

Thomas Aquinas Lets Them Have It.--IV

Some people look intelligent. Other people are intelligent. And because it takes young folks some time to discover this, old Albertus Magnus, one of the profs, merely smiled and wagged his head when he heard that some of the students had said that Thomas Aquinas was a "dumb ox." Of course, those were the fellows who didn't know Tom very well. "Dumb ox. My heavens!" chuckled the old professor. "Some day, you'll hear him bellowing round the world."

It came about this way. They were all gathered for the daily lesson in Science Hall.

"You're a bit original, aren't you?"

As the professor asked this question, many of the students chuckled. There were some in the front benches who turned to see how the individual addressed would take what they thought might be a stiff rebuke.

"I don't think so, sir." said Thomas Aquinas. The answer was very calm, very assured; not cocky; not bold.

As the professor hesitated, Thomas continued:

"Quite a few maintain that this is Aristotle's real meaning. And in his Metaphysics, he seems to defend it with sound arguments."

"Aristotle is an atheist. His God can scarcely be your God, Aquinas!"

For a moment, Thomas remained silent, until the fixed glance of the professor gave him to understand that he was to continue:

"As for Aristotle being an atheist, I do not think his writings support such a statement. I think his meaning has been misinterpreted."

"Young man, have you read all of Aristotle?"

"I have." The answer was immediate, but yet, so modest, the class was stunned. It was the first time that any of his class-mates had seen this side of Aquinas.

It must be said that the professor reacted with becoming humility. There was no rancour in his reply, no blush upon his cheek. He merely said,-- and the students were genuinely glad to hear him say it:

"In all things, I have found you very honest, Thomas. I have no reason, in this instance to doubt either your sincerity or your judgment."

Back in his room, Thomas Aquinas rested his elbows on the desk, his face in his hands. For a few moments, he reflected on what had happened in the class room; more especially, on what had happened after class. In telling Reggy about it afterwards, he said:

"Gosh, I felt like a bum. After class, I stopped at his desk to say I was sorry if I had been offensive. 'You've not been offensive,' he said. 'I should have known the truth of what you said. You have read me a good lesson. And I thank you for it.'"

Reginald said nothing for a moment. Then: "He's a good scout. And a good teacher, too!"

"I know it."

"But the dumb ox came through," laughed Reginald, slapping him on the shoulder.

(to be continued)

The Question.

The important question for you here at Notre Dame is not so much where you stand, as in what direction you are moving. If you have developed a sloppy attitude toward your religious duties, then.....?

PRAYERS: (deceased) James Philip O'Connor, friend of Ed Huff (Morrissey); brother of Sister M. Barbara B.V.M. Ill, A. S. McCaughey and S.L. Throckmorton, friends of L.J. Rondor (Cav). Four special intentions.