannot properly

be called an interesting book. Text-books are not usually interesting. The mere presentation of a body of established knowledge, however successfully done, rarely takes a firm hold of any but those who happen to be seeking just such a class of information. It is only bold excursions into new fields that chain the attention. Occasionally a text-book practically answers this description, but then it is devoted to some small part of a larger science. But generally the only interesting books relating to serious subjects are those of independent special investigators, who, untrammelled by pedagogic requirements, push some one of the Briarean arms of science far out into unexplored regions. The reader whom the subject interests at all will follow such an excursion with a zeal comparable to that with which accounts of analogous geographical explorations are read by adventurous youths.

The present work does not belong to this class. Although sociology is a new science, and although this is one of the few books treating of it, still there is practically nothing new in the book. It is almost exclusively a compilation, but it is a compilation by one who knows what he wants and how to secure it. The most useful work that is now done in any science is that which focalizes the scattered knowledge of others. Nor is this kind of work unscientific. Special investigators are rarely capable of classifying facts. A compilation such as this virtually amounts to a classification. It is the very making of a science out of its raw materials.

As nearly every one who would care to read this paper will have probably already read the book itself, there seems to be scarcely any justification for giving it a descriptive review. The present paper may therefore be looked upon as merely a contribution to social science, based chiefly upon certain considerations brought forward by Professor Giddings in this work.

The dual title of the book will suggest to most minds two somewhat distinct ideas. The "principles" of a science

are something besides an analysis of phenomena. Putting the contents with the title, it may be said in all truth that the former agree far better with the second title than with the first. In fact, it is difficult to see what the book has to do with the principles of sociology. It is devoted almost exclusively to the facts of association and social organization, and while it may be admitted that many of the factors leading to these results are considered, and while it cannot be denied that such factors are entitled to be called principles in the popular sense, still we look in vain anywhere in the book for any of the fundamental principles of a science of sociology, or any attempt to show that sociology is a science except as being a systematic domain of facts and phenomena. That it is a science in the sense of being a domain of natural forces and uniform laws, such as astronomy, physics and chemistry, or even as biology as now taught, or as "psychophysics," no intimation is to be found between these covers.

This, however, is nothing more than must be said of Herbert Spencer's "Principles of Sociology" so far as published. The work under review might well have been called: Elements of Sociology, omitting, as did Lord Kames in his "Elements of Criticism," the *vielsagend* definite article on the express ground of disclaiming an exhaustive treatment. With a modest title of this kind the book would be read with increasing interest and laid down with unexpected satisfaction instead of with a sense of "great expectations" unrealized.

But we are to deal with the book rather than the title, and here we find that it is not alone in the title that it imitates the great work of Mr. Spencer. The classification of topics is, it is true, very different, and there is some effort to avoid a similarity of method, but in the two most important respects the two treatises are in harmony. These are, first, in confining sociology chiefly to anthropology, and second, in adhering strictly to the "natural history method" of looking upon society as something absolutely passive, to be analyzed and dissected like the carcass of a dead animal.

To say that there is nothing new in the book is not the same as to say that there is nothing peculiarly the author's own. The details of his method and classification had all been announced by him before. Most of this is contained in his "Theory of Sociology," published nearly two years ago.* The rest is to be found in his numerous other papers and discussions. But he has here filled in the body of the matter and rounded it out with a great wealth of illustration. This is what constitutes the chief merit of the work. His classification is *une classification comme une autre*, and another would have done as well.

He professes to reject the biological view and to adopt the psychological one. In this latter he goes too far. When he says that "sociology is a psychological science" † he says too much if his words mean anything. There is only one "psychological science," and that is psychology. It is also too much to say that "all true social facts are psychical in their nature," ‡ or that "sociology is the science of the association of minds." § The truth is that sociology has a psychologic basis, *i. e.*, the forces of society are primarily psychic. He states this truth very clearly when he says that "the motive forces of political life, as of economic life, are the desires of men." || Finally, he goes too far in denying that the individual mind working for the individual's ends, entirely apart from any *consensus*, is attended with social consequences. In fact, by far the greater part of all social effects are the result of this independent action of individuals, totally regardless of everything that other individuals are doing.

Sociology is defined as "the systematic description and explanation of society viewed as a whole," or, "the general

* Supplement to the ANNALS, Vol. v. No. 1, July, 1894.

† Preface, p. v.

‡ P. 3.

§ P. 25.

|| P. 37.

science of social phenomena."* In another place † he defines it as "an explanation of social phenomena in terms of natural causation," or specifically as "an interpretation of social phenomena in terms of psychical activity, organic adjustment, natural selection, and the conservation of energy." "It is," he says, "strictly an explanatory science, fortifying induction by deduction, and referring effects to veritable causes." Supposing that he means: fortifying deduction by induction, instead of the reverse, these definitions fairly reflect his method of treatment. It is essentially "explanatory." There are thousands of facts that need to be explained, and sociology is supposed to be concerned chiefly in explaining them.

