

who have pronounced in favor of our right to so form a Grand Lodge, a strange lack of knowledge as to "the Comity of the Masonic World in regard to Grand Lodge jurisdictions." But I fearlessly assert that the Grand Lodge of Canada in December last *did not* "fully and carefully consider" this question of "right." A purely *ex parte* Statement by the Grand Master, of what had taken place in the Province of Quebec, resulting in the formation of an Independent Grand Lodge for said Province, —a statement, which as I have already shewn, did not contain all the truth, and in which also facts were so stated as to convey an erroneous impression; a statement also unsupported by any arguments worthy of the name as to the correctness of the position assumed,—is hurriedly read before Grand Lodge, and immediately referred to a Special Committee, the majority of whom were conveniently selected for their well known determination to support the Grand Master *comme qui coule*. This Committee immediately sets to work, and, although a series of resolutions are framed, yet the first undertakes to settle all the trouble, "That the Province of Quebec has been fully occupied, Masonically, since 1855, and is still so occupied by the Grand Lodge of Canada." An innocent Brother,—not in the "Ring,"—and who anticipated that at least some show of discussion would take place on such an important resolution, but who was astonished to find it declared carried almost as soon as announced, attempted very pertinently to elicit the authority for such an assumption, but was pooh-poohed down, and the Committee persistently refused to hear his arguments on a resolution which had been *carried*. (My information comes direct from this Brother—for of course I need hardly remind you I was not there.)

But I find that the foregoing resolution and the balance of the series forming the Committee's Report, was read in Grand Lodge, and the following motion (which, however, was not carried) was introduced by R. W. Bro. Wilson, seconded by M. W. Bro. Harington, viz., "That the report of the Committee on the M. W. Grand Master's Address, just read, be received and adopted." Now, either M. W. Bro. Harington was carried away by his desire to support the Grand Master at any cost, and so ignore all Masonic law and precedent, or he forgot that he had himself, while Grand Master, very clearly and forcibly enunciated the law on this very point, viz., in his Address at the Ninth Annual Communication, held in Hamilton in 1864, where, speaking of the differences existing between the Grand Lodge of England and the Grand Lodge of Canada, he says: "It was a great mistake we made in not determining a fixed date, where there must be *exclusive jurisdiction* throughout Canada." \* \* \* "It was the natural sequence to the events occurring in and since 1855, and no compromise should have been entered into by us except as to time." \* \* \* \* "We are not absolutely the Grand Lodge of Canada, though declared and acknowledged so to be while these few cometary fragments revolve in one system." \* \* \* "It is a delicate subject, but a matter of real grievance, and *certainly opposed to Masonic jurisprudence*, and causes an important defect in our otherwise perfect structure." (The italics are mine). The Resolutions framed and adopted in Committee were, however, carried seriatim in Grand Lodge, but it is within my knowledge that many Brethren of rank and influence had become so impressed with the utter unfairness shown not only the Brethren who had joined the Quebec movement, but even those who attempted to advocate their cause in any shape or form, that they studiously avoided being present when the discussion was going on. On these grounds I assert that the Grand Lodge of Canada has not yet fully and carefully considered this question of "right."

Your assertion that "any Grand Lodge admitting the correctness of the step taken by our Quebec Brethren admits also the right of three or more Lodges within *their own territory* to create a rival Grand Lodge," is surely not what you intended to write. We have surely *some show of reason* for what we have done. Let alone Confederation and the severance of the Province of Canada altogether, does not the arguments of M. W. Bro. Harington, quoted above, allow us a certain plea for the erection of an Independent and *Supreme* Grand Lodge? But *you* have irrevocably settled the question of "right," and therefore we are encroaching on your territory. I make bold to declare, that the Grand Lodge of Canada having failed to assert her absolute supremacy over the Craft in Canada, it was competent, in strict Masonic Law, for any three Lodges in the Province at any time subsequent to her concessions to England, Scotland, (and I think also Ireland), to erect an Independent, Supreme Grand Lodge of Canada. I do not say it would have been advisable so to do, nor do I question the legality of her acts so long as all were mutually satisfied; but the *right* so to do was just as unquestionably inherent in any three Lodges, as will finally be found the right of the Lodges in Quebec to form their Grand Lodge.