

GOD AND THE WORLD

mixture of the most diverse opinions and errors. The greater part of those who call themselves Christians are not monotheists (as they think), but amphitheists, triploteists, or polytheists. And the same must be said of Islam and Mosaism, and other monotheistic religions. Everywhere we find associated with the original idea of a "sole and triune God" later beliefs in a number of subordinate deities—angels, devils, saints, etc.—a picturesque assortment of the most diverse theistic forms.

All the above forms of theism, in the proper sense of the word—whether the belief assumes a naturalistic or an anthropistic form—represent God to be an extramundane or a supernatural being. He is always opposed to the world, or nature, as an independent being; generally as its creator, sustainer, and ruler. In most religions he has the additional character of personality, or, to put it more definitely still, God as a person is likened to man. "In his gods man paints himself." This anthropomorphic conception of God as one who thinks, feels, and acts like man prevails with the great majority of theists, sometimes in a cruder and more naïve form, sometimes in a more refined and abstract degree. In any case the form of theosophy we have described is sure to affirm that God, the supreme being, is infinite in perfection, and therefore far removed from the imperfection of humanity. Yet, when we examine closely, we always find the same psychic or mental activity in the two. God feels, thinks, and acts as man does, although it be in an infinitely more perfect form.

The *personal anthropism* of God has become so natural to the majority of believers that they experience no shock when they find God personified in human