He discusses at some length the relation of sociology to the special social sciences, with a general disposition to consider it in some way distinct from any one of them and from all of them taken together, still this distinction is nowhere clearly drawn. "Sociology," he says, "is a general social science, but a general science is not necessarily a group of sciences. No doubt the word will continue to be used as a short term for the social sciences taken collectively." ‡ His final conclusion on this question is probably best summed up in the following sentence: "Therefore while sociology in the broadest sense of the word is the comprehensive science of society, coextensive with the entire field of the special social sciences, in a narrower sense, and for purposes of university study and of general exposition, it may be defined as the science of social elements and first principles." § This seems at first sight to be very different from the definitions previously quoted, but it is necessary to remember what he means by "principles," and that, as already shown, he treats the word as if synonymous with "elements."

Much space is devoted to the consideration of the several

* Pp. 5-6.

† P. 419.

‡ P. 31.

§ P. 33.

alleged unitary principles on which as many authors have essayed to explain all the facts of human association. The principal of these are Gumpłowicz's doctrine of the struggle of races resulting in their forcible amalgamation, Novicow's similar doctrine of intellectual assimilation as the result of conflict, De Greef's modification of the doctrine of social contract, Tarde's principle of imitation, and Durkheim's idea of unconscious mutual coercion. This last is similar to Dr. Ross' "social control," but is probably much narrower than the latter will prove to be when fully developed. Of all these conceptions Professor Giddings lays by far the most stress on the law of imitation, which he justly regards as very fundamental and well-nigh universal. The fact, however, seems to be lost sight of that this principle has an important counterpart, and that there is an opposite, or exactly contrary principle. In fact, the principle of imitation is primarily biological, but also highly anthropological, while the opposite one is strictly sociological. It consists in a hatred or dread of imitation, an effort to avoid the ways of others and a refusal to follow any prescribed course. This *misomimetism*, or *mimophobia*, as it may be called, is a product of intellectual development, and is based on the recognition of the law of imitation in the lower stages of progress, and on the observation that that law marks a low degree of development. To avoid yielding to it is to manifest a high degree of development. The greater the intelligence the greater will be the effort to conceal the motives to action, and the more these motives will become internal and psychical instead of external and physical. A comparison of the negro with the white race brings this out clearly, but it is scarcely less obvious from a comparison of people of the same race but of different grades of intelligence. The relative calculability of human actions depends upon it, and it accounts for both the studied emotional indifference of a class of theatre-goers and the high excellence and originality of the best mental work done by man. In great minds it

produces a true originality, but in small minds it results in a false originality which is not only not productive but is positively obstructive. It causes the valuable work done by others to be ignored and belittled and emphasis to be laid on things that are unimportant. In this way problems that have been put on the high road to solution are often set back to where they were before anything was done. This intense individuality is one of the worst impediments to intellectual progress to-day, because it is next to impossible to secure the recognition of a new principle however important. The evil is aggravated by the fact that small minds are often found in high places and great ones in low places, whereby worthy contributions are forgotten and unworthy ones exaggerated. In this last phenomenon, however, the law of imitation is also a factor, since it is deemed proper to imitate whatever emanates from a highly respectable source.

If sociology consisted in the study of this class of principles there would be scarcely any limit to the number that might be detected and illustrated. Professor Giddings gives to each of these something like its true weight, but he brings forward one of his own, which, in strict imitation of the other panacea-mongers whom he criticises, he exalts to the first rank and places at the very base of the science of sociology. Indeed, he attempts to build the superstructure chiefly on this foundation, and this probably constitutes the weakest feature of the book, although there can be no doubt that it is the source of the greater part of what is original in it. This new sociological catholicon is what the author is pleased to call the "consciousness of kind," which he defines as "a state of consciousness in which any being, whether low or high in the scale of life, recognizes another conscious being as of like kind with itself."* This is not the first time that he had announced this principle. In a discussion with Dr. Patten in the *ANNALS* † he wrote:

* Preface, p. v; also, p. 17.

† Vol. v, No. 5, March, 1895, p. 750.

“ I have never thought or spoken of mere physical contact, hostile or friendly, as constituting association or a society. It is association *if and only if accompanied by a consciousness on the part of each of the creatures implicated that the creatures with which it comes in contact are like itself.* This consciousness of kind is the elementary, the generic social fact; it is sympathy, fellow feeling in the literal as distinguished from the popular sense of the word.” Dr. Small, in referring to this in the next number of the ANNALS,* classed the doctrine along with “other remote metaphysical categories.” Nobody certainly supposed that it was destined to be rehabilitated and made the very corner-stone of the whole science of sociology.

It is this important rôle which it is made to play that alone justifies a somewhat careful examination of it. It cannot be denied that a recognition of likeness among living beings is a distinctive psychic attribute of great moment. It is the basis of much biological discussion and is partially correlated with the physical characters which constitute species. I say partially, because the phenomena of hybridity show that the correlation is not exact. It is, therefore, not the importance of the fact that is in question, but the correctness of calling it a sociological principle. The idea of its being anything new, except perhaps the particular and fairly happy form of words by which it is here designated, is simply preposterous. It is a fundamental fact of biology but not specially of sociology. Nearly every biological truth runs through the whole of the animal kingdom including man, and it would be as correct to call one of these a sociological principle as another. There are many such principles that are much more fundamental than this one. To take one that resembles it in being also of a psychic nature, we might instance reflex action. There is as much reason why this should be regarded as the primary sociological

* Vol. v, No. 6, May, 1895, p. 950.

principle as the one under consideration, and it would be even easier to follow its workings throughout society and to illustrate its developed manifestations among enlightened peoples. Professor Giddings quotes Leidy to the effect that amœbæ will devour diatoms, desmids, and rotifers, but are prevented by the consciousness of kind from devouring one another, and he concludes that "no other discrimination of sociological significance is of equal generality, and this is the conclusive proof of the truth of my contention that the consciousness of kind is the primordial subjective fact in social phenomena."* Not at all. Sentiency is the "primordial subjective fact." He proves too much. His principle is altogether too "primordial," and yet not the most primordial.

