

quainted with the Bible, that when a poor ignorant man like myself found anything hard in it, all he had to do was, go to his priest, and bring his Bible with him, and that the priest, being knowledgeable in such things, and being well acquainted with God's Word, would be able to help him out of the difficulty, and explain what he found hard.

Priest—I wouldn't demean myself by arguing about the meaning of Scripture with the likes of you, but just look at the Protestants and see the fruits of allowing every man to read the Bible. Look at all the sects and religions they have among them. There's what the Bible has done; no wonder then that Pope Leo XII. called the Protestant Bible "*the Gospel of the Devil*," and no wonder that he exhorted all bishops and pastors "to turn away their flocks from those *poisonous pastures*;"<sup>\*</sup> sure 'tis it that causes all these and divisions among heretics, while on the contrary, the Catholics are one and the same everywhere.

Barney—I'm thinking, your reverence, there's other reasons for Catholics being united, besides their not having the Bible; sure we can't differ from your reverence, and your reverence can't differ from the bishop, and the bishop can't differ from the cardinals, and the cardinals can't differ from the pope, and that's the reason there's a *kind of unity* amongst us. The truth is, we'd be afraid to differ from your reverence, for if we did, 'tis abuse, and beating, and stoning we'd get. Sure we wouldn't get a day's work through the country, and we couldn't show our nose at a fair or a market, without a cry being raised after us, as if we're robbers or murderers, and that's the reason there's a *kind of unity* among us; but in troth, your reverence, I'd rather have a little difference between us, like there is among the Protestants, than a *kind of unity* that depends upon the horserhip and the curse. If the priests put *them* aside, and if every man could do as he pleased, I'm thinking there wouldn't be much unity amongst us, any more than there is in America, where I hear the Catholics are beginning to think for themselves, and read the Bible too, without leave or license from priest or Pope.

Priest—I see, Barney, that it's all over with you; a Protestant couldn't argue better; I see that you're fairly corrupted.

Barney—Your reverence, I deny that the Bible ever corrupted any man, and I couldn't stand by and hear it said that God's holy Word was the curse of mankind, and the cause of all hereby, without saying a word in its defence; and indeed I'm sorry to hear a priest crying down the holy Scriptures.

Priest—I'm not crying them down. I'm only saying that no man has a right to read them without leave from the Church.

Barney—And please your reverence if some tyrant was to say that you had no right to see the light of the sun, or drink the water of the well, or breathe the air of heaven, would you give in to him?

Priest—Of course I wouldn't, because those things are necessary to my life and health, and God only, who created them for my use, has a right to deprive me of them.

Barney—Just so, your reverence; and the Scriptures are as necessary to the life and health of the soul; they are light, as David tells us, and I'm sure that I've a right to see them. They are the streams of living water, and I have a right to drink them; they are the breath of the Holy Spirit, and who has a right to forbid my breathing them?

Priest—No one said that you shouldn't, only you should come to the Church for leave.

Barney—Why then, your reverence, shouldn't it be quite the other way? Sure it's the Church that should come to me with them; it's the Church that should urge us to read God's holy Word, instead of hindering us; and your reverence might as well say that you are appointed to see all the light, and drink all the water, and breathe all the air, and eat all the bread for me and every man in the parish, as to say that you can be religious for us, and that you have a right to keep the Bible from us as you please.

Priest—Hold your tongue man, I'm fairly vexed listening to you. Sure I knew well that it's with the jumpers you've been.

Barney—I hope, your reverence, that I've said nothing but the truth, and by my word the time is coming when the people won't allow themselves to be kept in darkness here, any more than in Dublin or the North, where Mr. O'Hagan, the great Catholic counsellor, says that 400,000 Douay Bibles has been sold within the last seven years—100,000 in Dublin, and 300,000 in Belfast—and it's me that's glad to hear that same any way; I tell your reverence plainly, that I deny the right of Pope or bishop, or priest, or church, to lock up the Scripture and keep it away from any of us, that is able to read it, and there's many more of my way of thinking. Sure you might as well say that the priest has the right of keeping under lock and key all the money in the parish, and giving it out as they please, by pence and half-pence, as

to say that you have a right to keep from the people that which is worth more than thousands of gold and silver\*—God's own words—my mind is that your reverence might just as well undertake to save us the trouble of swallowing by eating for us yourself, as to say that you'd keep us from reading the Bible by reading it for us yourself. Take my word for it, the people will have their rights; and if your reverence and the other priests of Ireland won't give them the Scriptures they'll just take them from Protestants, or jumpers, or wherever they can get them. Sure I wouldn't care from whose hand I got a loaf of bread if I was starving; and in like manner I tell you the time is coming when the people will take the Word of God from whoever is kind enough to give it to them. They won't allow their precious souls to be starved to death for want of the bread of life while they can get *their own* Bible from the Protestant minister. More by token, when Christ himself tells us that "man liveth not by bread alone, but every word of God.†

Priest—But ignorant people like you would pick a wrong meaning out of it, and then 'twould do you harm instead of good. That's the reason why it's better for us priests to read it, and take the right meaning out of it, and then explain it to you.

