

We, Protestants, she says, believe the Bible to be the Word of God merely on the authority of human reasonings. She herself, she says, on the contrary, places faith in it, because she accounts as infallible the testimony on which it rests. But who tells a Romanist that the Bible is the Word of God? His own branch of the Church, supposed by him to be infallible. A Romanist, then, boasts that he is *as sure* that the Bible is inspired, as he is that the witness to that fact is infallible. His argument is fair here. His certainty as to the authority of the Bible, may equal his certainty as to the infallibility of the Church which places it in his hands; but, receiving the Bible merely on the word of his Church, it is impossible that his confidence as to the inspiration of the Bible should be *stronger* than his assurance of the infallibility of the witness from whose hands and on whose sole credit he accepts it. We may well ask, then, what foundation a Romanist has for believing his Church to be infallible? If the Bible is to be received only on the testimony of one known to be infallible, this witness's infallibility must be received on the authority of some one else, previously ascertained to be infallible. If a Romanist were to believe his Church infallible on mere human reasonings and deductions, then his faith in the Bible, received on that Church's authority, would as much rest on human reasonings, as our own. On what grounds does a Romanist regard his Church as the one true Church? On what grounds does he believe that one Church is infallible? Will each individual Romanist pretend to a direct revelation from God announcing this fact to himself? No, doubtless! If not, will he pretend that the infallible one who maintains to him the infallibility of the Church is his confessor or parish priest, speaking officially and by the Church's authority? If so, the chain of evidence runs thus: every priest being so far infallible, supports the infallibility of the Church; and the infallible Church maintains the inspiration of Holy Scripture. But on what authority does an individual Romanist believe that each Romish priest is infallible? Nay, on what ground does he build his assurance, that any man calling himself a Romish priest, is really one at all? Does he receive these things on human testimony? If so, then on that, in the first place, rests his belief in the inerrancy of his priest; and the priest's word, in the second place, supports the Church's infallibility; and the Church's word, in the third place, upholds the inspiration of the book called the Bible. So that, in the end, the whole belief of a Romanist depends as much on human evidence, as our own does. If any link in a chain be too weak to support a weight, it is of very little consequence whether that infirm link be the one next to the weight, as in our case, or with a few interposed between, as in that of a Romanist. But Romanists, not seeing this, will wish, perhaps, to move the weak link a little further off still. Another infallible is called in, to speak to the infallibility of the man's spiritual instructor. Then we have Father B to prove the infallibility of Father A. But, then, who shall go security for Father B? Father C. must do this; and so on *ad infinitum*; or else the individual must believe his priest infallible solely on an immediate inspiration conveyed by God to himself personally. In that case, he is to credit it, not on human testimony, but because he has a conviction, that cannot deceive him, that God has revealed that fact to him. But, on the same authority, a Mormonite, or Irvingite, or follower of Joanna Southcote, may just as reasonably place faith in one of those unfounded systems. It will not satisfy Rome that God, having introduced Christianity into the world, established its claims by miraculous proofs; a superhumanly endowed witness must place the New Testament in each man's hand. Unless an infallible witness is thus brought into *immediate* contact with each man's mind, the Romish theory is incomplete. It is *there, next to the man himself*, that infallibility is required. Further off, a series of infallible authorities, each depending upon the other, are of no more use than the infallible Bible itself. Such an assurance as Rome demands can be had only by God sending an inspired messenger to speak to each of us, and, in that case, there would be little need either of the Inspired Volume or of the infallible Church to vouch for its authenticity. The meaning of the writings, when once their inspiration is acknowledged, is, of course, a different question—but of that hereafter.

Bishop Stillingfleet thus quotes and answers the Romish argument which I have been considering. The Papist argues—"As long as the infallibility of a revelation stands *remote* from me, for want of an undoubted application, made by an infallible proponent, it can no more transfuse certainty into faith, than fire, at a great distance, warmth" Stillingfleet replies—"If men cannot be infallible in believing the Apostles, unless there be other infallible proponents in every age, to assure them that the Apostles were inspired, why must not the infallibility of these present proponents be likewise so attested, as well as (that) of the Apostles; and what undoubted application can be made of the Church's infallibility, unless there be some other infallible proponent still to transfuse certainty into my belief of that by virtue of which I must believe all other matters of faith, which is the Church's infallibility. So that the last proponent must either be believed for himself, without any further evidence, and then the shorter way would be to believe the first so; or else there will be an endless

infallibility; or, at last all must be resolved into the enthusiasm of every particular person."—Stillingfleet's answer, &c., p. p. 78, 83.