If he had pursued his investigations into the lower organisms a little farther he would have found that certain Infusoria, instead of avoiding each other, actually devour each other, *i. e.*, they mutually absorb each other by a process called conjugation. Maupas has shown that this occurs at a stage anterior to any true sexual differentiation. This is, of course, a form of reproduction, and what is called fertilization in the higher animals is a similar process, except that here there is a difference between the two kinds of cells which is called sexual. It is facts like these that have emboldened such investigators as Claude Bernard † and Ernst Haeckel ‡ to declare that reproduction is at bottom a form of nutrition. The consciousness of kind, therefore, acts here in the opposite way from what it does in the amœba. That animals recognize their likes both for purposes of attraction and repulsion cannot of course be denied. It is one of the earliest manifestations of the perceptive psychic faculty. It is only a part of the wider truth that they perceive their environment and profit by such perception. They recognize other things

* P. 107.

† *Revue scientifique*, September 26, 1874, pp. 289, 290.

‡ "*Generelle Morphologie*," Vol. ii. p. 16.

also. They know their enemies. They distinguish nutritious from innutritious substances. They perceive and avoid obstacles. *

In seeking to justify his fundamental social concept Professor Giddings has displayed much ingenuity, and many of the applications made are acute and interesting, as where he makes it account for national pride and the common idea of each people that it is in some way superior, or specially "chosen," and that all others are merely "οἱ βάρβαροι"; or where he applies it to the theogonies as the principle on which each race makes its gods in its own image; likewise its application to political parties, social classes, religious sectarianism, and personal congeniality and companionableness. All these he thinks are based on a sort of intuitive perception of similarity which he identifies with the consciousness of kind. But these attempts have carried him much too far and led him to ignore the broader truth that among human beings it is the rational though dimly felt recognition of the advantageousness of association that has chiefly caused it, while in animals it has been no less its advantage, but secured through instincts developed by natural selection.†

In his chapter on the "Social Mind," based, like everything else in the book, on the "consciousness of kind," he has scarcely gone beyond the customary attempt to show that nearly everything in society presupposes a certain consensus of opinion, or at least of feeling among its members. But neither he nor any one else, so far as I am aware, has adequately set forth the essential character of this consensus. Almost always this is left out of view and attention drawn to certain mere accidents that often attend it. In order to have peace in a community it is necessary that not merely a majority, but practically all the people constituting it shall think alike on certain very fundamental subjects. Partisan

* Cf. "The Psychic Factors of Civilization," Caps **xxi**, **xxii**.

† See the *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. i, January, 1896, p. 432.

strife may run high, but the questions discussed are relatively incidental. In England no one raises the question whether the British Constitution shall prevail or be set at naught, because, no matter how widely they may differ on other questions, they are all agreed on that one. In America, even in South America, the maintenance of "republican institutions," as each country understands them, forms no part of political debates. While crimes against person and property are constantly committed by a small class in every civilized nation no one seriously questions the right and duty of the state to suppress them as far as possible. Although every conceivable form of marriage may and does exist in all monogamous countries, still, the question as to what constitutes the best form of marriage is never discussed, because so nearly all agree that monogamy is the best form. And so with any number of social states and conditions that might be mentioned showing that there is what might be called a social opinion or social mind which is essential to the coherence of the social aggregate. Neither is it exactly the same as that which is meant by "public opinion," since this usually refers rather to differences than to harmony in the thoughts of men, and stands for the preponderance of opinion on one side or the other of questions that are more or less in dispute, *i. e.*, questions which society thereby admits to be debatable.

The consideration of the fundamentals above referred to, about which, for the given community, discussion is over, and which have therefore become an integral part of the mental constitution of society, is much more important to the sociologist than a study of the facts presented by mobs and panics, upon which attention is usually concentrated in discussions of "social consciousness." Professor Giddings no doubt has a vague idea of this distinction, and his quotation from Lewes is much to the point, still, I am bound to say, he has not clearly brought out this "principle." His characterization of tradition as social memory is excellent,

and there are many other good things in this important but unduly foreshortened chapter.

In keeping with his general method, as above described, he has, logically enough, set aside the chief consideration in connection with the "social mind." In another place,* and quite out of its natural position, he has, indeed, shown what Spencer also admitted, that government is in the long run as good as the people chose to make it, and that even despotism is virtually sustained by them and despots encouraged by manifestations of popular approval. But that the social mind, and especially the social will, are really embodied in and carried out by government, as the homologue, however crude and imperfect, of the individual brain, is nowhere stated, and we are driven to infer that he either does not accept this view or else that he has omitted one of the most fundamental of all sociological considerations.