Barney—Troth then, your reverence, though I mean no offence, 'tisn't much of the Bible we'll get if we're trusting to what we get of it from the priests. And as to what your reverence says about poor ignorant men not understanding the word of God, I find it in the Bible that 'twas mostly the *learned* people that didn't understand it. St. Paul tells us that "the world by *wisdom* knew not God"‡ that is, they thought themselves so knowledgeable, and were so proud of their learning, they wouldn't submit to the simple plan of salvation that God had set forth for learned and unlearned. Again St. Paul says, "if any man among you seem to be wise in this world, let him become a fool that he may be wise,"§ that is, I'm thinking, that the learned man wasn't to trust to his learning but to come with an humble spirit, like a little child, ready and willing to be taught by God. And your reverence knows that the poor fishermen of Galilee understood Christ's words better than the learned scribes and doctors of the law, for the one saw the truth of his words and believed on him, while the others rejected and crucified him, So I don't think it's always the most learned that are best at understanding God's word. And moreover, if your reverence will let me tell you my real mind, I think many of the priests don't understand a great deal about it themselves.

Priest—Don't be slandering your clergy, Barney. It's they that know it, and a good right they have to know it, for it's taught them in Maynooth.

Barney—They ought to know it your reverence, but sure all the world knows that nothing frightens priests in general equal to the Bible. If a scripture-reader, or even a poor jumper pulls out the bible, it's enough to put a priest to flight. And besides I'm thinking if it's such a bad book for us, how can it be a good book for the priests. More by token, how seldom they read it, or speak about it. When a priest is going along the road he always has a book in his hand, but 'tisn't the Bible. It's his offices, and I'd like to see the man that ever seen a priest walking about with a *Bible* in his hand. I'm thinking that would be a sight good for sore eyes. And as for what they learn at Maynooth, I wouldn't give much for it, for I seen on a paper that in the year 1846, there were only 10 Bibles or Testaments found among 400 scholars, that were to be the makings of priests. But that's more than 7 years ago, and before Bibles was sold so cheap as Mr. O'Hagan says they now are at Belfast. But if we looked to the rights of the case, the priests would want to be even better instructed in the Bible than the Protestant ministers.

Priest—What do you mean by that?

Barney—I mean, your reverence, that our priests should know the Bible on their fingers' ends, for *we're* trusting entirely to them for everything about our religion. The Protestants hear service in English that they can understand, and every Protestant has a Bible that he can read for himself, so that even if his minister didn't know much about it, he could read the Word of God for himself; but we're trusting entirely to our priests, and I'm afraid it's the blind leading the blind, for some of them know as little about it as we do ourselves.

Priest—Barney, I only thought you an omadhaun before, but now I see that you're an out and out heretic; you're abusing your clergy, and standing up for the Protestant Bible, that all the world knows is a corrupt version.

Barney—I'm sorry to offend your reverence, but I must speak the truth whether it's pleasing or not; and after all I'm not so sure that the Protestant Bible is corrupt, for if it is, ours is corrupt too; for I've compared both, and there's but little differ between them; and I read in Mr. O'Hagan's great speech, that the great Bishop Doyle said that the Protestant Bible was one of the *noblest books*, and one of the *ablest translations* that ever was made, though he admitted it to have many inaccuracies; and besides it's out of the Douay Bible the Protestant ministers argue with us, and it's the Douay

Bible they're giving out to us, and sure your reverence won't say that it is corrupt.

Priest—I won't argue any more with the likes of you; I see that you've gone to the bad; you're a Protestant already, and you've left the old religion that your father and grandfather lived and died in.

