

EDITORIAL DEPARTMENT.

MASONRY AND ITS FOES.

THE spirit of Anti-Masonry still lives, and were we to believe what the opponents of Masonry say about it, there would be no hesitation in coming to the conclusion that the worst enemies of the Order were in its own ranks; for if there were truth in the assertions of the Anti-Masons, then, as a matter of course, the information would have been obtained from perjurers and deceivers. That anti-Masonry is simply an entity, is about all that can be affirmed of it, for there is not the slightest ground for belief that it will ever accomplish anything beyond making its advocates ridiculous in the eyes of all sensible men. The continued progress of Freemasonry everywhere indicates plainly enough that persecution has done it more good than harm; and so it has always been in every age, for no matter how industriously the enemies of any good cause may labor, they will find their efforts useless in attempting to frustrate the objects of those whom they oppose. The opposition to Masonry, we presume, is as old as Masonry itself, but of late years it has assumed a variety of forms and taken many new "departures," in all of which, however, it has merely succeeded so far as to show that it has no solid ground to rest upon. When it is based on the supposition that, differing from all other secret societies, it aims at the destruction of every moral and religious sentiment, then it comes into direct antagonism with those who uphold and maintain the principles of the Order, and has to be met in the proper spirit. Too often, however, it adopts the course of the insinuating rather than the direct mode of attack, and in this way is not so easily dealt with. It is but fair to assume, after all, that opposition to Masonry in any shape means that it is not the right thing, and that it should not be encouraged. The fact is, Masonry makes no pretensions, and this itself should satisfy its foes that it cannot be as bad as they represent it. Differing from most other societies in this respect, it rests solely upon its merits, and leaves the conduct and actions of the brethren to prove to the world the value of the institution, for no Mason is permitted to solicit applicants for membership; hence it follows that no inducements are held out to persons to become Masons. That being the case, it is all that is needed to disprove the main assertions of Anti-Masons.

To satisfy the opponents of Masonry that it is not the thing they believe it to be, is no easy task, for it would be impossible to convince some of them, even if they were allowed to be witnesses of what passes in the lodges. In the United States opposition to Masonry has in some instances been made a political question, but, happily, there is no fear of any such thing happening here. Anti-Masonry has assumed a somewhat formidable shape in the West, and its advocates stop at nothing in the way of telling untruths and publishing them. In Chicago they have started an organ, which teems with the veriest trash and the vilest falsehoods. Some years ago, a book was issued in Boston, under the title of "The Freemasons," and purporting to be translated from the French of Mgr. Segur. This book was a complete fabric of misrepresentation from beginning to end. It proclaimed Masonry a fearful propagandism, and called upon the faithful of the "Holy Church" to watch its movements closely. In fact, it was denounced as a political organization of the most dangerous character, and then proceeded to