From the standpoint of the present writer, the gravest defect of the book is, of course, the absence of any scientific basis. Science, as distinguished from isolated items of knowledge, deals with the *laws* of phenomena. The phenomena themselves are of course essential to science, but they do not alone constitute it. Laws are general expressions for the effects of natural causes operating in a uniform manner. Such causes are simply the forces, as they are called, which the given science has to deal with. In physics the forces treated are the gravitant and radiant forces, in chemistry they are mainly elective affinities, in biology they are usually called vital forces, in psychology they are nerve currents. These are all, however, merely modes of manifestation of one universal force, and may be resolved into it or transmuted into one another, but it is convenient to speak of them as so many distinct forces. If sociology is a science there must be a social force. Professor Giddings admits the existence of such a force, and a passage quoted near the beginning of this paper shows that he has a fairly clear

* Pp. 389, 390.

conception of its general nature; we also find him speaking of the "gigantic forces of the social mind."* One would have naturally supposed that anything so basic as this would be treated at full length in a work on "The Principles of Sociology." The proper place, the book being for the use of adult students, would seem to be near the beginning. We are therefore surprised to find that only a short chapter of twenty pages bears any such title, and that this is the last but one in the book. The surprise is, however, greatly heightened when we come to read this chapter. Only in the last three pages is there any allusion to social forces, and here he seems to confound them with physical forces. After remarking that "volition" (a forceless word merely implying choice) is a true cause, he goes on to say: "Therefore, while affirming the reality of sociological forces that are distinctly different from merely biological and from merely physical forces, the sociologist is careful to add that they are different only as products are different from factors, only as protoplasm is different from certain quantities of oxygen, hydrogen, nitrogen, and carbon," † etc. And further: "Enormous as is the social energy, it is always a definite quantity. Every unit of it has been taken up from the physical environment, and no changes of form can increase the amount. What is used in one way is absolutely withdrawn from other modes of expenditure. If the available energy of the environment is wasted or in any way diminished, the social activity also must diminish." ‡ These surely are generalities that fairly scintillate. They have an intensely scientific sound. Let us examine them. In the first place there is a certain ambiguity about them. If it is merely meant that man cannot exhaust the natural resources of the earth without suffering the consequences, they are indeed true but trite. But if, as it is perhaps more charitable to assume, it is meant that the social forces are

* P. 37.

† P. 417.

‡ P. 419.

themselves a fixed quantity that cannot be increased, then the propositions are not true.

In another place* our author discourses in an apparently learned manner on the conservation of energy and the transmutation of forces. His reasoning here is much to the same effect and equally unsound, if I understand it. The whole may be treated under one. I grant that "all social energy is transmuted physical energy," and also that to a limited extent "social energies are reconverted into physical forces," but I deny the implied reciprocity and equality of these processes. It does not follow from the law of the conservation of energy. I stated the principle in 1893 in a form which I could not now improve upon: "The parallel between physics and *psychics*, as thus defined, fails at one point. While, so far as is known, there has never been any loss of psychic energy, it is certain that there has been an immense increase of it. Indeed, time was when none existed. It has developed or been evolved with all organic nature and has increased *pari passu* with the increase of mind and the development of brain. Complete analogy between the organic and inorganic forces is not reached until it is recognized that the former are derived from the latter, and that vital and psychic forces are simply additional forms of the universal force." †

To say that the social energy cannot be increased is tantamount to saying that it cannot have been introduced. This would assume that society and man had always existed, whereas we know that the human record began at about the time that the geological record proper ended, and that the human period at the very maximum estimate (500,000 years) is only about a two hundredth part of the life period of the globe (say 100,000,000 years). Society is only a local phenomenon, very restricted both in its extent and duration, and social energy is simply one of the later modes of

* Pp. 363-366.

† "The Psychic Factors of Civilization," pp. 55-56.

manifestation, of the universal energy, due to a peculiar combination of conditions. Just as mechanical energy may be converted into heat at any given point, so cosmic energy may be and has been converted into vital, psychic, and social energy wherever the conditions have been favorable for such a transmutation. This process is still going on and social energy was never so rapidly generated as at the present time. Every fresh discovery of science and every new improvement in machinery, the products of psychic activity, transfers another large quantity of cosmic energy to the domain of the social forces, there to remain, so far as any one can foresee, forever.

It is perhaps well that Professor Giddings has not attempted to any considerable extent to deal with principles, for wherever he has sought to do so he has manifested the same inability to handle them philosophically. He professes to have derived his social philosophy chiefly from Spencer, but admits that it is not to be found "in those of his books that bear sociological titles,"* and he finds them "scattered throughout the second half of the volume called 'First Principles.'" I agree that there is more real sociology there than there is in his "Principles of Sociology," and this bears about the same proportion to the latter that the treatment of sociology proper in Professor Giddings' book bears to the whole book. In this respect the two treatises are so nearly alike that the latter might be regarded as an attempt to condense the former into one volume by a sort of "horizontal reduction."

