

of his character, the number of his friends, the fearlessness with which, amidst all his gentleness and charity, his liberal opinions were avowed, made him, if not a great leader or teacher, a centre of union which cannot be replaced. His friend and associate, Dr. Jowett, a man of far greater speculative power, deserts theology and gives himself to Greek. Among the clergy there is hardly another Liberal of mark. Rational Christianity in England is the creed of cultivated laymen who think but do not write.*

—Among the incidents of the Sceptical movement has naturally been a disposition to bring other religions, especially Mahometanism and Buddhism, into competition with Christianity. The Speeches of Mahomet have been made up into a sort of Testament by one who is evidently an admirer of the Prophet. They are, as all who have read the Koran must see, pearls picked from a vast heap, of which no small portion is absurd legend derived from the Talmud or Pseudo-Christian fable. They exclude the traces of personal lust, vengeance, and ambition which undeniably appear in the later chapters of the Koran, written when the religious Reformer had become a successful leader and had opened his career of conquest. They could not possibly exclude evidences of the thoroughly sensual character of Mahomet's Heaven or of the thoroughly material character of his Hell. Few can compare them with the New Testament without recognising at once, in the difference between the two trees, the cause of the difference between their fruits. It is evident, also, that what is highest in Islam, notably its Monotheism, is not original, but derived either from Judaism or from Christianity, principally from the first. On Mahometanism and on Buddhism, as well as on Christianity, the title of universal religions is conferred. Universal they are in so far as they are not limited to a single nation or race, like the majority of religions, including Talmudic Judaism, but offer

* The change in clerical character has been pointed out before, and is attested in an acute essay on "Romanism, Protestantism, and Anglicanism."