Barney—Well, your reverence, to tell you the honest truth, I tried hard to remain in the Church of Rome, but I heard the voice of God calling to me out of his holy Word, and saying, "Go out from her my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that you receive not of her plagues."<sup>\*\*</sup> But what made up my mind was seeing your reverence and the other priests so much against letting the people read the Bible; for, says I to myself, how can that be God's Church which is so much against God's Word? and how can they be God's ministers who are always keeping his Word from the people? And remember what I'm telling your reverence; the time is coming when, if the priests don't preach the Word of God in the chapels, the people will go to the church to hear it; and the day is coming when if the priests don't give out Bibles, the people will take them from the Protestants, or wherever they can get them; for God gave that Word to be "a lamp to our feet, and a light to our paths;"† and why should poor Irishmen be kept in darkness because the priests choose to lock up the candle? and God gave that Word to be food for the soul,‡ and why should poor Irishmen starve because the priests think it better to lock up the loaf? God gave that Word to be like living water, refreshing our souls, and making them bring forth fruit unto eternal life; § and why should poor Irishmen be left to die of thirst because the priests choose to lock up the water of life? No, your reverence, 'twon't last, for with God's help, "there's a good time coming," when poor Irishmen will get their rights; and the first right they'll ask for is the Word of God. And now may God bless your reverence, and may he open the eyes of the priests of Ireland, and show them that in shutting up the Bible from the people, they are shutting out both themselves and others from the kingdom of heaven.

#### TO CORRESPONDENTS.

To diminish the chance of disappointment, all letters should be forwarded to the office by the first day of the month.

All letters to be addressed to the Editor, 9, Upper Sackville-st  
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## The Catholic Layman.

DUBLIN, DECEMBER 15, 1855.

SINCE our last publication, as most of our readers have no doubt already learned, the Reverend Vladimir Fetcherine has been tried and acquitted of the charge of participating in the scandalous outrage on public decency committed on the 5th November last, in the chapel-yard at Kingstown, by publicly burning the Holy Scriptures among a number of immoral and irreligious works. We have no disposition whatever to impeach the fairness of either the trial or the verdict—whether that verdict was based upon a conviction that the rev. gentleman was *not* aware that there were Bibles in the heap burned in his presence and by his directions, or upon a deficiency of evidence to satisfy the jury (of whom the foreman was a Protestant, and the remainder Roman Catholics) that he *was* aware of it. In either case the rev. gentleman was properly acquitted; and we are far from asserting that the jury came to an unsound conclusion in the matter. According to the humane and enlightened laws of Great Britain, every man—be he native or foreigner, clergyman or layman—must in law be considered innocent until he has been found guilty on legal evidence; and though we may regret that the real culprit, be he who he may, has, for the time at least, escaped, we are not disposed to regret that the jury should have found that the crime was perpetrated without the concurrence or authority of the clergyman, who, *prima facie* at least, was responsible for what was done on

\* Encyclical Letter, May the 3rd, 1824, published by R. Coyne, Dublin, 1824.

\* Psalm cxviii. 105. † Luke iv. 4. ‡ 1 Cor. i. 21. § 1 Cor. iii. 18.

\* Apoc. xviii. 4. † Ps. cxviii. 72. ‡ Luke iv. 4. § Isa. iv. 10, 11

the occasion. Two things of importance have, at any rate, resulted from the trial: first, the law has been published and put beyond dispute; and secondly, the determination of the Government and the law officers of the crown to enforce the law, no matter by whom violated, has been publicly demonstrated in a way which we have no disposition to criticise, even though the prosecution has failed to convict the particular individual suspected of its violation.

Such a prosecution we think was rendered the more imperatively necessary by the fanatical and turbulent language used and countenanced by some other Roman Catholic clergymen, even pending the proceedings against the Redemptorist Father.

On *Sunday*, the 25th Nov., the Very Rev. Dr. McEvoy, P.P. of Kells, when taking the chair at a numerous meeting of the electors of the county of Meath, at which we are told a large number of Roman Catholic clergymen were present, among other things is reported to have used the following words, when speaking of the pending prosecution:—

"Would you know what is the nature of that charge? It was that of committing to the flames a thing which pretends to be the Bible, but which is a vile and blasphemous perversion and corruption of the Word of God (loud cheers). It was for committing to the flames a volume, which, if I myself, in the absence of Attorneys-General and Solicitors-General, were going to commit to the flames, I should take it up with a pair of tongs, for fear of soiling my fingers; and so with the tongs would I hurl it into the consuming fire (tremendous cheering)."

