The Catechism of Positive Religion

Comte Auguste
REPUBLIC OF THE WEST.

ORDER AND PROGRESS.

THE

CATECHISM OF POSITIVISM;

OR,

Summary Exposition

OF

THE UNIVERSAL RELIGION.

IN THIRTEEN SYSTEMATIC CONVERSATIONS BETWEEN A WOMAN
AND A PRIEST OF HUMANITY.

By AUGUSTE COMTE,

AUTHOR OF "THE SYSTEM OF POSITIVE PHILOSOPHY," AND OF
"THE SYSTEM OF POSITIVE POLITICS."

Love as our principle,
Order as our basis,
Progress as our end.
THE CATECHISM

OF

POSITIVE RELIGION.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH OF

AUGUSTE COMTE,

BY

RICHARD CONGREVE.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

The alterations in the arrangement of the Catechism have, in every case, the sanction of Auguste Comte. See *Politique Positive*, vol. iv.

The Tables at the end of the volume are given from the latest edition of the Author.

I have felt warranted by an extract from one of his letters in inserting the name of Shelley in the Calendar.

In the Preface, p. 4, the formula alluded to is: *Faire de l'ordre avec du désordre.* Your materials are disorder, with them you must organize order.

In the Positivist Library, *Old Mortality* should be substituted for *Woodstock*. 
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PREFACE.

"In the name of the Past and of the Future, the servants of Humanity—both its philosophical and practical servants—come forward to claim as their due the general direction of this world. Their object is, to constitute at length a real Providence, in all departments—moral, intellectual, and material. Consequently they exclude, once for all, from political supremacy, all the different servants of God—Catholic, Protestant, or Deist—as being at once behindhand and a cause of disturbance." With this uncompromising announcement, on Sunday, October 19th, 1851, in the Palais Cardinal, after a summary of five hours, I ended my third course of Philosophical Lectures on the General History of Humanity. Since that memorable conclusion, the second volume of my System of Positive Politics has lately given a direct proof how entirely a social destination, such as that above indicated, is the appropriate destination of Positive Philosophy; for it has shown itself able to suggest the most systematic theory of moral and social order.

We come forward then, avowedly, to deliver the Western world from an anarchical democracy, and
from a retrograde aristocracy. We come forward to constitute, as far as practicable, a real sociocracy; one which shall be able to combine wisely, in furtherance of the common regeneration, all the powers of man, each of course brought to bear according to its own nature. In fact we, Sociocrats, are as little democratical as we are aristocratical. In our eyes, these two opposite parties—the respectable portion of them, that is—represent, though on no theory, on the one hand, Solidarity, on the other, Continuity. These two ideas have hitherto been unfortunately antagonistic. Positivism removes this antagonism, and replaces it by a subordination of the one to the other, by showing Solidarity to be subordinate to Continuity. So we adopt both of these tendencies, in themselves, singly, incomplete and incoherent; and we rise above them both equally. Yet at the present time, we by no means condemn equally the two parties which represent them. During the whole of my philosophical and social career, a period of thirty years, I have ever felt a profound contempt for that which, under our different governments, bore the name of the Opposition; I have felt a secret affinity for all constructive statesmen, of whatever order. Even those who would build with materials evidently worn-out—even them I never hesitated to prefer to the pure destructives, in a century in which a general reconstruction is everywhere the chief want. Our official conservatives are behindhand, it is true. And yet, the mere revolutionist seems to me still more alien to the true spirit of the time; for he