

MR. H. L. HASTINGS ON THE INSPIRATION OF THE BIBLE.

AN OPEN LETTER TO THE EDITOR OF "THE
CHRISTIAN," BOSTON, MASS.

SIR,—Your lecture on the Inspiration of the Bible has been placed in my hands by a friend, who desired me to read it, as "it contains," said he, "an irrefutable argument to prove that the Bible is the word of God." Well, sir, I have read it, and I have jotted down a few things to say about it.

You introduce the subject by saying :

"The inspiration of the Bible is a question that was not raised by me. It is already up for discussion throughout the land." And you ask : "How are we to regard it? What are we to do with it? Is it God's book or is it man's book?"

This question of the inspiration of the Bible is altogether an unnecessary one. It should never have been raised at all. If the Bible is true, inspiration is superfluous; if it is false, either in whole or in part, inspiration is impossible and even unthinkable.

In 2 Tim. 3 : 16 I read : "All scripture is given by inspiration of God;" and in 2 Pet. 1 : 21 : "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of men; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." Had these passages been true, the question could not have been raised. When Peter (with an oath) said to the housemaid Rhoda : "Woman, I know not this man!" he lied, straight from the shoulder; but when he says that "holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost," we are expected to believe that he tells the truth.

If we look at the Bible merely as a book, it is neither better nor worse than any other so-called "sacred book;" but if our view embraces also the results it has produced in the lives of those who believe it to have been given by "inspiration of God," it must appear, it seems to me, not merely a bad book, but a great, an immeasurable curse.

Who ever heard of men cutting each other's throats over a