

theologian of to-day is purely a conception of the nature of man; and whenever the Theist has recourse to volition to supply the nexus between cause and effect, he unconsciously invests nature with his own human personality.

Since worship had its origin in man's contemplation of his own nature, in observing himself reflected from the mirror of his own thoughts, in fearing and reverencing his own qualities seen illasively in the objective world, the conclusion seems unavoidable that the continuance of worship must depend upon the continued recognition of a personality like himself behind or immanent in the world of phenomena. To say that God exists, that it is our duty to worship him, that worship consists in contemplating his majesty, his goodness, his love, in adoring and praising him for what he is as well as for what he does, and then to say that all our conceptions of him are but illusions, that all our thoughts of him, on which our admiration and love are founded, are no representation of him at all, that he is an unknown and unknowable something entirely beyond our comprehension—these two statements taken together are, it seems to me, quite inconsistent and absurd. On hearing them for the first time, a mind unperverted by theological teachings would, I think, wonder whether God, if anything, were not really a demon amusing himself by making man a victim of illusion, deception, and fraud.

A god has no significance or value for an ardent worshiper unless he can contemplate him as a being like himself, who approves and disapproves human actions, who sees man's movements, who hears his words, who sympathizes with him in misfortune and distress, to whom he can appeal when in need of aid, and from whom blessings come in response to prayer. What cares the devotee for the "absolute," the "unconditioned," the "unknowable"—a god without any of those human qualities with the contemplation of which, in fear, in reverence, in love, worship commenced and has been sustained through all the ages of man's existence as a religious being?

Just in proportion as men cease to regard God as a being possessing qualities like themselves, will they cease to worship and to find that consolation in communion with God which is the joy and the boast of the devotee. How can he find satisfaction in communing with something of which he can have no conception, and between which and himself there may be nothing in common?

"I am," says Henry James, "constrained by every inspiration of true manhood to demand for my worship a perfectly human deity, who is so