

tributed. But then the effect was, produced gradually and tacitly; in consequence of which it appeared the result of the people's free choice; though not formally declared, well enough understood. It was in this way that the old *Italic* first came into use in the Latin church; and it was in this way, from the growing predilection of the people, that the present Vulgate at length supplanted it.

Immediately after the Reformation, the opportunity was very favourable for procuring, among those who favoured it, a welcome reception to any version of the bible into the vulgar tongue, which had the approbation of the heads of the party; and if, from the changes in their rulers, there had been some changes in relation to the scriptures to be read in the congregation, what was established was of so short continuance, that the mind could hardly be said to be pre-occupied by it.

But the case at present is widely different. Learning is in more hands—critics are multiplied. The press is open; and every cavil, as well as every argument, is quickly circulated. Besides, the prepossession in favour of the translation to which we have been so long habituated, is at this day, very strong. Add to all this, that the religious, as well as the civil rights of mankind, were never better understood; the genuine principles of toleration, had never greater influence. How, then, should we be affected, upon hearing that we are commanded, under pains and penalties, by our superiors, to read, and cause to be read in our churches, such a particular translation of the bible only, and never more to admit into the sacred service, that version to which we have been hitherto all our lives accustomed, and for which we have contracted a high veneration?

For my part, I will not dissemble the matter: I should think such a measure exceedingly incongruous to the spirit of that religion, which the legislators perhaps intended to serve by it; and no less unreasonable, in respect of the age and country wherein we live. I perfectly agree with Tertullian, that "religion and coercion of mind are utterly incompatible."

But is there nothing then (says Dr. C.) which can with propriety be attempted by the higher powers, spiritual or temporal, for promoting the success of an accurate translation of the bible?—The utmost (he answers) which, in my judgment, can be done; if such a version should, in any future period, be offered to the public, is to remove the obstructions which those powers have heretofore raised to prevent

its introduction; and to permit, not command, the use of it.

All this seems to be dictated by reason itself; and we trust it will, consequently, have its due effect on the public.

Dr. C. concludes his most sensible and well written preface with these words:

"I am not confident of my own reasonings. I am sensible that, on many points, I have changed my opinion, and found reason to correct what I had judged formerly to be right. The consciousness of former mistakes, proves a guard to preserve me from such a presumptuous confidence in my present judgment, as would preclude my giving a patient hearing, to whatever may be urged from reason or scripture, in opposition to it. TRUTH has been in all my inquiries, and still is, my great aim. To her I am ready to sacrifice every personal consideration; but am determined not, knowingly, to sacrifice her to any thing."

Having, by these extracts, made our readers acquainted with the nature of Dr. C.'s work, and his manner of treating it, we shall now give, barely, the contents of his dissertations, which take up the whole remainder of the first volume.

They are twelve in number, and are regular introductions, one to another.

The *first* contains many excellent, and some new observations on the language and idiom of the New Testament; on the diversity of style, and on the inspiration of the sacred writers. This last, however, is far from being handled in the manner we might have expected.

In the *second* dissertation Dr. C. treats of the causes to which the principal differences in languages are imputable; the origin of the changes produced in the language and idiom of the Jews; and the principal difficulties to be encountered in translating the sacred books.—All this is curious, and laboured with great care.

Dissertation the *third* is an excellent piece of writing, on the style of the scripture history, particularly the gospels.—The objections of the celebrated oratorian, F. Simon, against the perspicuity of the style, are here fairly and judiciously confuted.

Dissertation the *fourth* consists of observations, (and excellent observations they are) on the right method of proceeding in the critical examination of the books of the New Testament.—We were particularly pleased with what he says in Section 12, &c. about interpreting scripture from the *analogy of faith*, and verbal *etymology*.—Nothing, we think, can more readily mislead an interpreter than these two guides.