

THE NATURE OF THE PROBLEM

importance, and the arrogance with which he sets himself apart from the illimitable universe, and exalts himself to the position of its most valuable element. This boundless presumption of conceited man has misled him into making himself "the image of God," claiming an "eternal life" for his ephemeral personality, and imagining that he possesses unlimited "freedom of will." The ridiculous imperial folly of Caligula is but a special form of man's arrogant assumption of divinity. Only when we have abandoned this untenable illusion, and taken up the correct cosmological perspective, can we hope to reach the solution of the "riddles of the universe."

The uneducated member of a civilized community is surrounded with countless enigmas at every step, just as truly as the savage. Their number, however, decreases with every stride of civilization and of science; and the monistic philosophy is ultimately confronted with but one simple and comprehensive enigma—the "problem of substance." Still, we may find it useful to include a certain number of problems under that title. In the famous speech which Emil du Bois-Reymond delivered in 1880, in the Leibnitz session of the Berlin Academy of Sciences, he distinguished seven world-enigmas, which he enumerated as follows: (1) The nature of matter and force. (2) The origin of motion. (3) The origin of life. (4) The (apparently preordained) orderly arrangement of nature. (5) The origin of simple sensation and consciousness. (6) Rational thought, and the origin of the cognate faculty, speech. (7) The question of the freedom of the will. Three of these seven enigmas are considered by the orator of the Berlin Academy to be entirely transcendental and insoluble—they are the first, second, and fifth; three others