

THE R. C. BISHOP v. FATHER CHINIQUY.

From the Kankakee Times.
City of Kankakee.

In one of your past issues, you told your readers that the Rev. Mr. Chiniquy had gained the long and formidable suit instituted by the Roman Catholic Bishop to dispossess him and his people of their Church property. But you have not yet given any particulars about the startling revelations the Bishop had to make before the court, in reference to the still existing laws of the Church of Rome, against those whom they call heretics. Nothing, however, is more important for every citizen, not only of Illinois, but of the whole United States, than to know precisely what those laws are.

As I was present when the Bishop of Rome was ordered to read in Latin and translate into English those laws, I have kept a correct copy of them, and I send it to you with the request to publish it.

The Rev. Mr. Chiniquy presented the works of St. Thomas and St. Liguori to the Bishop, requesting him to say, under oath, if those works were or were not among the highest theological authorities in the Church of Rome, all over the world. After long and serious opposition on the part of the Bishop to answer, the court having said he (the Bishop) was bound to answer, the Bishop confessed that those theological works were looked upon as among the highest authorities, and that they were taught and learned in all the colleges and universities of the Church of Rome as standard works.

Then the Bishop was requested to read in Latin and translate into English the following laws and fundamental principle of action against the heretics, as explained by St. Thomas:—

"Excommunicatus privatur omni alia civili communicatione fidelium, ita ut ipse non possit cum aliis, et, si non sit toleratus, etiam alii cum ipso non possint communicare; idque in cassibus hoc versu comprehendis.—Os, orare, vale, communico, mensa negatur."

Translated by the Bishop:—"An excommunicated man is deprived of all civil communication with the faithful, in such a way, that if he is tolerated, they can have no communication with him, as it is in the following verse: It is forbidden to kiss him, pray with him, salute him, to eat or to do any business with him.—St. Liguori, vol. 9, page 162.

"Quoniam heretici tolerandi non sunt

is forbidden to kiss him, pray with him, salute him, to eat or to do any business with him.—St. Liguori, vol. 9, page 162.

"Quoniam heretici tolerandi non sunt ipso illorum demerito, usque tamen ad secundam corruptionem expectandi sunt, ut ad sanam redeant ecclesie fidem; qui vero, post secundam corruptionem, in suo errore obstinati permanent, non modo excommunicationis sententia, sed etiam secularibus principibus exterminandi, tradendi sunt."

Translated by the Bishop: "Though heretics must not be tolerated because they deserve it, we must bear them till, by a second admonition, they may be brought back to the faith of the Church. But those who, after a second admonition, remain obstinate in their errors, must not only be excommunicated, but they must be delivered to the secular power to be exterminated."

"Quoniam heretici revertentes, semper recipiendi sunt ad penitentiam quoties cumque relapsi fuerint; non tamen semper sunt recipiendi et restituendi ad bonorum hujus vite participationem . . . recipiuntur ad penitentiam . . . non tamen ut liberentur a sententia mortis."

Translated by the Bishop: "Though the heretics who repent must always be accepted to penance, as often as they have fallen, they must not, in consequence of that, always be permitted to enjoy the benefits of this life. . . . When they fall again, they are admitted to repent. . . . but the sentence of death must not be removed."

—St. Thomas, vol. 4, page 91.

"Quum quis per sententiam denuntiat propter apostasiam excommunicatus, ipso facto, ejus subditi a dominio et juramento fidelitatis ejus liberati sunt."

When a man is excommunicated for

his apostasy, it follows from that very fact, that all those who are his subjects are released from the oath of allegiance by which they were bound to obey him."—St. Thomas, vol. 4, page 94.

The next document of the Church of Rome brought before the court was the act of the Council of Lateran, A.D. 1215. But as the Latin text is too long I will give only the translation, as it was read under oath:

"We excommunicate and anathematize every heresy that exalts itself against the holy, orthodox, and Catholic faith, condemning all heretics, by whatever name they may be known—for though their faces differ, they are tied together by their tails. Such as are condemned are to be delivered over to the existing secular powers, to receive due punishment. If laymen, their goods must be confiscated. If priests, they shall be first degraded from their respective orders, and their property applied to the use of the Church in which they have officiated. Secular powers of all ranks and degrees are to be warned, induced, and, if necessary, compelled by ecclesiastical censures, to swear that they will exert themselves to the utmost, in the defence of the faith, and extirpate all heretics denounced by the Church, who shall be found in their territories. And whenever any person shall assume government, whether it be spiritual or temporal, he shall be bound to abide by this decree.

"If any temporal lord, after having been admonished and required by the Church, shall neglect to clear his territory of heretical depravity, the metropolitan and the bishops of the province shall unite in excommunicating him. Should he remain contumacious a whole year, the fact shall be signified to the Supreme Pontiff, who will declare his vassals released from their allegiance from that time, and will bestow his territory on Catholics, to be occupied by them, on the condition of exterminating the heretics and preserving the said territory in the faith.

"Catholics who shall assume the cross for the extermination of heretics shall enjoy the same indulgences and be protected by the same privileges as are granted to those who go to the help of the holy land. We decree further, that all who may have dealings with heretics, and especially such as receive, defend, or encourage them, shall be excommunicated. He shall not be eligible to any public office. He shall not be admitted as a witness. He shall neither have the power to bequeath his

heretics, and especially such as receive, defend, or encourage them, shall be excommunicated. He shall not be eligible to any public office. He shall not be admitted as a witness. He shall neither have the power to bequeath his property by will, nor to succeed to any inheritance. He shall not bring any action against any person, but any one can bring an action against him. Should he be a judge, his decision shall have no force, nor shall any cause be brought before him. Should he be an advocate, he shall not be allowed to plead. Should he be a lawyer, no instruments made by him shall be held valid, but shall be condemned with their author."

The Roman Catholic Bishop swore that these laws had never been repealed, and, of course, that they were still the laws of his Church. He had to swear that every year he was bound, under pain of eternal damnation, to say in the presence of God, and to read in his Breviarium (his prayer-book), that "God Himself had inspired" what St. Thomas had written about the manner that the heretics should be treated by the Roman Catholics.

I will abstain from making any remarks on these startling revelations of that Roman Catholic high authority. But I think it is the duty of every American citizen to know what the Roman Catholic bishops and priests understand by liberty of conscience. The Roman Catholics are as interested as the Protestants to know precisely what the teachings of their Church are on that subject of liberty of conscience, and hear the exact truth, as coming from such a high authority that there is no room left for any doubt.

VOX POPULI.