Our author makes a number of invidious comparisons between Spencer and Comte, with the customary disparaging references to the latter, made on the sociological principle of "imitation," and, like all similar ones, for the two reasons, that it is fashionable, and that he does not know any better. He has put the first edition of Comte's "Positive Philosophy" into his bibliography, and makes a few references to it,

*P. 9.

doubtless the result of successful rummaging, but nothing is more certain than that he is utterly ignorant of Comte. Otherwise he would scarcely say that "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. Spencèr, more scientific, adheres to precise physical notions."* A more exact reversal of the truth could not have been formulated. Comte used social statics and social dynamics as the natural subdivisions of "social physics," and devoted three volumes (half the course) to their systematic elaboration. Of course he maintained that these subdivisions relate respectively to order and progress, for this is the truth. Spencer did in reality use the term "Social Statics" "in a merely rhetorical way," and professed to write a book on it, but the book does not treat of that subject at all. It has transpired that even this was Comte's term filtered through Mill and caught up by Spencer (without knowing the source) as a fine sounding name for a book. As regards social dynamics, I am not aware that he has ever used the expression with approval. The very idea of a scientific use of either expression seemed to be wholly new to him in 1864 when he wrote his "Reasons for Dissenting from the Philosophy of M. Comte," where he says: "Respecting M. Comte's application of the words *statics* and *dynamics* to social phenomena, now that I know what it is, I will only say that while I perfectly understand how, by a defensible extension of their mathematical meanings, the one may be used to indicate social *functions in balance*, and the other social *functions out of balance*, I am quite at a loss to understand how the phenomena of *structure* can be included in the one any more than in the other."† How an author who thus criticises the subdivision in question can be said to employ it in his system in a scientific sense, I am quite unable to see.

*P. 9.

†Appendix to the "Classification of the Sciences," London and New York: 1864, p. 44.

“But Comte,” says Professor Giddings, “used these terms loosely. His social statics was little more than description; his social dynamics little more than history.”* The first of these propositions is utterly unsupported. In his fiftieth lecture toward the end of Vol. IV he sets forth his conception of social statics, and there is not a word of descriptive sociology in that lecture, not a name of a tribe of men nor mention of a primitive custom. It deals all through with the theory as he understood it. The second of the above quoted propositions has scarcely more justification. The fifty-first lecture is entitled: “*Lois fondamentales de la dynamique sociale, ou théorie générale du progrès naturel de l’humanité.*” It contains no history but deals strictly with theory. The fifth and sixth volumes, however, which immediately follow these two lectures on the theory, do profess to be historical and to deal with the natural development of society. But what kind of history is it? Certainly not the ordinary kind, as Professor Giddings’ language would imply. In fact, it presupposes an acquaintance on the part of the reader with all that commonly passes for history, and really treats of nothing but the underlying principles. It is one of the profoundest parts of this great work, and its perusal extorted from John Stuart Mill the following remark:

“These propositions having been laid down as the first principles of social dynamics, M. Comte proceeds to verify and apply them by a connected view of universal history. This survey nearly fills two large volumes, above a third of the work in all of which there is scarcely a sentence that does not add an idea. We regard it as by far his greatest achievement, except his review of the sciences, and in some respects more striking even than that. We wish it were practicable in the compass of an essay like the present, to give even a faint conception of the extraordinary merits of this historical analysis. It must be read to be appreciated.

* P. 56.

Whoever disbelieves that the philosophy of history can be made a science, should suspend his judgment until he has read these volumes of M. Comte. We do not affirm that they would certainly change his opinion; but we would strongly advise him to give them a chance." *

Comte went over this same ground again in his "*Politique Positive*," and with still greater fullness, and anyone who has read the first essay will be astonished to note the sustained originality and wealth of ideas that characterize the second. It may surprise some of the adherents of the so-called "German historical school of political economy" to be told that Comte comes much nearer to being entitled to the name of founder of that school than any German, and that this is not the claim of any of Comte's followers, but the repeated acknowledgment of many of the leading spirits of that school in Germany, such as Brentano, Knies, Schmoller, Schulze-Gävernitz, and Gustav Cohn. Both Dilthey and Bernheim have also conceded their indebtedness to Comte.

But Professor Giddings is not satisfied with the expression "social dynamics," and thinks he can improve upon it. Clinging to the etymological meaning of the word, and ignoring the universal tendency of words to specialize in meaning, he claims that all study of forces is necessarily dynamic, whether the forces are producing motion or are in equilibrium. He says:

"Dynamics is coextensive with physics and is not a division of it. It includes all studies of motion and of resistance. Statics is a division of dynamics and is not co-ordinate with it The other division of dynamics is kinetics If, then, we must have two

*"The Positive Philosophy of Auguste Comte." By John Stuart Mill. *Westminster Review*, Vol. lxxxliii (New Series, Vol. xxvii), April 1, 1865, pp. 396-397.—"Auguste Comte and Positivism." By John Stuart Mill, London, Trübner & Co., 1865, p. 106. (The second edition of this work, 1866, the third edition, 1882, and the American edition, J. Lippincott & Co., Philadelphia, 1866, are all printed from the same plates except the title page.)

divisions of social physics, we should designate them by terms that have some justification in sense and usage. We should not say 'social dynamics' when we mean social kinetics." *

As if startled by the erudition displayed in the above, he appends a foot-note explaining that "this discrimination is not merely formal and pedantic." It is scarcely pedantic. It is *Pickwickian*. The literal meaning of a word is not the only justification for its use. It is far more important to consider its application. The difference between kinetics and dynamics is a difference of application. It is similar to the difference between *motion* and *movement*. Doubtless they are partial synonyms, but they have different uses. History and sociology do not deal with social motions but with social movements. The former could scarcely be used except in a humorous sense. One might conceive of a case of "social kinetics," as, for example, the Army of the Potomac after the first battle of Bull Run! Certainly kinetics is used in physics in a very different sense from dynamics, although both always imply motion. The opposite of kinetic is not static but potential. The latter also might be applied to society, according to the definition given by the boy in the physical class, who said that kinetic energy was the power of doing work, and potential energy the power of doing without work; a condition somewhat too common in society! I am sorry that it is not possible to treat this subject seriously.

