

32 The Bible is indeed the inspired written word of God. But since it is written, it falls necessarily under the same laws which determine the value of documents of importance which are entirely human. To those who received it, as its several books came from the hands of their respective writers, the Bible had, in the circumstances, immediate proof of its authenticity. It is to all other persons its authenticity required proof by the immediate testimony of an unbroken chain of witnesses, reaching from the writer to the reader. It is for a like reason that human documents of importance are recorded in public offices, so that in cases of doubt, their authenticity may be duly attested. Now, without this testimony, that is, the authority of the Church, it would be impossible at this day, to prove the authenticity of the Bible. But the Private Reasoners deny the authority of the Church, and thus deprive the written word of God of her testimony as to its authenticity and inspiration, and consequently of the first condition essential to prove its Divine character. I ask any one of them, the more learned the better, to prove that the book which he offers to me as the Bible is authentic, except by deriving the proof from the authority of the Church which he denies. For me that authority is sufficient, but for him there is no other, so that on this point, if he be consistent with his own principle as a Private Reasoner, his argument will be—"the Bible is the Bible because it is the Bible, and everybody says so."

33. But suppose, what is impossible that they could prove the authenticity of the Scriptures, I pass to a second difficulty, which the Private Reasoners cannot reach without invoking the authority of the Church. What we call the Bible is a book made up of common paper, ink, and binding, which might have been employed for any literary purpose. What is revealed in it is the sense or meaning which the Holy Spirit intended to convey. This sense or meaning, was originally committed to parchment under written signs the exact value which as expressive of the meaning, was liable to be misunderstood by the reader. Eighteen hundred years have passed since these signs were formed in the autograph of the original writers. It has been necessary to copy them by pens, not inspired, during the whole period of fourteen out of the eighteen centuries. But not only has it been necessary to transfer them, it has also been necessary to copy them, it has also been necessary to transfer the sense from the signs of the language in which they were first written, to the signs employed in writing other more modern languages, and in these also, to renew the work of copying with the hand. Can any of our private reasoners prove, without the authority of the Church, that the signs have not been altered? That the text has not been adulterated by interpolations of the Copyist?—That the sense has not been changed by the will or accidental omission or addition of words? On their principles such proof is utterly impossible, and thus they necessarily sap the foundation of their own religion, by depriving the written word of God, of those outward, necessary attestations of its inspiration, its authenticity, and the substantial integrity of its text. And they consider themselves friends of the Bible forsooth!

51. But passing over this also, for, among Catholics, there is no doubt on either of these points, what is the practical condition of the Bible in the hands of these Private Reasoners? The sacred volume is like all other written documents, a silent and dumb oracle until it is brought into contact with the living intelligence of its reader. He puts his mind into communication, so to speak, with the writer of the sacred page, through the medium of the written signs, by which the latter intended to convey his meaning. When he misinterprets the signs, the writer is not there to correct his error. The Church indeed was appointed to discharge the writer's office in that respect—but the reader is a Private Reasoner, and will admit no help from the Church. If he says that, according to the Bible, Christ is God, the Bible speaks not. If he says that Christ is not God, the Bible is silent still. If he says that there is a hell for impenitent sinners the Bible makes no reply. If he says that according to the Bible, there is no hell, the Sacred Volume itself still remains as mute as if it conveyed in his interpretation. Now let him take any of these interpretations. Let him be a leader among the Private Reasoners. Let him preach his interpretation with all the eloquence of which human language may be made the vehicle, and what will it amount to? Not to what the Bible says, for the Bible has no powers of utterance to say anything but his preaching will be simply his own opinion.

or, in other words, the Bible having no living voice of its own, he puts his tongue and speech into the mouth of the oracle, and makes it seem to say just what he wishes to express. Here is the fundamental fallacy of the whole system of Private Reasoning. There is necessarily as little contradiction in the true meaning of what the Bible teaches, as there is in the living teaching of the Church, or in God Himself, who is the Author of both.

36. The great evil of this stem is, that contradictions of the different sects, to which the Private Reasoners are divided, are charged on the Bible itself. There is a subtlety in their first principle which allows it to evade detection by the popular mind. The orthodox blame the heretodox for holding erroneous doctrines, but they do not perceive that both rest on the same foundation—private opinion, and that this private opinion in both cases, is presented to them, as what the Bible says. The consequence is, therefore, that whereas in the Church every doctrine is held and believed as matter of fact, revealed by Jesus Christ, and therefore infallibly true, the same doctrines among the Private Reasoners by the essential nature of the process through which they arrive at their religious belief, are reduced to the basis and uncertainty of opinion. Now God has revealed no opinions. The Bible contains no opinions, and yet, on the principle of Private Reasoners, it is obvious that what is called religious belief is not, and cannot be anything more than opinion. The Rationalists of Germany have pushed this principle to some of its frightful consequences. Their more timid brethren in this country are, as yet, far behind, but are necessarily moving on in the same direction. But the end is not yet.

