

THE NATURE OF THE PROBLEM

strumentality of reason, to that higher grade of culture, and, consequently, to that better path towards happiness which has been opened out to us by the progress of modern science. That aim, however, is vigorously opposed by the influential parties who would detain the mind in the exploded views of the Middle Ages with regard to the most important problems of life; they linger in the fold of traditional dogma, and would have reason prostrate itself before their "higher revelation." That is the condition of things, to a very large extent, in theology and philosophy, in sociology and jurisprudence. It is not that the motives of the latter are to be attributed, as a rule, to pure self-interest; they spring partly from ignorance of the facts, and partly from an indolent acquiescence in tradition. The most dangerous of the three great enemies of reason and knowledge is not malice, but ignorance, or, perhaps, indolence. The gods themselves still strive in vain against these two latter influences when they have happily vanquished the first.

One of the main supports of that reactionary system is still what we may call "anthropism." I designate by this term "that powerful and world-wide group of erroneous opinions which opposes the human organism to the whole of the rest of nature, and represents it to be the preordained end of the organic creation, an entity essentially distinct from it, a godlike being." Closer examination of this group of ideas shows it to be made up of three different dogmas, which we may distinguish as the *anthropocentric*, the *anthropomorphic*, and the *anthropolatrous*.*

I. The *anthropocentric* dogma culminates in the idea

*E. Haeckel, *Systematische Phylogenie*, 1895, vol. iii., pp. 646-50. (Anthropolatry means "A divine worship of human nature.")