The discovery which Professor Giddings feels that he has made in announcing that statics as well as dynamics has something to do with force is worthy of being further traced. It is an accepted truth that all discoveries are reached by a series of antecedent steps leading up to them, and perhaps the trail of this one may be found. This part of the book consists in part of a criticism of a certain article in the *Political Science Quarterly* for June,

* P. 58.

1895, in which the objectionable use of the words static and dynamic was made that is here condemned. On page 219 of that same article the following sentence occurs: "Dynamic as well as static sociology deals with the social forces, *i. e.*, with social wants." It is just possible that in reading this sentence the truth may have first dawned upon him. It had of course been repeatedly stated before by the same writer, but was considered too elementary to require special treatment.

Neither was it to be expected that Professor Giddings would understand what was meant in that article by "feeling and function." That principle is not so self-evident as the other and needs to be thought out by every one for himself. If there is one principle of sociology that is more fundamental than any other that is the one, and perhaps after all the other sociological elixirs shall have been tested and assigned their true respective values, this one may gain admission to the pharmacopœia of social science.

It would never do to write a book without including a "classification of the sciences," so Professor Giddings has introduced his. Of course, too, like all the rest, it is the only true one, the others being defective or false. This feature, however, is not new, but has been published several times before during the past two years; it therefore requires no explanation. It need only be said that there are as many ways of classifying the sciences as there are purposes to be subserved thereby, and all of them may be true and useful. The present one doubtless serves some useful purpose in the author's mind. Few others, I imagine, will be able to profit by it. Comte's classification, which, as usual, he does not understand, is rejected, and Spencer's is criticised, in some points, as I think, justly. His own is somewhat ingenious and more complicated than it appears at first sight. The theory is not altogether devoid of merits. If he only could separate the abstract from the concrete sciences the system would be a good one, but this he has

utterly failed to do. He calls chemistry a concrete science and physics an abstract science, when the main difference is that the one deals with molecules and the other with masses. Or, if it be said that their material must be distinguished from their dynamic aspects (matter from force), then the answer is that both these aspects equally belong to both. The same is true of every one of his concrete sciences—astronomy, geology, biology, psychology, sociology—each deals with bodies and also with forces. The only economics that can be regarded as abstract is the “mathematical economics” which totally ignores the facts, and which most modern economists eschew. As for ethics, it is not a science at all except in so far as it is not ethics but sociology.* Politics is certainly a department of sociology, but it is not the whole of that department which deals with laws and principles, and it does not deal wholly with these.

There is some truth in the statement that the names of abstract sciences naturally take the termination *ic*, and those of concrete sciences the termination *ology*. This means that when we wish to express the uniform and systematic action of a certain class of forces we select a word with the termination *ic*; and when we wish to refer to the detailed description of a certain group of facts we select a word with the termination *ology*. It all depends upon the point of view from which we are contemplating nature. But, as a matter of fact, every material object has its properties, and these are, in their ultimate analysis, natural forces. If we contemplate the objects as manifesting these forces we have a sort of abstract idea, but if we only contemplate them as stationary and inert, we have the concrete conception. The better terms would therefore be *passive* and *active* sciences, but such terms have not yet been used. Professor Giddings' attempt at a geometrical notation is grotesque. It is wrong

* See “The Psychic Factors of Civilization,” Cap. xvii; also, “Ethical Aspects of Social Science.” *International Journal of Ethics*, July, 1896.

side up, to begin with, but it is not of such a character that any curves can be drawn to indicate the respective fields embraced by the sciences. If this could be done it might possess a graphic value.

The fundamental defect of the whole scheme, as already remarked, is the failure to make any clear distinction between concrete and abstract sciences. The more we study the subject the clearer it becomes that there is really only one abstract science, *viz.*, mathematics, and that this is not a science in any such sense as the others, but simply the ideal toward which all aspire. The degree to which the phenomena of any science are reducible to exact mathematical treatment fixes its place in the scale. This would certainly place solar astronomy at the head, followed by physics and chemistry. Economics and politics are only subspecies under sociology. The real and important distinction, however, as already shown, is not between the sciences themselves, but between the aspects from which they are viewed. Each has the two aspects pointed out, the passive or material, and the active or dynamic, and they differ only in the degree to which the latter can be formulated. This dynamic aspect is one for all the sciences, and to call it mathematics is too broad. As it relates to force, it might be called dynamics, but that term, as we have seen, is ambiguous. It could be called physics, but that name must also stand for one of the concrete sciences. There is an intermediate term which is not open to any of these objections and which seems in other respects to be better than any of those suggested. This term is *mechanics*. Mechanics is the branch of pure mathematics which deals with force both in its dynamic and its static relations. This may be regarded as the aspect from which to view all the sciences when contemplating properties, activities, and forces generally. It is also as good a criterion of their exactness as mathematics in the broader sense. It is that part of mathematics that is referred to in making the test of exactness. Every science must have its mechanical

aspect. If it has not reached the stage at which this can be said, it is not yet a fully developed science. Mathematical astronomy is astronomical mechanics (*mécanique céleste*). Physics is mainly applied mechanics, and chemistry is molecular physics. Dynamic geology is geological mechanics. Mechanical theories in biology are latterly becoming very common and attracting wide attention. Psychophysics is the mechanics of psychology, but there is a broader "dynamics of mind,"* which I call *psychics*.† Dynamic sociology is not quite all of social mechanics. I have endeavored to indicate its whole scope in a lecture that I have several times delivered and hope soon to publish.‡