Surely, when such language could be used at a public meeting by a *Very Rev.* Roman Catholic clergyman, in the presence of a number of others, and such a sentiment be received with tremendous cheering, it was high time for the law officers of her Majesty to take some steps to vindicate the law, and show such men as Father McEvoy that they cannot violate it without running the risk at least of incurring a serious punishment. We rejoice to think that there can no longer be any dispute either about the law or the disposition of the Government to enforce it by all legal means within their power; and we sincerely trust that this trial will be the means of deterring some persons from committing similar outrages, who, but for it, might have been led into crime in the expectation of impunity.

Having said thus much to atone for the doubts expressed in our last as to the course likely to be pursued by the Attorney-General in the matter, and recorded our ready acquiescence in the acquittal of Father Petcherine, we should not further notice what took place at the trial but that we think the speeches delivered both by her Majesty's Attorney-General, and the eminent Queen's Counsel, Mr. Thomas O'Hagan, who conducted the defence (both, be it recollected, themselves Roman Catholics) contain matters of great importance, which deserve to be universally known and remembered in this country. We would gladly, if our space permitted it, insert both these speeches at large in our pages, as specimens of forensic eloquence, of which any true Irishman might well be proud. But even limited as our columns are, we cannot deny ourselves the gratification of recording at least a few extracts from these speeches, which we think will be as acceptable to our readers as they have been agreeable to ourselves. We trust the passages quoted by the Attorney-General from Archbishop Kenrick, and by Mr. O'Hagan from the celebrated Dr. Doyle, as to the excellence of the Authorized Version of the Scriptures, will not be lost on our Roman Catholic fellow-countrymen; while the facts stated by Mr. O'Hagan as to the large circulation which the Douay version has obtained during the last few years, will afford all true lovers of the Holy Scriptures the sincerest pleasure. It will not be forgotten that we have never omitted an opportunity of encour-

aging the circulation of the Douay Bible (while steadfastly maintaining our conviction of the superior accuracy of the authorised translation), nor that, in order to facilitate that fair and free discussion which we have now laboured for four years to promote among our fellow-countrymen, we have always quoted the Douay version in preference to any other, though sincerely believing it to be inferior to our own.

The following are the extracts from the speeches of the Right Hon. the Attorney-General and Mr. Thomas O'Hagan, Q.C., on the trial, above referred to:—

#### THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL.

Gentlemen, from the humblest individual in this country to the Sovereign who sits upon the throne, there is no security—none—for anything, be it life, or be it property, except what is based upon the Authorized Version of the Word of God. And, gentlemen, what is the law which governs this case? Upon that subject you will have information on the high authority of their lordships; but, speaking under their correction, I will state to you what is the law on the subject, as laid down by the greatest authorities, and recognised and established in these countries. Gentlemen, the law is thus stated:—Offences against God are, by the common law, indictable, as are all blasphemies against God, denying His being or His providence, or profane scoffing at the Holy Scriptures, or exposing any part thereof to contempt and ridicule. That is laid down in "Hawkins' Pleas of the Crown," p. 359, and Blackstone, in his fourth volume, p. 59, cites Chief Justice Prisot, in the reign of Henry VI., who says that "the Scriptures are the foundation of our common law;" and when was this said? It was not since the Reformation—it was not since the Authorized Version was given to the people of England—it was not since that translation was made. And remember, gentlemen, that these are the words, in all human likelihood, of a Roman Catholic Chief Justice, words spoken before the Reformation in England; and what says he? "The Scriptures are the foundation of our common law," on which all other laws are founded. These, gentlemen, are ancient and venerable authorities; but I regret, deeply regret, that I can refer to later cases—cases occurring in this country. Gentlemen, I consider it a great disgrace to this country that I am enabled to refer to other cases of this description. But, gentlemen, the people of this country—the Roman Catholic people of this county—are not to be held accountable for the acts of over-heated fanatics; and accordingly when I refer to these acts I do believe that the Roman Catholic population of this country do not agree in the acts complained of. Gentlemen, in the year 1852, so late as that, at the Spring Assizes of the county Mayo, a man was tried before the present Chief Justice of the Queen's Bench. It was my duty, as counsel for the prisoner, to suggest such topics in his defence as occurred to me, and I trust, and I know that every member of the bar will, with his utmost zeal and ability, press upon the court to lay before the jury such matter as may prove favourable to his client. That man was found guilty of the offence, which was the burning of a single copy of the New Testament. I was present, and I will not forget the words used by the eminent judge to whom I have referred in sentencing the prisoner. I will state it, for I know it to be the fact, that he was tried by a mixed jury of Protestants and Roman Catholics, and he had such assistance as my humble abilities were able to afford him. He was found guilty of the offence, and the eminent judge used these words:—"In this case the prisoner is indicted for burning a copy of the Authorized Version or Translation of the New Testament; and the offence is equally applicable to any other version or translation of the Scriptures, whether it be the Douay translation of the Old Testament, or the Rheinish translation of the New Testament, or the Authorized Version of the Bible." Gentlemen, you are aware—such of you as are Roman Catholics—that the Douay is the Roman Catholic translation of the Old Testament, and the Rheinish is the Roman Catholic translation of the New Testament. And what said that learned and eminent judge? "The offence is the same no matter what translation the book may be." In that case there were contemptuous words used at the burning, and it was laid down that the words used, and the want of reverence for the Scriptures, were blasphemous, for it is not because fallible men cannot agree upon a translation that any one version of it is to be treated with contempt; it is not because it may not be a perfect translation it is to be treated with vilification. Gentlemen, that man was found guilty, and he listened to these words, and heard an exhortation which I thought would have had such weight and influence throughout the entire of this country, that whatever might be our sectarian differences, however closely we might each hug the persuasions in which we were educated and brought up, still that we might join, and find a common ground whereon to join, in respecting and reverencing the Holy Scriptures. Still more recently—and it is with regret that I have to say it should be so—another trans-

