

In moving this resolution the speaker said it would be evident, both from the interesting and gratifying Report of the Secretary, and also from the addresses to which they had listened, that the Bible Society occupied a distinguished, perhaps he ought to say *the chief* place, among the many splendid organizations that exist at the present day for the dissemination of Christian truth. Its simple, but sublime object is to circulate God's word, without note or comment, in all the languages of the many-tongued millions of mankind. In order to accomplish this, it seeks to combine as far as practicable the exertions and piety, the learning and liberality of Christians of every evangelical denomination. It is based on the broad principle that the Book of God is the only power that can regenerate and save society, the only sure and certain guide through the snares and pitfalls of the present life to a glorious immortality hereafter. The duty of Christians in relation to the Bible the speaker held to be twofold : first, to hold it *fast*, and then to hold it *forth*. It was necessary at the present day to hold it fast, for the Book had been on its trial for nearly eighteen centuries. It would almost seem as if its enemies had, of late years, been heating the furnace seven times hotter than its wont ; but we may be sure that every page of the Bible will come out more bright and beautiful because of the burning. Science, falsely so called, had been setting itself in array against some of the primary and fundamental truths of revelation. Geology, seated on her chair of petrifications, has loudly called in question the Mosaic account of creation. Infidelity, under the high-sounding names of rationalism and historical criticism, has boldly demanded the elimination of every miracle from the sacred record, no matter by what evidence it may be supported. Pantheism, decked in all the attractions of imaginative poetry and French romance, would, as it writes its life of Jesus, take from us not only a real Saviour but also a personal God. And, more and worse than all, men on whom were laid the vows of God, that they would contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, have not hesitated by their writings to affirm that Moses made sad mistakes, that the grand central saving doctrine of justification by faith in a crucified and risen Jesus is only an idle dream, and that in dealing with God's Book, every word of which is tried, we are, forsooth, to choose the good and to cast the bad away. Now, when a wild and lawless spirit of errorism like this, is let loose on society, surely it becomes every one, who is loyal to the Bible and the God of the Bible, to give the trumpet no uncertain sound, and to affirm with no bated breath that the Bible *contains*,—no not contains, but is, in every part of it,—the whole truth of God. And yet, while we may deplore these attacks of the infidel and sceptic, we do not fear them. They are not an unmixed evil. Good will come out of them—good has come out of them. The close criticism and the searching investigation to which the Book is being subjected in consequence of these attacks, are bringing out its truth and beauty with a tenfold force. Scientific research is illustrating its statements—the ruins of Nineveh, the monuments of Babylon, the inscriptions on Moabite stones, and the excavations at present taking place in Jerusalem itself, are all proving its wonderful historical accuracy. The fact is, that the evidence of its Divine authority have been multiplying ever since the blessed birth at Bethlehem ; and the man who does not now receive and believe the Bible closes his eyes on the brightest flood of evidence that the world has ever seen.

Mr. Stewart then referred to another line of argument, showing the influence of God's Word in spreading civilization, in establishing law and order, in turning the savage into the man, in making the slave an heir of freedom, in raising woman from the dust and fitting her to be the partner and the equal of man, in enlightening the mind and calming the conscience and saving the soul. Does not its influence for all this, and a thousandfold more, proclaim, as with a trumpet tongue, that it has God for its author and salvation for its end ? Can infidelity produce any blessed results like these ? Would we not all be startled to read some morning that a man had been converted