

private Lodges whose night of meeting it was. The Lodge of the United Brothers had even prepared for a brilliant *soirée*, and were not made acquainted with the order until their arrival at the Hall.

1861.—May 23.—A deputation waited upon Prince Napoleon at ten in the morning, and handed him a written report showing that, debarred from effecting a regular election, they had had recourse to the best means available, accompanied by a minute of the election signed by 98 deputies. They were graciously received, and proceeded thence to a notary public in order to deposit with him a minute of the election, etc. They then separated to meet at two o'clock as a Grand Orient. But Rexès had meanwhile interviewed the Prefect of Police, and when the brethren arrived they found this notice on the door—"Freemasons are forbidden to meet for the election of a Grand Master before the end of next October. Signed Boitelle," etc., etc.

May 24.—The members of the Grand Orient published a formal and dignified protest against all these proceedings, attaching very naturally, and it may be justly, all the blame to Rexès, the only one interested, to the extent of 9000 francs per annum, in the then existing arrangements.

May 28.—The *Opinion Nationale* published a letter from Prince Napoleon thanking the Fraternity for their sympathy; but in view of the strike which the election was engendering, requesting that his name might be no more mixed up in the matter. Then followed decrees of Murat's. The Grand Orient will not be convoked till October. Lodges in the metropolitan department of the Seine are suspended till further notice. A third, on May 29, after many "*whereas's*," goes on to say, "All brothers who have taken part in these illegal and unmasonic meetings in the hotel of the G. Orient, without our authority and in spite of our prohibition, are hereby declared unworthy; as soon as their names shall be known, and failing a disavowal on their part, they will be suspended." [Then follow the names of 24 brothers who were known and consequently suspended.] Signed, Murat.

July 29.—In a long manifesto, very dignified and Masonic, but misstating the facts, Murat declared that thenceforth the duties devolving upon him as G.M. had ceased to be *pleasing*. In fact he declined re-election, and appointed a committee composed of Boubée, Desanlis, Rexès, and the G.M.'s Council to manage affairs until the election in October. I must pass over the bickerings and recriminations in the ordinary as well as in the Masonic press—but these can very readily be imagined?

September 29.—The G.M.'s Council convoked an extraordinary General Assembly for October 14. As its sole business was to elect a G.M., the sitting was to close on the same date. This was followed by a dignified letter of advice from Murat to the Fraternity, and the publication of a private letter of Prince Napoleon, begging the Craft to give their votes to some other brother.

October 10.—"We, Prefect of Police, on information received, in the interests of public security, do decree; all Masons are hereby interdicted from meeting in order to elect a G. Master before the month of May, 1862. Signed Boitelle." This naturally raised further protests, amid which October 28 arrived, and the Order was without a G.M. Murat's time had lapsed, and no successor had been elected. Under these circumstances a committee handed in the name of *three* brothers to the Minister of the Interior, as administrators of the Craft, and claimed that their legal power should be acknowledged; but Murat had already advised the minister of *five* of his own appointing, so that we now have two committees claiming to rule the Craft, and more discord.