Before leaving this subject of the classification of the sciences, it may not be out of place to call the reader's attention to a comparison which I have lately instituted between the systems of Comte and Spencer,§ based on a recent communication from the latter in which his system is more clearly stated than in any of his works. In the paper presented to the Philosophical Society of Washington, of which only a brief abstract was published, I ventured to suggest an arrangement of the sciences in the order of their degree of exactness, *i. e.*, of the extent to which their laws are capable of being formulated in mechanical terms, giving to the names a uniform termination derived from the Greek νόμος, law, of which *astronomy* already furnishes an example. This terminology has been introduced at the beginning of my paper on the Social Forces,|| merely as a suggestion. I would not attribute any special importance to it, but it does no harm to propose all possible aids to the solution of so vast a problem as the true order of the universe, and Professor Giddings' effort in this line is, from this point of view, wholly commendable.

* "The Psychic Factors of Civilization," Cap. xv.

† *Ibid.*, pp. 56, 129.

‡ It is entitled "The Mechanics of Society," and will be the eighth of the series of papers now running through the *American Journal of Sociology*.

§ See *Science*, New Series, Vol. iii, New York, Feb. 21, 1896, pp. 292-94.

|| *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. ii, Chicago, July, 1896.

I have, at the outset, explained my intentional omission to treat the body of Professor Giddings' book in this paper. The headings of the chapters sufficiently indicate their nature, and I have already recorded my admiration for the able manner in which the work is done. The arrangement, terminology and classification of the subject-matter are not objectionable, and were needed to furnish a plan and method of treatment. The chapters on "The Social Composition" and "The Social Constitution" are interesting, and the distinction is fairly drawn. The several steps in association—zoogenic, anthropogenic, ethnogenic and demogenic, had struck me favorably when first sketched out by him in his "Theory of Sociology" in 1894. Book IV is not strong, and several of its weaknesses have already been considered. Space forbids further enlargement. Notwithstanding a manifest effort to be original, there is very little in the book that is truly original. I mean to say that it makes no original contribution to science, no fresh inroad into the unknown, no deeper foundations of the known. On nearly all the living questions, the author is to be found on the traditional side. For example, he goes with Aristotle, Comte, and, indeed, most writers on social questions, in regarding man as naturally a social being,* and he even declares that "the ape-like ancestor of man also must have been a social animal." † It is true that this is almost quoted from Darwin, who, however adds: "but this is not of much importance for us." ‡ The question is what constitutes a "social animal." If apes are social animals then there are scarcely any others. It is at least false to say that "human nature is the preëminently social nature." § The proposition would be more correct if reversed, and "un-social," or "anti-social" were put for "social." ||

* See pp. 225, 421-422.

† P. 208.

‡ "Descent of Man," American edition, 1871, Vol. i, p. 81; see also p. 155. (Professor Giddings' reference is incomplete and seems to be erroneous).

§ P. 225.

|| *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. i, January, 1896. pp. 432-33.

Dr. Patten's "Theory of Social Forces" was received too late to be treated except in foot-notes, but Professor Giddings seems to me to have failed to grasp the import of the "pain economy and pleasure economy" set forth in that essay. At least, he does not read into it the swarm of ideas that the terms give rise to in my own mind, whether they were in the writer's mind or not. The common-place economic terms which he would substitute * indicate that those of Dr. Patten did not arouse any such train of thought in our author's mind.

Although the treatment of "zoogenic association" is excellent, due to a certain genius of the author for marshaling facts, still, wherever he ventures into biology on his own account he displays the usual incapacity of political economists to deal with biological subjects. It certainly will be refreshing to biologists to learn that "'biology' had no vogue until Mr. Spencer took it up."† This, however, is in keeping with his Spencer-worship in general.

It is so fashionable in these days to talk about "natural selection" that we are not surprised to find the term applied to man in a way that is wholly unwarranted. For example, to say that "in the United States natural selection is rapidly producing new types of men and women from almost every European nationality."‡ All in three or four generations! He does not mean natural selection, that is all. But listen to this: "Natural rights are socially necessary norms of right, enforced by natural selection in the sphere of social relations."§ If it can be shown that a natural right is a character whose partial absence has the effect of diminishing the chances of survival to the age of reproduction or of causing a smaller number of progeny to be produced, and if this disadvantageous condition can be supposed to go on through a sufficient number of generations to tell against

* P. 406.

† P. 32.

‡ P. 91.

§ P. 418.

those possessing the defect, then, and only in this way, can natural selection have anything to do with it.