action of the same character occurred. In the case of the Queen v. McQuaid, tried at the summer assizes of last year, an humble man, not with the advantages of education, an humble peasant, was accused of having burned contemptuously a copy, a single copy, of the Sacred Scriptures. He was tried before an eminent and as merciful a judge as ever sat upon the bench—Baron Pennefather. Gentlemen, what was his language; what were the words of this eminent judge? "The offence," he says, "is complete, no matter whether it is an Authorized Protestant or Roman Catholic version of the Scriptures. It is an act of gross impiety, and I would say the same of any Protestant who would destroy, in so contemptuous a manner, the Douay copy of the Holy Scriptures. Whatever differences exist between these volumes—and they are slight indeed, it must be acknowledged by all that they both contain truths of deepest worth—truths that have been revealed to us for our eternal salvation; and the destruction of either is an offence against the law of the land, and an indignity offered to the oaths taken upon the Sacred Volume." That is the law, as laid down in the highest authorities. That is the law, as recognised by eminent judges who still live to adorn the Bench. That is the law acted upon in those two cases I have mentioned, when Roman Catholic jurors—and I say it to their honour—thought it right to convict the prisoners. This was the principle recognised by the best teachers of the Roman Catholic Church; and, if I am rightly informed, instead of wishing to cast contempt and indignity on any version, they have spoken of the Authorized Version with honour, as a work deserving of the highest admiration and respect. Perhaps you will excuse my reading, gentlemen, from a public copy of a Roman Catholic, and a recent Roman Catholic version of the Sacred Volume. I have here in my hand a translation recently made by one of the most eminent divines, at this moment an Archbishop, and when he made this translation a bishop of the Roman Catholic Church. For, gentlemen, you ought not to think for a moment the Roman Catholics have one fixed copy of the Sacred Scriptures, and that no one is to presume to make any other translation. The learning and the piety of man, from the earliest ages down to the present time, have thought it right in searching for truth to turn back again and again to the great originals; and accordingly, I find this rev. divine searching the most minute points of etymology, in order to make clearer and more plain the solemn truths of the Holy Scriptures. He says:—"In adopting occasionally the words and phrases of the Protestant version, I have followed the example of others, who have from time to time revised the Rheinish translation. It is not to be regretted that whilst we point to errors which need correction, we acknowledge excellencies which we are free to imitate, thus diminishing the asperity of censure by the tribute which we willingly render to literary merit." There is that volume—there is that translation published in the year 1851—emanating from a Roman Catholic bishop, now a Roman Catholic archbishop. There is that splendid tribute paid by him, in the face of the whole Roman Catholic world to the Authorized Version of the Sacred Scriptures. But, gentlemen, is it necessary in this day that we should refer to the authorities so late as that? Let us take up the Roman Catholic version of the Scriptures, and quote from that Roman Catholic version. What says the apostle himself, speaking upon the value of sacred writings?—"All Scripture [says St. Paul] inspired of God is profitable to teach, to reprove, to instruct in justice, that the man of God may be perfect, furnished to any good work." Has that been ever disrespectfully commented upon by any minister of the Roman Catholic Church? Where are we to search for the true lights of the Roman Catholic Church if not amongst those greatest bishops and teachers who are acknowledged as amongst its greatest ornaments? Let us turn to the almost inspired page of Massillon. Let us hear him tell us that the Deity, who scarcely ever appears in the profane page of ancient history, appears distinctly and openly almost always in the Divine writings, and that it is by their light only, that profane history can be advantageously studied. Let us look to the confession of St. Augustine, where he says, "that the Scriptures may be ever his chaste delight—that no day may pass without his finding a time to meditate on the sacred things of the law." Let us hang upon the eloquent lips of Bossuet, as he indignantly exclaims—"The greatest calumny of all which has ever been used against the Roman Catholic Church is that which attributes to us that we consider the Holy Scriptures dangerous. I ask who amongst us has ever dared to advance this blasphemy?" Well then, gentlemen, if these be the views and opinions of Roman Catholic clergymen, and of those most celebrated teachers and divines,—if these are the words and instructions of the Roman Catholic version of the Scriptures,—I ask, if those facts be proved before you which I have shortly endeavoured to detail, what will be said on behalf of the traverser? I well know that everything which talent, genius, and legal ability can suggest on his behalf will be suggested to you by my learned friend on the other side, but, gentlemen, I am much deceived—I have much deceived myself—if a word should fall from his Roman Catholic lips—even one single word—disrespectful of

