

spirit and on the force of religious convictions. Christianity has materially contributed to call forth this idea of the unity of the human race, and has thus tended to exercise a favorable influence on the *humanization* of nations in their morals, manners, and institutions. Although closely interwoven with the earliest doctrines of Christianity, this idea of humanity met with only a slow and tardy recognition; for at the time when the new faith was raised at Byzantium, from political motives, to be the established religion of the state, its adherents were already deeply involved in miserable party dissensions, while intercourse with distant nations was impeded, and the foundations of the empire were shaken in many directions by external assaults. Even the personal freedom of entire races of men long found no protection in Christian states from ecclesiastical land-owners and corporate bodies.

Such unnatural impediments, and many others which stand in the way of the intellectual advance of mankind and the ennoblement of social institutions, will all gradually disappear. The principle of individual and political freedom is implanted in the ineradicable conviction of the equal rights of one sole human race. Thus, as I have already remarked,* mankind presents itself to our contemplation as one great fraternity and as one independent unity, striving for the attainment of one aim—the free development of moral vigor. This consideration of humanity, or, rather, of the tendency toward it, which, sometimes checked, and sometimes advancing with a rapid and powerful progressive movement—and by no means a discovery of recent times—belongs, by the generalizing influence of its direction, most specially to that which elevates and animates cosmical life. In delineating the great epoch of the history of the universe, which includes the dominion of the Romans and the laws which they promulgated, together with the beginning of Christianity, it would have been impossible not to direct special attention to the manner in which the religion of Christ enlarged these views of mankind, and to the mild and long-enduring, although slowly-operating, influence which it exercised on general, intellectual, moral, and social development.

* See vol. i., p. 358; and compare, also, Wilhelm von Humboldt, *Ueber die Kawi-Sprache*, bd. i., s. xxxviii.
