

Tried indeed is that priceless word which this society seeks to spread among the needy millions of earth. It is in the crucible to-day, as it has been through the long ages, but, as with the Hebrews in the fiery furnace, the presence of an unseen Power seems so to guard it with a sacred charm, that not a trace of the burning flame can be found upon it. But rather as the fires burn with fiercer rage and the ages wear away, this sacred book sheds an ever increasing lustre and manifests its divineness with ever intensifying power.

I. Let us give brief consideration to the fact that this divine book *has been thoroughly tried and its value fully tested.*

1. It has been tried in the *fires of bitter opposition and des'ruptive criticism.* Why should men hate and assail the book that brings them such messages of love and hope? Because it condemns their sin and brings them face to face with a holy Being for whom they have no affinity. The boast that a bold and talented blasphemer had recently been greeted with a large audience, and could command such an audience at his pleasure, has been appropriately answered by a daily secular paper: "Yes; the witty, blaspheming infidel will not soon be likely to lack an audience, because there are multitudes of men who *want* to believe the Bible is false."

But from whatever cause, the fires of adverse criticism have been kindled around this holy book through successive ages. Now, it is sheer unreasoning infidel hate, and now it is plausible science, with its antagonistic theories, seemingly appealing to men's reason; now, it is the secular power which arrays itself against God's word; and now it is ecclesiastical power, which, in God's name, seeks to restrain the spread of his own truth. But, as the attacks upon the fervid Wycliffe and the intrepid Luther only gave them greater distinction before the world, so every assault upon this divine word has revealed its value and extended its sway.

2. How thoroughly has the Bible been tried by *the crucial tests of advancing civilization?* Suppose, for a moment, that it were the production of the unaided intellect of man! What mind of earth's transcendent genius can scan the future and discern the secrets that lie hidden in the coming centuries, so that never a fresh discovery of the far-advanced ages shall falsify the utterance of the far-back years, in the infancy of the race? What wisdom of Zoroaster or Plato can stand the ordeal of the nineteenth century?

But here is a book, portions of which reach back to the dim twilight of historic times, upon whose pages the discoveries of the on-moving centuries, the revelations of man's latest and highest wisdom, have been pouring their intense beams, and lo! like the burning bush of Horeb, it remains unconsumed! Not a single essential feature is disproved or discredited; nay, rather, its heavenly origin and authority are attested by every new ray of light which man's increasing knowledge sheds upon it.

The Reverend gentleman then went on to shew how the discoveries of the archaeologist, the physicist, the astronomer, &c., add new emphasis to the demonstrated fact, "The word of the Lord is tried," "the word of the Lord endureth forever," "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away."

3. This book has been tried and its value attested by its demonstrated *adaptation to the varied conditions and multiplied wants of humanity.*

The experience of the race has settled a few things. Water quenches thirst, bread satisfies hunger, a few medicines are specifics for certain diseases. Thirty-three centuries of accredited history have proved that the Bible alone, meets the necessities of the human race.

All man's wants are supplied. All his ills are here remedied. All his wrongs are here redressed. His spiritual nature, always and everywhere seeking sustenance and rest, always and everywhere seeks in vain, until coming to his divine source it finds the bread, which eating it hungers no more, the rest, which securing, its weariness is at an end.

There is no member of the great family of man who does not want deliver-