

THE
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THE ENGLISH BIBLE.

The "old English Bible" maintains its place of authority in our Churches and families; but we doubt whether it is privately and habitually read by the present generation as it was by their fathers. Granted that the neglect of the Bible must be referred to its radical cause in the natural prejudice of every "carnal mind," and may also be traced in part to the influence of the multiplied books and periodicals of the day in diverting attention from the Book of Books. We are inclined, however, to recognise also the operation of another cause: the dissatisfaction which is felt with the present translation, and the uninviting dissection of the matter into small separate verses,—a treatment which no uninspired volume could have so long survived.

The question of a revision of the authorised version is much debated. It is no longer a movement of the Socinians to wipe out the evidences of Christ's Deity, and of the Holy Trinity; or of the Baptists to insist on a special rendering of one or two Greek words, that are words of life or death to their system; but an anxious inquiry among educated men in all Protestant Churches speaking the English language, whether the faults and solecisms of the present version may not be corrected without injury to those great characteristic excellencies which no competent judge disputes. It is a question on which every intelligent mind has or seeks to have an opinion, and the temperate discussion of which must promote the genuine interests of Scriptural Christianity.

On the threshold of the subject we are met by the alarmists, who raise their hands and voices in horror at the thought of changing the popular Bible. "Innovation! Latent here! Rationalistic criticism! Our Bible in danger!" By such outcries the ignorant and the timid are affrighted and most unjustly prejudiced. The men who raise these cries would have with equal zeal exclaimed against the present version itself, had they lived at the time when it was first projected to supersede the translations previously in use. We are not without a persuasion, however, that, above the din of mere unreasoning outcries, the calm voice of sound investigation and judgment will yet be heard, and that perhaps, speedily.