

importunate widows, and sly rogues of lazy, clever, unjust stewards, the God who was at the very opposite pole from that celestial Rabbi of the Pharisees, with horn spectacles and a large white tie studying the Law of Moses in the abundant leisure of the ages, since he had exhausted himself in producing it.

It was not his mission to make men speculate much about himself. He kept himself in the background; was in no hurry to precipitate any decisions whatever, and certainly not any metaphysical ones about his claims. He was content that men should see his Father's claims and their own good, and very trenchantly repudiated the value of all "Lord, Lord's" addressed to him. He knew that those whose heart leapt up at his words, the weary and burdened, to whom he brought rest and lightening of their load, would know him for what he knew himself to be, the Son of God and their own elder brother, the Captain of their Salvation. Did he conceive himself to be the Messiah? There is a strong tendency to doubt it now-a-days, and even to deny it. One of the very noblest of the German critics, a man of deep piety who knows far better than most of them, or almost of any of us, what Jesus really was, Kölbing, is one who very largely from religious motives denies it. I think personally there can be no doubt he did. I wish I had space to give my reasons. But if he did he knew that the way to the Messianic dignity was through suffering and death. This Messiah, this son of Man and servant, came, not to be ministered unto but to serve, to establish his royalty in the same way that his meanest follower may win his crown, not by thunderbolts, or miracles, or the swords of Angel hosts, but through helpfulness, steadfastness, lowliness, and love. He came at last to know that it was an indispensable part of his mission to die. And however many doubts and difficulties there may be, however many questions about him we must be content to leave forever perhaps, with a painful note of interrogation, we may safely feel that he was the Messiah, the only Messiah his people ever had or ever will have offered them for the bring-