### The Cross;

HALIFAX, SATURDAY FEBRUARY 19.

#### CALUMNIES AGAINST THE IRISH CATHOLIC CLERGY.

We resume to day, this painful and disgusting subject. We have maintained that for many years past the clergy of Ireland were the only effectual barrier against a total disruption of Society. The policy of England seems to have been to goad the people into resistance, to try how much agony poor human nature was able to stand, and to render it impossible for the Clergy with all the influence of religion to keep the unfortunate people quiet. But the stimulating causes of crime are now all forgotten as well as the long and unexampled services of the calumniated Clergy.

Be it remembered too, that this same Clergy have literally five times more duty to perform than any other Clergy in Christendom. I venture the Government of Protestant Prussia when they are about the same number of Catholics as in Ireland, there is one Catholic Priest for about every 100 of the population—where as in Ireland there is not more than one for every Three. The people, harassed with an alien Clergy, and ground down by rack rents and every species of oppression, are too poor to support a larger number of Clergymen of their own faith. I would that the number of regular Clergymen of those countries with Colleges of Colleges of priests were increased by age &c. The population of the working classes of the country of England will be still much greater. Then in the rural districts the poor Catholics live in so scattered a manner, and so many old Parishes must be cut & under one Pastor in order to avoid a large number, that the faithful round of the Priest's duties will appear incredible to all who are not well acquainted with the state of things. In fact more than half the Priest's time is spent on the road both day and night endeavouring to carry the essential comforts of religion to his dispersed and suffering flock. On Sundays he must divide himself, as it were, between two Districts, officiate in chapels remote from each other, and preach to the different sections of his flock with his fast unbroken, —this too after a week of incessant toil, at home and abroad, by day & by night. If there is any trouble to be given in the District, it is sure to be imposed on him, if there be any tales of woe or cries of misery they are sure to reach his heart, if there be any quarrels or disputes the priest will be applied to. Now we boldly ask, is it just to hold such a toil-worn man as this, responsible for the wicked and disorderly characters who exist in every flock, and in every part of the world? Is it fair to expect that he

can do the work of half a dozen men—that he can search-out and expel from his large and straggling district, every bad character who infests it, or who steals into it from distant parts of the country? England with her large standing army, and her ten thousand Policemen has covered the whole surface of Ireland as in a network, and although the Police Barracks are within 3 miles of each other, notorious offenders continually escape their vigilance. The Police have nothing else to do, and they often fail the Priest is overwhelmed with an endless variety of labour, and is it wonderful that he is sometimes unable to prevent the commission of crime? For those who know any thing of the subject, are well aware—though our English disbelieving calumniators and religious Bigots will not comprehend it—that the bad characters in a district, the robber, the assassin, the soldier or never goes near a Priest at all, either to Mass, or Sermon, or Confession. What influence then can the Priest exercise over him? The moment an abandoned character becomes notorious in his own Parish, he generally flees into some part of the country where he is unknown, and how can the clergy take cognizance of him? There are, no doubt, desperate characters in Ireland, but who made them so? There are some murderers, but very few in cold blood. There are secret assassins, but poverty and persecution, ejections and starvation, the habitual violation of the commonest duties of humanity, on the part of those who grind them to the earth, have made them so.—There is turbulence and discontent; but instead of being surprised at this, the great wonder should be, that there is so little of either. Some landlords have been shot, but God alone knows how much oppression prompted the guilty murderers to perpetrate the terrible crime. It is not a war of religion, or of race. A Catholic Scully has been shot down, as well as a Protestant Mahon. The indignant upturning of trampled humanity makes no distinction between the hard hearted Saxon and the unfeeling Celt. England, English laws, English misgovernment, English robbery and oppression of the poor—English State Churchism, and Class Legislation, English violation of the first duties of a Government, English hatred of Ireland, of her religion, her people and her race—these, and not the exhortations of Irish priests, are the real cause of Irish discontent and murders, and though a new Coercion Bill were passed every month in the year, the same consequences will always flow from the same causes. It is useless to alledge in this case, that modern England, that the present Government are not influenced by these sentiments towards the Sister Country. In tracing crime to its natural source, it is vain to tell us that the present people and Government of England are influenced by the most benevolent intentions towards poor Ireland. What we want to shew, is that instead of reproaching the Irish Priest for the non performance of impossibilities—that instead of imputing to him, consequences of which he is innocent, they should, if they are not just enough to record his praise for his extraordinary services, at least bestow him the charity of their silence. What we want to establish is, that England, instead of playing the bully to the heart-broken Irish Priest, should bow down in the dust and acknowledge before high heaven that in the present calamitous state of Ireland she is justly punished for the accumulated crimes of her own fathers against that noble nation—crimes out with the Prophet of sorrows: "Our Fathers have sinned, and we have borne their iniquities."

