

huge oriental empires, as well as of the lesser kingdoms that surrounded Judea—mere flotsam and jetsam—are now and then cast on our distant shores."

Or again look at the wonderful history of this Book since the volume has been completed. Consider the history and influence of the Book since the time of Christ. Has not its effect upon the intellect and the action of man been marvellous? Volumes might be written upon the character and spirit of the men who by thousands have died for its sake. It would take volumes to describe the way in which men's lives have been swayed by its teachings or how it has compelled the homage of the greatest intellects and still compels it.

It is a remarkable thing about this Book that, having its origin, not among a literary people like the Greeks, but among an unliterary people, it should have proved a well-spring of life to the literature of every land in which it has been welcomed. Can one exaggerate what the German Bible has done for the language and literature of Germany? Or estimate the influence of the English Bible upon English literature? When the missionary visits a Barbarian tribe and translates the Bible into their language he thereby originates a civilization and a literature. The Bible has fulfilled the prophecy concerning the River of Life in Ezekiel's vision, "every thing shall live whither the river cometh."

To see the unique position that the Bible holds among books place it in the midst of the myriad books of Christendom. Let them declare their relation to it, their indebtedness to it. Here are books written to explain it; books written to attack it; books written to defend it; books inspired directly by it; books inspired indirectly by it; books influenced by it

in their diction, elevated by it in their thoughts. Let these all come forth and they will be found to be the very substance of the literature of Christian lands. Then consider the history of the Book occupying this unique position, where it was produced and who wrote it, and you will be compelled to ask for the *something* that gives it its proud pre-eminence.

Another remarkable fact about the Bible is the apparent universal adaptation of the Book to all nations and tribes, to all classes and conditions of men. Eastern books are proverbially local. This Book arose among a narrow-minded people full of local prejudice. Yet it overleaps all local bounds. It is a citizen of the world, truly cosmopolitan, truly catholic. I need state but one fact to show this. It is a singularly suggestive fact. The British and Foreign Bible Society to-day is issuing the Bible, in whole or in part, in 267 different languages and dialects. Take a geographical survey of the world and the significance of this fact will be manifest. How are we to account for the universal character of the Book? Or what shall we say of the attitude of thousands of men and women who are ready to spend and be spent that they may carry this Book to the uttermost parts of the earth? What are we to say of the men that compose this very Society that prints the Bible in so many languages and of the thousands who give their money to sustain the great work? Are they crazy or duped? Not long ago a large company of the ablest and most learned men in the world sat for a number of years with reverent toil seeking to put into English the exact meaning of the Hebrew and Greek phraseology of this Book. Every point and particle was carefully gone over and the meaning of words prayerfully weighed and voted upon. Were these men under a delusion?