The anthropological part of the book is much better, in fact it is the ablest department of the work. The greater part of the work is anthropological, but I refer now more especially to the two chapters on anthropogenic and ethnogenic association, which together constitute a magnificent compilation. It cannot be denied either that, although it is to these aspects that most of the so-called sociology is confined, still this remains the most essential preparation for the science of sociology. True, there was nothing to do but go again over the ground so well tilled by Tylor, Spencer, Maine, and Morgan, but I confess that much new light has here been shed on the great problems dealt with by these writers. The subject has been somewhat Americanized, but there is room for further work in this direction. The important contributions of Schoolcraft, Powell, Mallery, Yarrow, Cushing, and many others, contained in the Smithsonian publications and the reports of the Bureau of Ethnology, have been almost totally neglected, and yet they constitute about the only trained expert work that has ever been done in anthropology. To study these sources would be better than to thresh the old straw contained in books of travel of untrained observers which are written to sell. Spencer's "Descriptive Sociology" is chiefly derived from these latter, and all its statements have to be taken *cum grano salis*. His so-called "Principles of Sociology" are compiled from the other, and, even as checked by Tylor's splendid achievements, suffer from the same disease. It goes without saying that Giddings' work shares this defect. Still, in the main, the philosophy thus brought out is sound, and even the repetition of the well-worn facts that underlie the true origin of religious beliefs § may be justified in a work of this character.

§ Pp. 247 et seq. Perhaps the last previous plagiarism of this class is contained in the *Forum* for September, 1889 (Vol. viii, pp. 98-107).

The brief reference made by Professor Giddings* to the views of Darwin and Fiske relative to the causes and effects of the erect posture in man, upon which he has enlarged in his article on Sociology in Johnson's "Universal Cyclopaedia," is disappointing. Scientific men do not read cyclopedias. It should have been even further expanded here. He expresses surprise at the similarity between his theories and those advanced in the *American Anthropologist* † of almost even date with his cyclopaedia article. This is another of the many proofs that he is wholly unacquainted with the work entitled, "Dynamic Sociology," the sixth chapter of which is devoted to a discussion of these same principles, and where they are treated much more fully than in the article referred to. In fact, the whole subject was gone over by the same writer three years earlier in a paper read before the Anthropological Society of Washington on April 20, 1880, and published by the society. ‡

With the chapter on demogenic association the reader finds himself for the first time out of anthropology, but sixty pages in a work of nearly five hundred, is surely inadequate to the treatment of even the purely statical aspects of the whole science of sociology, and one is still more disappointed in the quality of the treatment than in its quantity. He alludes briefly to Comte's famous "three stages," the notion of which he seems to have derived through Spencer's inverted spy-glass, and which he consequently regards as characterized by "superficiality," § and yet a few pages further on || he puts forth a theory, ostensibly his own, which scarcely differs except in the choice of terms from Comte's, and which he declares to be "the complete philosophy of history"! He thereupon concludes that "the

* P. 229.

† "Relation of Sociology to Anthropology." *American Anthropologist*, Vol. viii, Washington, July, 1895, pp. 241-256.

‡ "Pre-social Man." Abstract of Transactions of the Anthropological Society of Washington for 1880 and 1881. Washington, 1881, pp. 68-71.

§ P. 304.

|| P. 308.

stages of civilization accordingly are: the military and religious; the liberal-legal; and the economic and ethical." * These seem to be drawn up for no other purpose than to propose something different from what had been previously proposed—a clear case of mimophobia.

On a number of points, however, all will, I think, agree with him, as, for instance, that there can be no such thing as an exclusively military society, † that the lower outlying races are really inferior to the European race, and not merely the unfortunate victims of a cruel environment, ‡ that a form of true savagery exists in the midst of civilization, § and that the much decried influx of the rural population into cities has a rational basis and is not an unmixed evil. || Going outside of the particular chapter here under consideration, there are many other points deserving attention, but which cannot be discussed for want of space, but I would like to set the seal of approval upon what is said about the negro not representing an especially low type of mankind, ¶ about the density of population as a factor in civilization, ** and about the real advantages of the division of labor. †† I would also specially commend the philosophical conclusions reached on the vexed question of incest and exogamy, ‡‡ but here, I think, we actually have a partially biological question, and that, although he fails to do so, we must call in the law of natural selection to explain the earliest stages.

On the other hand, there are many statements in the book besides the ones specially selected for discussion in this paper, which might be successfully combated, a bare mention of a few of which will have to suffice. Such are the popular but exploded idea that a cold climate is favorable to

* P. 309.

† P. 305.

‡ P. 328.

§ P. 351.

|| Pp. 343-347.

¶ Pp. 235, 238.

** P. 367.

†† P. 397.

‡‡ Pp. 96, 267, 271.

the development of social energy,* that criminals represent a degenerate instead of an undeveloped type,† that intellectual development is the effect instead of the cause of association,‡ and that Malthusianism, even as modified by him, is in any proper sense a sociological, as distinguished from a biological principle.§ But there must be an end to these enumerations.

Most students of society will doubtless agree with him in accepting Mackenzie's three main factors of civilization: " (1) the subjugation of nature, (2) the perfection of social machinery, and (3) personal development," as also that "true progress must include them all;" || yea, and much more.

The final judgment, then, which it seems necessary to pass upon this work, is that, while excellent so far as it goes, it is not a treatise on the "principles of sociology," or, except to a limited extent, on sociology at all in the proper sense, but that it deals in the main only with the elements or rudiments, coming under the head of what I have called the "data of sociology." ¶ It is therefore merely preparatory to the study of the science itself, and what I have said relative to sociology as a properly university or postgraduate study does not apply to it. The bulk of it is well adapted to undergraduate teaching.

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* P. 88.

† Pp. 72, 127.

‡ P. 132.

§ P. 336.

|| P. 356.

¶ *American Journal of Sociology*, May, 1896.