the Authorized Version of the Sacred Writings. He may, and he will, if he can, challenge the fact, and say the Word of God has not been treated with disrespect by the traverser, and that is a complete and sound defence. He may, and he will, if he can, say that it was not wilfully and knowingly committed by the traverser at the bar; but, as I have said, I shall be astonished, indeed, if my learned friend says a single word of a disrespectful kind of the Holy Scriptures. What, in fact, the defence will be, it is not for me to speculate upon. I have adopted the views of all Roman Catholic writers in telling you what I have told you, that it is the duty of every Roman Catholic to reverence and respect the Sacred Writings; and if he should ask you, without any evidence, to arrive at the conclusion that, because these doctrines have been laid down by the heads of our church, it is impossible that any man, any minister of the church, could show disrespect to this sacred Volume,—then, gentlemen, I will warn you against arriving, without sufficient grounds, at that conclusion; because the history of the world tells us that there are men influenced by fanatical zeal who can see nothing right save in that instrument which they have themselves used. If the facts I have stated are proved in evidence I would rather you would arrive at that conclusion, and consider that the traverser has been so influenced, rather than that, without evidence, you should come to the determination that whilst the Sacred Volumes were burned, whilst they were knowingly burned, still there was no contemptuous or criminal intention. Now, gentlemen, do not understand me as telling you that I believe or that I think that all versions of the Sacred Scriptures are the same. I do not mean for a moment to ask you to come to that conclusion. There are differences between different versions of the Scriptures. There are undoubtedly differences between the version of the Catholic Church and the Authorized Version. These differences are such as will continue to the end of time. Do I say that all versions of the Scriptures are alike? By no means. Differences there will exist between every sect, and each will cling to the version in which he has been taught to search for and find the truth. But Christianity is still the same. Great is the difference between the rising and setting sun, but the morning and evening are but one day. Errors will creep into every translation, for they are the work of erring men, and no temple is perfect but one, and that not made by human hands. Still, despite of differences and errors, the great original remains—that venerable record of the economy of the Supreme Being, the prophecy and the proof, the oracle and the miracle, the Royal Psalmist and the Divine Teacher—above all, the belief, the cherished belief in the atoning blood of Him, of whom it is written in all versions of the Scriptures alike, that “there is no other name under heaven given to men by whom we must be saved!” In that great name, in the name of our common Christianity, I ask you to approach this case. Act upon its precepts, and the law will be vindicated. This prosecution is not instituted for vindictive purposes, but for example. Whatever may be your verdict, I earnestly trust that there will go forth from this court a lesson of mutual forbearance: may Peace and her twin sister Charity preside over the land!

MR. THOMAS O'HAGAN, Q.C.

