

## GOD AND THE WORLD

tial and unprejudiced study of this notable historical source, we find it very different in several important respects from the popular impression. Here again modern criticism and history have come to certain conclusions which destroy the prevalent tradition in its very foundations.

The monotheism which Moses endeavored to establish in the worship of Jehovah, and which the prophets—the philosophers of the Hebrew race—afterwards developed with great success, had at first to sustain a long and severe struggle with the dominant polytheism which was in possession. Jehovah, or Yahveh, was originally derived from the heaven-god, which, under the title of Moloch or Baal, was one of the most popular of the Oriental deities (the Sethos or Typhon of the Egyptians, and the Saturn or Cronos of the Greeks). There were, however, other gods in great favor with the Jewish people, and so the struggle with “idolatry” continued. Still, Jehovah was, in principle, the only God, explicitly claiming, in the first precept of the decalogue: “I am the Lord thy God; thou shalt have no other gods beside me.”

Christian monotheism shared the fate of its mother, Mosaism; it was generally only monotheistic in theory, while it degenerated practically into every kind of polytheism. In point of fact, monotheism was logically abandoned in the very dogma of the Trinity, which was adopted as an indispensable foundation of the Christian religion. The three persons, which are distinguished as Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, are three distinct individuals (and, indeed, anthropomorphic persons), just as truly as the three Indian deities of the Trimurti (Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva) or the Trinity of the ancient Hebrews (Anu, Bel, and Aa).