

home has to be submitted for thoughtful and humbling consideration, and as a stimulus to renewed and more energetic endeavours.

While thus varied is the Society's constituency and her work, we cannot afford to forget the glorious definiteness of her aim and object. With but one Book out of the world's vast literature is she conversant; but that is the Book of books, the unique and precious gift of God to men. With a single eye to God's glory, she takes in her hand that solitary volume. Her strength lies in the conviction that in its sacred lore there is wisdom to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. And strong in that strength she seeks to spread it wide over the earth, only ceasing her efforts where man himself ceases to be. So long as there remain dark places on earth, grim and squalid abodes of sin and ignorance and sorrow, does she seek amidst these dark places to make that Lamp to shine. Solemn is this responsibility. Sorely does she need the prayer and loving sympathy of all to whom God's honour is dear, and the souls of men are precious. But not for ever will that Lamp of God's Word have to be held up. Not for ever is struggle and self-denial in this holy enterprise demanded of us. The Church of God is a watcher for the dawn. Soon—and God alone knows how soon—will the day break and the shadows flee away. Then the work of the kindled Lamp shall have found its full accomplishment. For with His holy angels, and in the lustrous glory of uncreated light, will He come who is crowned with many crowns, and whose royal robe will even still be empurpled with the blood of redemption—even He who bears the ineffable and the Eternal Name, "the Word of God."

WHAT IS IT TO ME?

The Bible itself is the battle-ground of our generation. From opposite sides the hosts are gathering to the encounter, and a struggle as for life and death is to occupy the latter days of many who received from their fathers as a first axiom of truth that *all Scripture is given by inspiration of God*. In this struggle may there be no mistaking of friend and foe; no temporary alliance between light and darkness; no gratuitous and outlying combats between truth and the truth; no cowardly compromises, and no fighting in armour that has not first been proved!

Not less is the Bible, in the judgment of the believing, the test and touchstone of human character. Of it, as of Him who is its inspirer and its subject, the words are daily verified, "Set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel, and for a sign which shall be spoken against—that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed." By their treatment of the Bible men may know, for themselves if not always for others, what they are. By the spirit in which they read or forbear from reading; by the view which they find themselves taking of each successive incident which makes either for or against the acceptance and prevalence of revelation; most of all by the effect produced upon the mind itself, in the secret chamber or in the house of God, by the word which speaks to it in those pages from the throne and from the mercy-seat above; by these signs may men judge what character and what spirit they are of; and in comparison with this question the other shrinks, for the individual at least, almost into insignificance; the enquiry how the Bible is to stand hereafter with the world becomes a small matter, when we place it side by side with the other enquiry, What is it to me? Does it speak to me for conviction, and for admonition, and for guidance? Can I go to it as my oracle, and find it ever, what it calls itself, a lively, that is, living, oracle, vocal to me in life's difficulties, persuasive amidst life's temptations, consolatory in life's sorrows? He only is fit to fight for the Bible, who has first yielded to it within and done it homage; who has been equipped out of its own armoury, and enlisted by the very voice which speaks therein.—C. J. Vaughan.