From the time of the invention of printing the press has teemed with copies of the Holy Scriptures; and can any one doubt the position on which I stand, when I tell you that between the period of the invention of printing and the publication of the Bible by Luther, there were 200 editions of the Bible published by the press of Europe; and not only that, but before the completion of that Bible, fifty editions in the vernacular tongues of Europe—those of France, Belgium, Spain, and England,—issued from the press? What is said by Maule in his remarkable work with respect to England. He says:—“The Holy Bible was long before Wickliff's day, by laborious and well-learned men, translated into the English tongue, and by good and godly people held in reverence and diligently read.” And so, gentlemen, it has been down to the present moment. But before I go to this, need I ask for evidence to sustain my position beyond the very case now trying in this court? Here are the law officers of our Sovereign Lady the Queen coming to prosecute this humble minister of God. How and why? Not by reason of any statute, nor by reason of any law passed by any modern legislature. This case is founded on the old common law of England; and if there be a conviction here, it will be on that common law. That law, established by wise judges, by pious kings, and sanctioned by holy bishops, proclaimed that Christianity belonging to the Constitution of the country, and that the Scriptures and Christianity were identified, and that assault upon the Scriptures was an assault upon the Constitution and the law. But, gentlemen, it might be urged upon you, the impression might be upon your minds that this old system was not in existence at the present time, and that, although in the beginning of Christianity and in the mediæval times, under the influence of popes and bishops, the Scriptures were revered and spread throughout the world for the enlightenment and the salvation of the human race, still that in this unhappy land of Ireland there is a

difference. It may be said (and my apprehension is that some of you may be under the impression) that in Ireland there is a disposition on the part of the Roman Catholic Church to prevent the circulation of the Scriptures and the cause of the Word of God. I have investigated that; I have, with a view to this trial, made a few inquiries; and I have to tell you this (and this fact ought to leave no doubt on the mind of any honest man whom I address), that in this city of Dublin there is a single publisher who, within the last seven years, has issued three editions of the Catholic Bible from his shop and press, under the sanction of the Rev. Dr. Mac Hale, Archbishop of Tuam, and the Most Rev. Dr. Murray, the late venerated prelate of the archdiocese; and that publisher has told me, that of these three editions he sold 42,500 copies, and that if all the copies which have issued from other hands in Dublin were enumerated, they would amount to 100,000 copies. I know this, too, that friends of mine—dear and venerated friends—in the county and town where I was born, informed me that there had been a large issue of the Holy Scriptures in the Douay Translation. In Belfast alone copies of the Bible to the extent of 300,000 have been disposed of, and at such prices as to bring them within the reach of the poorest person, varying from 6d. and 9d. upwards, and that although the publishers of that town have not the assistance or facility which the publishers of the Authorized Version possess; for whereas the latter have an allowance of twenty-five per cent on the paper on which it is printed, the former have not an allowance of one farthing. I think on that point I have a right to make an impression upon such of you as have any doubt upon the matter as to the circulation of the Scriptures, and as to the enmity of the heads of the Catholic Church to that book. And now I have to tell you, and it is right you should fully understand, that the doctrine of that church, while it is consistent with the full and free circulation of the Word of God, proclaims this: that that church, holding of authority—holding itself the teacher of the nations, does not approve of the unadvised and undirected perusal of the Scriptures. But I have to tell you further, that that church does not approve in all its parts of the Authorized Version of the Scriptures. It believes in it there are errors and corruptions, and having these, and leaving them unexplained, might be the means, instead of guiding men to truth, of leading them into error. But while it does that, it holds this as its true doctrine and real faith, that the Scriptures are a most precious possession, and that rightly read, and under right direction, the Scriptures should be circulated afar, even to the bounds of the earth. The Attorney-General was right in saying that you would hear from me no word of condemnation of the Sacred Scriptures here. Understand me as saying nothing whatever on that subject, but that if it be necessary to prove to you that Catholics have not the narrow views which some attribute to them, if it were necessary I could demonstrate to you that Catholics regard with reverence the Word of God. I have to state to you the opinion of one of the ablest and wisest men, and one of the most devoted Catholics that ever existed in this land. I refer to the Right Rev. Dr. Doyle. He was examined before a committee of the House of Lords in the year 1825, and he was asked—“Did he consider the Authorized Version of the Scriptures used in the Church of England as of a sufficiently perverse quality to warrant the description that it is the Gospel of the Devil?” and his answer was—“I have said before, God forbid that I should so consider it, for, though it has many errors, I consider it as one of the noblest works, and one of the ablest translations that ever has been produced. This I say, while I consider that it abounds in inaccuracies.” In the same year, before a commission of inquiry which sat in Dublin, the opinion of four Catholic Archbishops was required. They were Drs. Curtis, Kelly, Suffern, and Murray. Dr. Curtis said:—“We agree that the Authorized Version of the Established Church is a very noble and a very fine work. It uses fine language. It surpasses ours by far in point of language, for it is in the nature of a paraphrase; but we cannot take it, and have not done so, but we have all of us in our controversial works praised the translation. It is a very fine one—very good language—and harmonized more than ours.” Why do I state all this? It is for the purpose of showing that there is not among the prelates of the Catholic Church the opinions attributed to them, and because I have a right to say that no such opinions are propounded by the heads of that church. And I have a right further to ask you not to assume that my reverend client acted in the spirit and with the purpose imputed in this indictment. Gentlemen the Attorney-General spoke, and truly, of the fanaticism which sometimes disfigures the Christianity we all profess. There is, unfortunately, no doubt of it. There is no doubt that men of all religions are sometimes over zealous, and that their zeal may degenerate into fanaticism, though I shall demonstrate to you that that observation has no bearing on my client.

