

THE RIDDLE OF THE UNIVERSE

examined, a number of subordinate deities being generally introduced besides the supreme one. Most of the religions which took a purely monotheistic standpoint have become more or less polytheistic in the course of time. Modern statistics assure us that of the one billion five hundred million men who people the earth the great majority are monotheists; of these, *nominally*, about six hundred millions are Brahma-Buddhists, five hundred millions are called Christians, two hundred millions are heathens (of various types), one hundred and eighty millions are Mohammedans, ten millions are Jews, and ten millions have no religion at all. However, the vast majority of these nominal monotheists have very confused ideas about the deity, or believe in a number of gods and goddesses besides the chief god—angels, devils, etc.

The different forms which monotheism has assumed in the course of its polyphyletic development may be distributed in two groups—those of *naturalistic* and *anthropistic* monotheism. Naturalistic monotheism finds the embodiment of the deity in some lofty and dominating natural phenomenon. The sun, the deity of light and warmth, on whose influence all organic life insensibly and directly depends, was taken to be such a phenomenon many thousand years ago. Sun-worship (solarism, or heliotheism) seems to the modern scientist to be the best of all forms of theism, and the one which may be most easily reconciled with modern monism. For modern astrophysics and geogeny have taught us that the earth is a fragment detached from the sun, and that it will eventually return to the bosom of its parent. Modern physiology teaches us that the first source of organic life on the earth is the formation of protoplasm, and that this synthesis of simple inor-