

man race as the way to happiness in another life. But to this spiritual teaching, Christianity unlike either Judaism or Mahometanism, adds no political character whatever. Christianity, like Islam, was first preached in a single settled community, and from that one community it spread, like Islam, over a large part of the earth; but wherever it spread itself, it spread itself as purely a system of theological teaching. Its followers formed no political society, and it has at no time been held that Christians are bound, as Christians, to be subjects of any particular power, to establish any particular form of government, or to rule themselves by any particular civil precepts. Christianity has allied itself with the civil power; it has been forced upon unwilling proselytes at the sword's point; but when this has happened, the appeal to the secular arm has been something purely incidental, while in the Mahometan creed, such an appeal has ever been one of the first of religious duties. Thus, of the three great monotheistic systems which the Semitic race has given to the world, Judaism proclaims itself as the divinely given code of a single nation, a system which does not refuse proselytes but which does not seek for them. Christianity proclaims itself as a divinely given system of faith and morals, a system addressed to all mankind, but which is content to make its way among mankind by moral forces only, and which leaves the governments of the earth as it finds them. Mahometanism also proclaims itself as a divinely given system of faith and morals, a system addressed to all mankind; but it proclaims itself also as a system to be enforced on all mankind by the sword. It is a system which, in its perfect theory, would require all mankind to be members of one political society, and which in its actual practice requires the revelation of its original prophet to be received, not only as a rule of religious faith and practice, but as the ground-work of the whole civil jurisprudence of all who accept its teaching.

Each again of these three great monotheistic religions has its written revelation. Herein comes one of the most marked distinctions between the three, and a specially marked distinction between Chris-

tianity and Islam. The book which contains the revelation of Islam is the work of the founder of Islam. It proclaims itself as the word of God, not indeed written by the hand of the Prophet, but taken down from his mouth, and spoken in his person. It is a revelation which began and ended in the person of its first teacher, which none of its first successors dare add to or take away from. But, as that revelation does not take the form of an autobiography, it follows that there is no narrative of the acts of the Prophet which can claim divine authority. But the sacred books of the Christian revelation are biographical; they are not the writings of the founder of Christianity, but records of his life, in which his discourses are recorded among his other actions. Certain other of the writings of his earliest followers are also held to be of equal authority with the records of his own life. The Jewish law comes to us in a third shape; it is a code incorporated in a history, a history which orthodox belief looks on as an autobiography. But in this case the revelation is not confined to the lawgiver himself or to his immediate followers; an equal authority, a like divine origin, is held to belong to a mass of later writings of various ages which are joined with those of the original lawgiver to form the sacred books of the first dispensation. In short, the Mahometan accepts nothing as of divine authority except the personal utterances of his prophet taken down in his lifetime. With the Jew and the Christian the actual discourses of Moses and of Christ form only a portion of the writings which he accepts as the sacred book of his faith.

We are here of course speaking of what we may call the orthodox belief of Jews, Christians, and Mahometans respectively. The genuineness, the divine origin, of the sacred books of the three religions it is no part of our immediate argument to discuss. But we must go on to notice that each system assumes the divine origin of the system which went before it. Each comes not to destroy but to fulfil the dispensation which it succeeds. Christianity assumes the divine origin of Judaism; the sacred books of the New Testament assume the genuineness and the divine authority of the sacred books of the Old.—