I felt when I read those passages to you that the Church of Ireland was not obnoxious to the charge of zealotry, and I have others to read from some who rank even higher than the prelates whose words I gave you. Dr. Kelly the Metropolitan of the Roman Catholic Church in the west, was examined at the committee before which Dr. Doyle was examined in 1825, and he was asked:—

“Is it your experience of the Protestant Bible, or have you heard it in such a manner as to believe it, that there have been any number of cases of desecration of the Testament in the West, either executed or enjoined by the clergy?” He answers:—“The directions given to the clergy are, that if the versions of the Scriptures are not approved of by the Catholic Church, the faithful are to refuse to take them. If they take them, they are to be given up into the hands of the clergy, and I have not known of any instance of any clergyman destroying, by fire, or otherwise, any of these.” He then, in answer to another question, says he knows nothing of a destruction of Bibles in the river at Ballinasloe, and says he would think it improper to sanction such an act, and improper to destroy such a book. Dr. Doyle says he would think it improper to treat the Word of God in that way; he might overlook the act in a person committing it from a mistaken view, but would think it very wrong. I have read this to disabuse your minds of the impression that my client, because of his religion and profession, is to be assumed guilty of that which, in fact and truth, he never did. If I have taken with me such of you as had that impression or prejudice on your minds, my work is done.”

WE take the present opportunity, when closing our fourth volume, to repeat the offer which we made at the end of the year 1854, viz:—That with a view to facilitating fair discussion, we will undertake to forward the CATHOLIC LAYMAN during the ensuing year, without charge, to any Roman Catholic clergyman who will be good enough to intimate either to the Editor or Publisher, 9, Upper Sackville-street, his desire to receive it, direct through the post. We also, again, invite our Roman Catholic fellow-countrymen, whether clergymen or laymen, to avail themselves of our pages to publish replies to our arguments, or otherwise defend the doctrines of their Church as they may think most likely to promote Christian charity, and the cause of truth. Anything written in a spirit of candour and good feeling will be inserted freely, and with a sincere anxiety to give the most perfect fair play to our opponents.

We hope our regular subscribers will be good enough to forward their subscriptions for the ensuing year (together with any arrears due) on or before the 1st of January next. We need scarcely remind them, though 3s. 6d. is a small sum, that when a large number of such sums is in arrear, it imposes a serious difficulty in the way of the conductors.

## Correspondence.

### BIBLE BURNING.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CATHOLIC LAYMAN.

DEAR SIR—I should be sorry to think that there are not many Roman Catholics who are offended and grieved at the profaneness of those persons, whoever they were, who were so destitute of all feelings of reverence for the holy Scriptures as to burn them publicly at Kingstown on the 5th of November last—an outrage which has filled all right-minded persons with shame and indignation. Unfortunately this is nothing new. It is quite certain, whatever be the truth of the matter as to the Redeemtorist father, that Roman Catholic priests have been known to burn Protestant Bibles, and encourage others to do so, and that such zealots as the late editor of the *Tablet* have made no secret of their approval of their impiety. For this reason I should wish to propose, for the consideration of your Roman Catholic readers, two or three questions, which, I hope, they will not think improper or undeserving of an answer.

1. Why is it that Roman Catholics burn the Protestant Bibles, while Protestants never think of burning Roman Catholic Bibles?

The Roman Catholic version was made and published with a controversial intention. It was not put forth in order to encourage or facilitate the reading of the word of God in the vulgar tongue; but to guard people against the alleged corruptions in the Protestant Bible. This is distinctly avowed in the preface of the Rhemish Testament, where the misdoings of the Protestant translators are declared to be so wicked and shameful, that the word of God has been, through their “sacrilegious treachery, made the devil's word.” Well, if the Protestant Bible is so utterly contrary to the Roman Catholic faith, we may fairly suppose that the Roman Catholic Bible is quite as contrary to the Protestant faith. It was got up expressly for the purpose of opposing the Protestant doctrines in the Pro-