

THE LIBERTY OF ROMANISM.

In the city of Boston Roman Catholics predominate and fill the principal city offices, having a majority on the school Board, City Council, etc. Not a great while ago we noted the fact that several Protestant ministers were arrested and fined for attempting to preach to the people on Boston Common – one of them, the widely known H. L. Hastings, being imprisoned because he did not pay the fine. More recently Swinton's History has been rejected from being a school text-book. It tells some truths about the past, which Romanists would fain cover up rather than repent of.

The objectionable passage in Swinton's history runs as follows:

"When Leo X. came to the Papal chair he found the treasury of the church exhausted by the ambitious projects of his predecessors. He therefore had recourse to every means which ingenuity could devise for recruiting his exhausted finances, and among these he adopted an extensive sale of indulgences, which in former ages had been a source of large profit to the church. The Dominican friars, having obtained a monopoly of the sale in Germany, employed as their agent Tetzal, one of their order, who carried on the traffic in a manner that was very offensive, and especially so to the Augustinian friars. The indulgences were in the early ages of the church remissions of the penances imposed upon persons whose sins had brought scandal on the community. But in process of time they were represented as actual pardons of guilt, and the purchaser of an indulgence was said to be delivered from all sins."

Victor Durney, the renowned Frenchman and historian, himself a Roman Catholic, in his history (*Historic des Temps Modernes*, page 128), says on this same subject, what confirms the above, as follows: –

"The wars of Julius II. had exhausted the pontifical treasury. Afterwards came the magnificence of Leo. X., who dispensed 100,000 ducats at his coronation, and gave 500 for a sonnet. He was likewise compelled, in order to live, to pledge the jewels of St. Peter and to sell some charges, which increased by 40,000 ducats the annual expenses of the government. The splendid temple commenced by Julius II. on a plan which should make it the grandest basilic of Christendom, St. Peters of Rome, threatened to remain uncompleted. Leo. X. accorded indulgences to all those who contributed of their money for its completion. The archbishop of Mayence charged with the publishing of these indulgences in Germany, caused them to be preached in Saxony by the Dominican Tetzl.

"There were great abuses committed, both in the exaggerated promises made to the faithful who purchased these promises of salvation, and in the employment that was made, even under their eyes, of a part of their money. The Augustines, heretofore charged with the sale of indulgences, were irritated to see that lucrative mission pass into the hands of the Dominicans. Spite uncovered to them abuses, and these abuses were strongly attacked by their most eminent doctor, Martin Luther, whose theological studies led him to take a view entirely opposed. He had, in effect, already arrived at the principle which remained the foundation of the Protestant churches, – justification by faith alone, – whereas the doctrine of indulgences supposes also justification by deeds. Such was the beginning of reform."

The above mentioned treatment of the ministers, and also that of Swinton's History, serve to show what toleration means, to Roman Catholics. They appreciate tolerance when it is extended to them, but then only. When President Cleveland's gift, of a copy of the Constitution of the United States, was presented to the Pope, he expressed great admiration for the religious tolerances of this land, no doubt longing for the power to crush it under the heel of Roman intolerance and bigotry. We do not forget that while the pope was a

temporal sovereign, no protestant congregation was permitted to worship within the city of Rome. The pope would tolerate none now, if it were in his power to prevent it. The power alone is lacking – not the will.

Archbishop Ryan, of Buffalo, who was one of the committee to present President Cleveland's gift to the Pope, made a statement in Philadelphia not long since which, as reported in the public press, is as honest an admission of Romish intolerance and its cause, as could be asked. We quote as follows, from the columns of the *Methodist Advocate*: –

"We maintain that the church of Rome is intolerant – that is, that she uses every means in her power to root out heresy. But her intolerance is the result of her infallibility. She alone has the right to be intolerant, because she alone has the truth. The church tolerates heretics where she is obliged to do so, but she hates them [R1083 : page 5] with a deadly hatred, and uses all her powers to annihilate them. If ever the Catholics should become a considerable majority, which in time will surely be the case, then will religious freedom in the republic of the United States come to an end. Our enemies know how she treated heretics in the middle ages, and how she treats them to-day where she has the power. We no more think of denying the historic facts than we do of blaming the Holy Ghost and the princes of the church for what they thought fit to do."

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Since writing the foregoing we learn that the Archbishop denies the accuracy of this report. It cannot be denied however, that the past history of this "*unchangeable*" church, agrees perfectly with the words of the Archbishop, as reported. Indeed they are tame when compared with some of the well authenticated utterances of popes during the period of Papacy's triumph: and though her people have changed by the advance of civilization, in the Reformation (still in progress), her clergy and their general policy are unchanged; and they

themselves claim that they are unchangeable. The same errors of false doctrine which led to persecution and general corruption in the past, still remain, and would undoubtedly produce the same fruits again if favored by opportunity, power, etc.

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