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WILL THE COMING MAN WORSHIP GOD?

BY B. F. UNDERWOOD, CHICAGO, ILL.

THAT religions, considered as systems of doctrine, have been developed from simple conditions, many theologians are willing to concede; but they all continue to maintain that religion, considered as an element of the human mind or as a predisposition to worship, is a primordial part of man's nature, with which he must have been endowed when he came from the hand of his maker. And as certainly as thirst implies water and hunger food, as certainly as fear implies something to dread, and affection beings to love, the religious element of man's nature, it is affirmed, presupposes a personal, intelligent being whom it is our duty to reverence and adore.

But if the theory of evolution be true, religion, regarded as an element of human nature, so far as it is such, as well as a body of doctrine, has come into existence naturally with the development of the race. If man has a relationship with the animals below him, and has risen from the condition of creatures destitute of religious ideas and devoid of a religious nature, then his tendency to worship, not less than his belief in regard to the power that he worships, must have been *acquired*; in which case it presupposes those causes only which have combined to produce this tendency.

The evidence seems to be abundant that there are tribes on the earth to-day entirely destitute of religion; or, if they have it at all, it is in such a rudimentary condition that travelers are unable to observe any indications of it. Of a tribe of Bechuanas, Moffat, who was among them many years, says: "The people have many ceremonies and superstitions, believe in the influence of witchcraft and charms; but no one of them has the remotest reference to religion. They have no knowledge whatever of idols or anything intended to represent an invisible power, and consequently have nothing of a religious character" (Enc. Brit., art. Bechuanas).