

feeling in it a training for a state of being in which action shall be eternal, and friction shall be gone for ever. And we *know* they are there. They are in that deep rest which is God's own preparation for the energies of the everlasting state. But how do we *know* that? This is just the question on which I would hang some of the few other remarks I have to make, after thus briefly touching on the memory of an honoured friend. Does it not come to this, when we analyze the reasons why : the Bible exists, and we know it to be the Word of the Lord, which liveth and abideth for ever? Whatever intimations God has given us of immortality, in our nature, or in nature around us, whatever weighty things there are by way of suggestions to us of the blessed prospect of the future of the redeemed, still, when we ask, 'Where is the positive information? where is the reason for certainty? where is the title to go on as matter of fact?' we are reduced to this sacred Book of the East—this mysterious, blessed, Divine Bible. And then this thought of the Bible being, as was so wonderfully well said by the Boden Professor just now, the only book to clasp to the heart of the dying, or to lay beneath the dying head—is it not inseparably connected with another fact, that this Book claims, as no other book does, to have final spiritual authority? I feel profoundly that that word 'authority' is a vital word in all considerations about the Scriptures. There are controversies about inspiration and its mode—controversies which are legion, but they all circle, like waves round a rock, round the question of authority. That which separates the Bible from all other books, however elevating, is, after all, not so much that it contains such treasures of historic information, of poetic beauty, of moral analysis, as that it contains the authority of God and the certainty of His Word. Yes, it is this, after all. There are other books, for which God be thanked, written in many ages, which have had and have their influence on the elevation of man; but the difference between them and this Book is that no conceivable amount of information or inference from them, as such, is binding on the conscience, while we claim for this book, which the Bible Society exists to circulate, that when we have once ascertained the meaning of it, it binds us. It is not merely attractive and elevating—it is all this—but it is binding upon us; it says in the name of a Greater than itself, 'Believe this, because I say it; do this, because I enjoin it.' And are we sure of the rightfulness of this? Surely we are, for a reason as simple as it is deep. It is as irrefragably certain as anything in history that this was the opinion held of the Book by the Son of God Himself. It is not arguing in a circle thus to give Bible statements as Bible credentials. The Bible holds two different characters—history and revelation. In its capacity of history, it takes me to Jesus Christ as a historic fact and reality, and then Jesus Christ presents to me the Bible in its character of authoritative revelation. As surely as Jesus Christ was and is, so surely I learn from Him that the Written Word is a binding thing. And I venture to hold it for certain that, so long as that opinion of the Holy Scriptures is the ruling and certain and confident opinion of the disciples of Jesus Christ, so long will there be an inexhaustible supply of faith and hope, and a ceaseless range and means of work, for a Society like this. But let that conviction go out of fashion, let it be undermined in the public opinion of the Christian world, and indubitably, however slowly the tide may ebb, the resources of a Bible Society, as such, must fail. May I add one word further? I cannot but warmly and cordially respond to the words which were uttered by Dr. Greeves about the scriptural value of the services of my own beloved Church. It is a fact always very precious to me as an Anglican that the very first sentence of the very first authorized sermon of the Church of England, the first sentence of the first homily of the first Book, says, 'There is nothing more necessary or more profitable to a Christian man than the knowledge of the Holy Scriptures.' The whole of that homily is occupied with the fruitfulness of the study of the Bible, and in tearing to pieces the pleas urged from very