

THE RIDDLE OF THE UNIVERSE

that man is the preordained centre and aim of all terrestrial life—or, in a wider sense, of the whole universe. As this error is extremely conducive to man's interest, and as it is intimately connected with the creation-myth of the three great Mediterranean religions, and with the dogmas of the Mosaic, Christian, and Mohammedan theologies, it still dominates the greater part of the civilized world.

II. The *anthropomorphic* dogma is likewise connected with the creation-myth of the three aforesaid religions, and of many others. It likens the creation and control of the world by God to the artificial creation of a talented engineer or mechanic, and to the administration of a wise ruler. God, as creator, sustainer, and ruler of the world, is thus represented after a purely human fashion in his thought and work. Hence it follows, in turn, that man is godlike. "God made man to His own image and likeness." The older, naïve mythology is pure "homotheism," attributing human shape, flesh, and blood to the gods. It is more intelligible than the modern mystic theosophy that adores a personal God as an invisible—properly speaking, gaseous—being, yet makes him think, speak, and act in human fashion; it gives us the paradoxical picture of a "gaseous vertebrate."

III. The *anthropolatric* dogma naturally results from this comparison of the activity of God and man; it ends in the apotheosis of the human organism. A further result is the belief in the personal immortality of the soul, and the dualistic dogma of the twofold nature of man, whose "immortal soul" is conceived as but the temporary inhabitant of the mortal frame. Thus these three anthropistic dogmas, variously adapted to the respective professions of the different religions, came at