

ing the recent elections, denounced the Craft. We take the following from an exchange:—

During the late Dominion elections *La Minerve* intimated that certain of the liberal candidates were Freemasons, a statement always sufficient to alienate votes in this province. A. E. Poirier, an advocate here, the unsuccessful candidate for Terrebonne, feeling himself aggrieved, instituted an action for libel, which is now being heard before the Police Magistrate.

Father Antoine Gibaud, of St. Sulpice Seminary, late Professor of Theology, and one of the best authorities on this subject, testified as follows:

Q. What is the doctrine of the Roman Catholic Church on the subject of Freemasons or other secret societies, and what is the punishment given by the Church to Catholics belonging to them?

A. The Church understands by secret societies condemned by her, those whose members are bound by an oath, and those who have an evil motive in view,—that is to say, those who are hostile to the Church, the Government, and society. She condemns also those secret societies in which a compulsory promise or oath is made to execute all orders given by the heads of the society. All Catholics are forbidden to belong to any of these societies under pain of the most severe punishment. The penalties are these:—His Holiness Pope Pius IX., in his apostolic decree of the 12th October, 1869, which is to Catholics the most authentic and, at the same time, the most recent order of the Church, included among those who would be subject to excommunication by the sole fact, those who join the Masonic fraternity, or the Carbonari, or any such societies. But it was not Pius IX., however, properly speaking, who first excommunicated Freemasons. The same was done by his predecessors, Clement XII., Pius VII., and Leo XII. All that Pius IX. did was to renew and confirm the order. The Church in this province had the same punishment against secret societies in general and Freemasons in particular. In fact, a Roman Catholic Freemason is excommunicated, and those excommunicated are among the number of those in which absolution is reserved to the Pope. According to Monsieur de Segar they have no part in the Church; have no right to take part in Mass or other services of the Catholic Church; cannot receive the sacraments, and if they remain in this state they have no right to be buried in consecrated ground.

Q. Do you consider that the fact of being a Freemason is of a nature to discredit a Roman Catholic in the Church, as he is in the opinion of Roman Catholics? A. I

would here distinguish a Roman Catholic worthy of the name. I believe that the sole fact of belonging to the Freemasons would be sufficient to discredit all Roman Catholics among such, but among Catholics who are only Catholics in name I believe that the feeling is very indifferent relative to the esteem in which they hold a Roman Catholic Freemason.

Cross-examined:—Q. Would you include among secret societies prohibited by the Church those which bear the name of Freemasons, but have only a philanthropic motive, and do not take any oath or make any engagement such as before enumerated?

A. No, not exactly; but I would consider such a society very suspicious on account of its name and the vagueness of its aim.

The case is closed, and the public await judgment with considerable interest.

Correspondence.

We do not hold ourselves responsible for the opinions of our Correspondents.

A LETTER FROM THE NEWLY-ELECTED GRAND MASTER.

To the Editor of THE CRAFTSMAN.

SIR,—On my return from the northern portion of Muskoka, after an absence of several days on post-office business, my attention was directed to a letter which appeared in the "Mail" of the 3rd inst., signed "A G. L. Rep. of St. Clair District."

In reply, permit me to say that while I do not consider a general newspaper the proper place to discuss Masonic matters, I cannot permit the untruthful remarks of this anonymous slanderer to pass unchallenged. I have therefore to state that I neither canvassed any brother to vote for me for the office of Grand Master, nor solicited any other person to do so on my behalf. I did not form or assist to form any ticket or combination, and was not consulted in reference to those brethren whose names were placed before the Grand Lodge for election to office, and I deny that I in any way aided in the defeat of Col. Moffat. I was in favor of the re-election of Col. Moffat, and although he was not chosen, I had not changed my mind as to the wisdom of re-electing him until I heard his speech after the ballot had been declared. Although I was not a candidate for the office of Grand Master, I am not aware that I was called upon to decline the position after a majority of the brethren had, unsolicited by me, cast their votes in my favor. Had I done so, "A G. L. Rep." would no doubt have loudly sounded my praises.

I have not entered into any of the diffi-