#### NEWS BY THE LAST PACKET.

The Bishop of Modena, Mgr. Reggiani died of apoplexy on the 9th of January. He was born in 1772, was consecrated in 1830, and was renowned for his zeal, learning and charity. On the 3d of January the venerable Bishop of Fulda Mgr. John Leonard Pfaff expired at the age of 72. On Christmas night he celebrated the midnight Mass in the Franciscan Church of Mt. St. Michael near Fulda. On the morning of Christmas day he preached in his Cathedral, and officiated pontifically at the High Mass of the day. He had been in delicate health for some time previously, and the fatigue which he endured on that occasion aggravated the symptoms of his disease. The whole Catholic population were deeply afflicted at the loss of this excellent Prelate. A Concordat has at length been concluded between the Holy See and Russia. It is difficult to estimate the important advantages of this arrangement. A Catholic Archbishop and several

Bishops are to be established in Russia and 20 Students are to be supported at the expense of the Government in each of the Diocesan Seminaries. The King of Prussia has given \$70,000 to the second new Catholic Church which is now in course of erection. The Holy See has energetically protested against the sacrilegious spoliation of property by the Swiss infidels. Mgr. Lipp, the Bishop Elect of Stuttgart was to have been consecrated a few days since by the Archbishop of Fribourg. The celebrated Abbé Lacordaire has been preaching with great success at Marsailles. On the 10th inst he was to pronounce the Funeral Oration of O'Connell in Paris. There is a serious division in the camp of the 'Young Irishmen.' Some of the leaders are drawn daggers. Duffy, the Editor of the Nation, terrified at the avowal of warlike dispositions and physical force demonstrations by Mitchell and other dangerous politicians of his stamp, has cut the connection. The penetrating sagacity and shrewd foresight of the Great Liberator are now fully vindicated. If O'Connell lived longer, and permitted these foolish young men to continue in the Association they would have soon entangled him in the meshes of the law. But he knew his men, and he crossed this mad Mitchell particularly. It is singular enough that some of the English calumniators of the Irish Clergy have never thought of charging the young Ireland Orators with the recent murders in consequence of their sanguinary and violent harangues. They would not suit English policy. The Young Irishmen were playing the game of England too successfully. Smith O'Brien did not attend the last annual meeting of the Confederation. He is probably getting ashamed of some of his associates, and would be very glad to back out from this very distasteful concern altogether. The recent meetings of the Old Association exhibit increased vigour on the part of the sensible Repealers, and a determination to keep together the elements of nationality, until the time—and from the aspect of Europe it cannot now be far distant—when Ireland will be able to cry out in a voice of thunder, and insist on the concession of her plundered rights. We think at the same time it would be good policy and good taste in Conciliation Hall to abstain from all allusion to those misguided seceders, as we think the honest steps amongst them will return to the ranks of their country when they begin to comprehend the real spirit and fatal consequences of Young Irelandism. The notorious Father Kenyon has been accused of denunciations, but he has distinctly denied the charge. The Curate of the late Father Tom McGuire, has written to the Papers to contradict every word of the false report which was circulated touching the cause of his death and the alleged post-mortem examination. It was all a dirty-trick of the Tory Papers—a lifting of the hind legs of jack asses against the Dead Lion. Father Tom gave Protestantism in Ireland a blow from which it never recovered. Count Montlebent has recently delivered a noble speech on the affairs of Switzerland in which he openly accuses our Revolutionary Minister Lord Palmerston as the author of all the misfortunes which have happened in Switzerland—Palmerston threw obstacles in the way of a united action in behalf of the Great Powers, and whilst he encouraged the Swiss vagabonds to prosecute the war with vigor. The honest people who were defending their homes and their altars, finding as they thought, that they were deceived by France, Austria and England, lost all spirit, and hence the melancholy consequences. He is playing a similar game in the kingdom of Greece, and there is no doubt that he will revolutionize all Italy, if he can. He is preparing future misery and humiliation for England. We have contracted the greater part of an enormous National Debt in attempting to prevent France from creating Revolutions in other countries, and yet we ourselves are now treading in the steps of Republican France. Palmerston may have more wars on his hands before long than he will know how to manage, and we tell him that the next war in which England is engaged, is likely to be one for her very existence both at home and abroad. She cannot increase the hatred of Republican America or formidable France, and by her recent intrigues in Switzerland and Italy she will force Austria to become her enemy. We say nothing of Ireland or Irishmen. England has very few