

THE MASONS AND THE BENNETT LAW.

A little elementary education in an American private school, or a little association with educated men outside of the priesthood, would be an excellent thing for Bishop Katzer of Green Bay. He is the man who said the other day in the German Roman Catholic Convention at Milwaukee that the Bennett law was gotten up by the Masons, and was an incident of the warfare which they were constantly waging on the church.

If the Bishop would take the trouble to investigate he would find that his fears of the Masons are as unfounded as those entertained by a few Protestants. Although only the initiated can enter a lodge, the intelligent world has arrived at the calm conclusion that the order is a perfectly harmless one, not warring on God and morality, but doing a good deal often to relieve suffering humanity. There may be some nonsense about it, and the titles may be a little high-flown for plain Americans, but it is not sapping the foundations of the Republic or of religion.

The intelligent members of the Roman Catholic priesthood know this perfectly, and while they speak against Masonry because of its secrecy, which the church condemns, they do not make themselves ridiculous by repeating the stale slanders of past centuries. But the Bishop of Green Bay seems actually to believe that the Masonic order is one of the instrumentalities of the Devil to destroy the church of Peter. So when somebody playing on his credulity, told him that the Grand Lodge of Masons originated the Bennett law and that his informant could tell him more, but that he feared for his life if he did, he greedily gulped down the yarn and made himself ridiculous by repeating it.

A fair proportion of the Masons of Wisconsin are Democrats and ordinarily vote their party ticket straight, but this year it will be pretty hard for them to do so. The party is to be run by some German Catholics to secure

the repeal of a law which they allege was gotten up by the Masons because of their malignity to the church. This is hard on Mayor Peck, who was elected as an opponent of the Bennett law, but who is an active Mason—one of those whom Bishop Katzer is attacking.

Priests and ministers rarely jump into politics without making a mess of it, in Chicago or in Wisconsin, and it does not appear that a Bishop shows any more sense when he wanders outside of his province than an ordinary preacher. —*Chicago Tribune.*

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