

the one greatly influenced the other. The Academy of Berlin awarded Mendelssohn the prize for an essay in a competition in which he defeated Kant, the Philosopher. He was elected one of the members of the Academy of Berlin, but Frederick the Great would not sanction the admission of a Jew. His first resolve was to endeavor to raise the standard of education among his co-religionists, so he published a Hebrew magazine, "The Moral Preacher." But the Rabbis took alarm at this tendency to investigate and for some time he had to give up writing. Twenty years of struggle so changed the life of the people that he was enabled to publish a translation in classical German of the Five Books of Moses, the Prayers, and several works on philosophy and theoretical religion. Here was his real work—the emancipation of the Jewish youth from Rabbinism. He protested against the interference of the synagogue with the rights of conscience. He became the leader of Jewish Reform and opposed Rabbinic Judaism. His great work "The Immortality of the Soul," had immense circulation, Jews and Christians alike reading it; but the latter could not understand how such an earnest seeker after truth should not see Christianity in their own light. So Lavater, of Zurich, wrote to Mendelssohn, in his preface to Bonnet's "Inquiry into the Evidence of Christianity," and publicly challenged him to a refutation. Of course Mendelssohn refused the challenge; and the uniform courtesy, the temperateness of his language, and general charity of his reply was such that Lavater was so impressed with the sense of Mendelssohn's nobility and high morality that