

I. We assume as undeniable that a true reverence for God's Word requires us to use the most accurate and faithful version of the inspired original that we can obtain, whether that version be new or old. Granted, that a change proposed for trivial reasons should be discouraged, and that the reverential associations that gather around an old version are not to be lightly disturbed; but the interests of Sacred Truth are paramount in importance, and these interests require that the original Scriptures be rendered with all possible fidelity into the vulgar tongue for the use of English readers of the present day.

II. We venture further to say, that the authorised English version, with all its excellencies, is no longer a sufficient or satisfactory representation of the inspired Bible. We believe it to have been a wonderful production of sacred scholarship in the age when it first appeared, and can unite with its most ardent admirers in praise of its general fidelity, dignity, and strength. It has directed the faith and nursed the virtues of better men than we are. It has guided our fathers to the gate of heaven. But the God of the Bible has given to our generation greater advantages for ascertaining the exact words of the Book, and the accurate meaning of those words, than former ages possessed; and we seem to be constrained to take one of two courses, either to submit our present version to the capricious verbal alterations of individual expounders, or to endeavor after such an authorised and competent revision of the whole as may command the general confidence of the Church.

The following considerations appear to us to carry great weight :

1. The original text is now far more accurately known than at the period when the authorised version was produced. This remark applies mainly to the New Testament, of which some of the most reliable MSS. have been obtained since the era of the English translation. True, that the changes noted and adopted by the critical editors of the New Testament are generally of an unimportant nature; but if even ten are such as should be known to the English reader, there arises an uncertainty in the popular mind as to the authenticity of many texts on which great stress has been laid in religious controversy. No scholar is content to read the "textus receptus," because the scholar is perfectly aware that it was framed from an imperfect collation of Greek MSS., and, in some parts of the Book of the Revelation of St. John, without any old Greek MS. whatever. It is required by veneration for the truth and by justice to the unlearned readers of the Bible, that the English version should be made to correspond with the original, as determined by consent of the learned critical editors of England and Germany, or in cases where they differ, by the preponderating judgment.

2. Not only the text, but the meaning of the text, is more accurately ascertained now than in the reign of James I. of England. No disrespect is intended to the erudition of the period, or of the Divines whom that King appointed to prepare the version which is still "authorised." We merely state the fact, that the studies of the two hundred and fifty years which have elapsed since that period have not been unfruitful. Within the present century how marked the