

anything to lower, let us do everything to elevate it to its scriptural character and importance. Let men of gravity, of veracity, of sobriety, of conscientiousness, as the scriptures expressly require, be chosen and ordained to this office: and let such be directed to undertake and prosecute its duties, in humble dependance on divine grace, and encouraged by the prospect of a great reward. For, let them remember the words of scripture,—“They that have used the office of a deacon well, purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.”

*(To be continued.)*

### THE THREE WITNESSES TO JESUS CHRIST.

Our English Bible is a noble work; it is alike wonderful for its simplicity, and its accuracy. Sacred philology and criticism have made great progress since it first appeared, and yet this Book of God, in the old Saxon tongue, stands an unparalleled copy of the divine original. The advance of learning in the course of these past centuries has no doubt thrown much additional light on the inspired volume, and discovered some mistakes in our English version, as well as passages where the translation might be improved; but our English Bible throughout is marvellous for the fidelity and force with which it renders the Holy Scriptures into our vernacular tongue. It is affectation alone, or something worse, that can prompt a preacher in the pulpit to be ever finding fault with this noble translation, and to be ever proposing instead, renderings of his own, culled perhaps from his Lexicon the day before. In most cases it is a mere shade of difference in the meaning that is brought out, even when the alteration is an improvement, and this can usually be done with sufficient clearness, in the course of exposition or illustration of a text, without the parade of a formal emendation of the translation. We must not be understood by these remarks, to condemn all criticism of our English version of the Bible, we only maintain that true criticism has here comparatively little fault to find, and when it has room for exercise it is all the more likely to receive a candid hearing when it is known to speak in a reverend spirit for the Holy Book.

It is with this spirit of profound veneration for our English Bible that we proceed here to offer a few observations on a passage in it, containing a not unimportant difference from the original text. It lies in the sequel of the words of the Apostle John respecting “the Coming One,” to which we have directed attention in a former paper.\* It reads thus, “For there are three that bear record in Heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one; and there are three that bear witness on earth, the spirit, the water, and the blood, and these three agree in one.” 1 John V., 7, 8.

There is perhaps no passage of the New Testament, whose genuineness has occasioned more discussion among critics than this, on account of its bearing on the doctrine of the Trinity. But no good