I have now considered the first purpose on account of which the Church of Rome asserts the necessity, and, therefore, the *existence*, of an infallible living authority. I have, I trust, shown that, for the end proposed, such an arrangement would be altogether worthless; I am next to consider the other use of an infallible, speaking, authority—namely, as an expounder of the meaning of Scripture; this, with your permission, I will reserve for a future occasion.

Your obedient servant,

A KILDARE CHURCHMAN.

### MASS IN THE CRIMEA.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CATHOLIC LAYMAN.

SIR—We, in St. Giles, in London, sometimes get a look at your paper, and as I think you will give a straightforward answer to a plain question, I take the liberty of asking your honour about something we have heard lately from the Crimea, which mightily puzzles us all, and perplexes me out and out. We have always been taught to tell Protestants that the Mass is in the Protestant Bible, and that the last book in the Old Testament, Malachi I believe it is, says, that "From the rising of the sun to the going down of the same, my name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name and a pure offering."

Now, I see by the "Life of a Priest," in your last number (page 6), that "it was Gregory the Great who decorated the Mass with incense and light," &c.; and we are told that Gregory the Great was the man that sent Augustine into England, and that was about the year 600. And, your honour, was it 600 years before incense was offered in any place? I suppose the priest that says so is a good judge, and wouldn't say so if it wasn't so. But what puzzles me entirely is, that it is to be offered in every place, and yet one of the Roman Catholic chaplains at the war tells us the contrary, in a letter which your honour will see in the *Tablet* of January 6, 1855, page 5. There one of our own priests says, "Last Sunday I read the service in the open field—to offer the Holy Sacrifice there is impossible. In a day or two I hope I shall be able to get a tent of sufficient height for an altar, so as to offer Mass in my tent."

Now, what in the world is the meaning of all this? I am sure I can never again quote that text against Protestants anyhow. Sure, Mr. Editor, wouldn't they turn round on me and say, that one of our own priests admits that the Mass cannot be offered in every place? and what am I to say then? Sure two or three days at the least he can't get a tent at all—he only *hopes* to get one; and only think, Mr. Editor, of all the poor soldiers that must die in that time, and yet there is no Mass for them, because it can't be "offered in every place." But more than that, we hear that the clothes, food, and tents sent out from England have been delayed or lost, and, perhaps, this reverend gentleman's tent was among them; or if he got it, it was a chance whether it would be the *proper height*; and if it was *too low* for an altar, Mr. Editor, what was to be done then? The people in England, I'm sure, don't know *what height* an altar should be, nor, indeed, do I myself; but that's, perhaps, my own fault; and I hardly think they would, in the hurry and bustle, think of making the tent exactly to the liking of his reverence.

As I know you publish letters asking information, perhaps you will print this for me, and ask *what height* an altar should be? and why it is impossible to have the Mass in the open air? Certainly I have heard of great storms out there, and 'tis true they might blow out the candles, if the altar was exposed; but if the Mass is to save souls, couldn't they do without the lights in the day time, and thus save the candles too—and, by the same token, we hear they are wanting badly out there during the cold and dark nights.

Mr. Editor, if any body can give me the desired information, I'm sure you can. It's too bad to hear that Protestants can preach and pray in the open field, and, indeed, in every place, and that we can't. Excuse the inquisitive letter of

POOR PADDY.

St. Giles, London.

We readily insert Poor Paddy's letter, and hope some of our Roman Catholic correspondents will enable us to give an answer to it; which, of course, would be much more satisfactory, than any reply proceeding from ourselves. Our opinions on such matters are already well known. True religion is an affair of the heart, and neither consists in Masses or candles, tents or altars. Let those who think otherwise answer our correspondent, and we will readily insert it.

### FARMING OPERATIONS FOR FEBRUARY.

(From the *Irish Farmers' Gazette*.)

WHEAT should be sown, with as little delay as possible, after the weather clears up, and the land becomes dry enough; the best varieties to sow will be the white ones, of which the red-chaffed white and the white-chaffed white are the most generally esteemed; if possible the sowing

should be concluded within the month; but the true spring or April wheat (*Triticum aestivum*) may be sown as late as the middle of April.

