

others the heavenliness of the treasure. Some have no eye for the human element : others fail to detect the Divine. Some refuse to consider the Scriptures in their historical light, as literature spanning a wide period, and treat them instead as a mere quarry of proof texts where all parts are of equal value. Others find in them nothing more than ordinary literature, to be explained like other products of human thought. In both cases the reverent and humble spirit may be lacking, for that spirit is willing to learn both what the Lord has said and how the Lord has spoken. Of recent years criticism has been inclined to exaggerate the human element in Scripture, persistently inclined, indeed, in some quarters to deny any distinctly Divine element. It has looked on the history of Israel, on its laws, its institutions, its records, its experience among the nations, as if all these might be explained on a purely naturalistic basis, without any other supernatural intervention or any clearer Divine revelation than could be found in ancient Roman or early British history. We cannot, however, expect that such a method will attain the truth, because it comes to the Bible not to explain it but to explain it away, not with reverent spirit to recognize any evidence of a Divine element but with decided conviction that there is no Divine element, not with the listening, receptive heart that says "I will hear what God the Lord hath said," but rather in the spirit that would banish the Lord of truth from the garden of knowledge, as it asks in a tone even more of denial than of doubt, "Yea, hath God said?"

This need of the reverent and humble spirit is further illustrated if we consider, for instance, the claims of Christ. It seems to us when we read Christ's claims, the words that disclose his self-consciousness, that shew us what He considered Himself to be, that we are in the very centre of Divine revelation, at the inner shrine of the sanctuary. Charles Lamb said that if Shakespeare came into the room we would all rise to greet him, but that if Jesus came in we would all kneel down before Him. As we think of the way in which He presents Himself to us, endowed with the power and revealing the love of the Father, clothed with authority to forgive sins and to execute judgment, worthy of Divine honour and glory and worship, we seem constrained to bow down before we examine, to revere in order that we may understand. There were those who listened to His words, who heard His claims, who looked upon His person, not with a reverent and humble heart, but with the coldly critical, flippant, self-conceited spirit, and we know how far they were from learning the truth concerning Him. Having eyes they saw not, and having ears they heard not, neither did they understand. Whatever their professions they were the anti-supernaturalists of their day, and said in their irreverence, by the way of explaining Christ and His words, "He hath a devil," "How can this man give us His flesh to eat?" "Ah, thou that destroyest the temple and buildest it in three days, save thyself, and come down from the cross," "He saved others, Himself He cannot save." To that spirit the knowledge of Divine things, the intelligent apprehension of the Person of Christ, becomes utterly impossible, as is the knowledge of the sun's noontday glory to the blind.

But, indeed, the very conception of the God whom we worship, the