

of expediency it is your duty to put aside; the grave responsibility rests on you of determining, so far as this jurisdiction is concerned, upon the very right of this important matter.

"In the month of October last, at the city of Montreal at a convention of lodges, it was resolved to erect an independent Grand Lodge for the Province of Quebec; and the body so formed claims to be recognized as the duly and legally constituted masonic authority in that Province.

"The Grand Lodge of Canada, recognized by all Grand Lodges in the masonic world and claiming jurisdiction over the Provinces of Ontario and Quebec, protests against the recognition of the so-called Grand Lodge of Quebec, and asserts its right to exclusive masonic government over the Province of Quebec as occupied masonic territory.

"The question then upon which the several Grand Lodges are called on to pronounce is, first, the right of the lodges in Quebec to erect an independent Grand Lodge; then, if the right exists, whether or not their proceeding in the organization has been regular and according to masonic usage.

"It is manifestly necessary to determine first, as to the right to establish an independent Grand Lodge, for if the *right* does not exist and is not inherent in the lodges acting in the formation, no formality of procedure, no unanimity of action, no preponderance of numbers, no individual or collective weight or importance to be attached to the component parts of the convention, can avail to give vitality to the new body.

"I have considered this question by the light of what is called "American Masonic Jurisprudence," relating to the formation of Grand Lodges, because the new body claims to have followed American precedent,

"The learned and W. Brother Mackey, in his "Masonic Jurisprudence," Book 5, under title "The Nature of a Grand Lodge," lays down certain rules as necessary to be observed in the organization of a Grand Lodge, in a territory wherein no such body has previously existed. He asserts that such a territory is common ground and that it is competent for any Grand Lodge to grant a warrant of constitution and establish a lodge in such unoccupied territory on the petition of a requisite number of masons. Each Grand Lodge in such case exercising jurisdiction over the lodge or lodges it has established, but not over the territory. When the subordinate lodges desire to organize a Grand Lodge, and take possession of the territory, they meet by lodges in convention and erect a Grand Lodge. At page 424, he says: 'The Grand Lodge thus formed, by the Union of not less than three lodges in convention, (other jurists contend that a majority of the lodges working in the territory is required,) at once assumes all the prerogatives of a Grand Lodge and acquires exclusive masonic jurisdiction over the territory within whose geographical limits it has been constituted. No lodge can continue to exist or be subsequently established in the territory except under its authority.'

"To the same effect is the authority of Chase in his 'Digest of Masonic Law,' sixth edition, page 15: 'The usual mode of organizing a new Grand Lodge is in substance as follows: A certain number of lodges—not less than three—holding charters or warrants from some legal Grand Lodge, or from different Grand Lodges, meet in convention by their representatives, formally resolve 'to organize a Grand Lodge.' Page 16: 'It is necessary that it be a separate state or territory; that there be no Grand Lodge at that time existing within it.'