Beans should be got in, as early as possible, this month. They require deep and clean cultivation, and a liberal supply of manure; good crops are obtained by broadcast sowing, and harrowing them in—this mode requires a clean tith; but if the land be foul, drilling them in at 2½ to 3 feet apart, will be the best mode; the most approved varieties are the tick, Heligoland, and Russian. A heavy, clay soil, but dry, is best suited for beans, and they make the best preparation for wheat, while the lighter and more calcareous ones are best suited for peas.

Peas should also be sown some time during the month; select the finer and lighter soils for their cultivation, which should be thoroughly clean, and moderately manured, taking the condition of the land into consideration, as too much would run the crop to too much straw; they may be sown either broadcast, or in drills 18 inches apart. If one-fourth beans are mixed with the peas they will serve to support and keep the latter off the ground; after thrashing they may be easily separated from the peas by a suitable riddle, though, if required for home consumption, it is not needful to do so, as both may be ground together for meal.

Spring Vetches should be sown early in the month, of a suitable breadth, to succeed the winter-sown, and be followed by successional sowings during the season, as will be directed in subsequent operations; the land will require a liberal dressing of manure; a little oats and rapeseed should be mixed with the vetches, which will improve the quality, and increase the bulk of the fodder.

Potatoes—Planting should be proceeded with when the weather is mild and open; since the appearance of the blight, planting potatoes have, with good results, preceded the sowing of oats and barley. Care should be taken not to plant in wet weather, or while the land is wet; in damp, backward soils, planting in beds is to be preferred; in light, dry soils they may be planted in the usual way in drills; but when an early crop is desirable the beds will, in most localities, be found the better mode, so as to obtain that object.

Rye and Bere may still be sown either for a soiling or seed crop.

Oats.—In favourable weather, and dry, early situations, oats may be sown this month, but in the majority of cases it will be better deferred till next month, particularly the white varieties; the black Tartary being hardy, may be sown by the middle of this month.

Parsnips may be sown any time during the month, providing the land be thoroughly pulverized, rich, and deep, and the weather mild and dry. Sow in drills 28 inches apart. Though parsnips may be sown with great advantage this month, we would only recommend sowing a small breadth—next month will be best for the general crop; heavy, deep soils, tolerably dry, are the best for parsnips, and they make an excellent preparatory crop for wheat; but light, sandy loams are best for carrots, though the latter, when rich and deep, produce excellent parsnips.

Grass Land, intended for meadowing, should be no longer trespassed upon, but shut up at once; if to be top-dressed with compost, no further delay should take place; when dry enough, the top-dressing should be bush-harrowed, all large stones and brushwood gathered and raked off, ant-hills cut and scattered, and then well rolled.

Watered Meadows require particular attention during the month; see that the water be given in full and sufficient quantity, and that it flows evenly, regulating the outlets so that the discharge may be equal to the supply, allowing no stagnation on any part. When the land in one quarter is sufficiently saturated, which is indicated by a scum rising to the surface, turn the water off to irrigate another quarter, and when the first is sufficiently dry, lay on the water again; but in severe frosts, the water must not be turned off till the frost is gone; water should not be turned over land during frost.

Fattening Stock will now be approaching maturity, when sales should be effected, so as to economize provender for the stores which have the most pinching time of the year before them.

Ewes in Lamb will now require much care, turnips should not be given too profusely, and they should have free access to good hay, with oil-cake and rock-salt in their troughs; but sudden changes in their food should be avoided.

Fattening Sheep, and stores of all ages, should have a regular increase of artificial food, such as rape, turnips, mangels, oil-cake, &c., with salt. Those in sheds should be regularly littered, and have their feet examined and pared.

Fattening Calves and Lambs require great care and attention, with abundance of cow's milk, dry, warm lodging, and clean beds; salt and chalk should be laid in their troughs to lick at pleasure.

Fattening Pigs should have plenty of cooked turnips, mangels, or other roots, mixed liberally with pea, bean, or barley meal; clean out their troughs when done feeding, and give the refuse to the stores. All pigs should have free access to pure water.

Farm Horses.—As the days advance in length, and the hours of work increase, the teams will require full and liberal rations, and particularly an increase in the quantity of corn.