

of the very Lodges supposed to be favourable to a union with the Grand Lodge of Canada, had openly declared themselves in favour of a Grand Lodge of Quebec, and joined the secession movement. Meetings had been held by a large number of the eastern or Quebec brethren, favourable to the formation of a Grand Lodge of Quebec. On the 25th September, a deputation waited on the Grand Master, requesting him to convene an emergent meeting of Grand Lodge, for the purpose of ascertaining whether the object of forming a Grand Lodge for the Province of Quebec can be carried out in a manner satisfactory to all concerned. A compliance with this request was refused: the reasons assigned by the Grand Master for such refusal being that the four deputies did not place before him any facts which would justify him in complying therewith; that the document itself, signed by four Past Masters, gave him no information whatever as to the reasons which actuated them in making such a request, nor did it furnish any particular relative to the meeting whose delegation they purported to be, except that it was "*large and influential.*"

The Grand Master, upon learning that a convention was to be held 26th October, for the purpose of forming a Grand Lodge for the Province of Quebec, and that it had been agreed that it mattered not what the nature of the reply received might be, it would not in any way alter their determination, conceived it his duty to summon those four brethren to appear before him on the 8th October, to give an explanation of their conduct; and they were summoned accordingly—three of whom fyled an appearance, the fourth disobeying the summons. Of these three, the Grand Master says, he received most unsatisfactory explanations; that they admitted that they had grievances to complain of; nor did they show any advantages which would result from a division of our Grand Lodge. He "admonished with friendship and reprehended with mercy," and concluded his remonstrance by the assurance that *if it should turn out that there existed so strong a feeling on the subject as they pretended, the question might come up for discussion at the next annual communication of Grand Lodge.*

Here, then, the deputies were assured by the Grand Master that the discussion on the subject of separation, which in 1868 and 1869 had been treated as heterodox, if not even as treason, would be allowed by him as orthodox and in order. Unfortunately, however, the promise granting permission for that discussion was coupled with the condition that if it should turn out at any time that there existed so strong a feeling on the subject as the deputation then pretended: thus leaving the certainty of that discussion to subsequent and additional evidence, and giving the deputies ample room to infer that the evidence then before the Grand Master, on the strength of which he assured the Grand Lodge that its very existence was imperilled, and what the deputies told him regarding the subject, was not sufficient in itself to warrant him to grant that permission, nor to comply with their request regarding the emergent meeting. The deputies, after consultation with their friends, informed the Grand Master, on the 11th October, that they positively declined to withdraw themselves from the movement. On the following day the Grand Master received a circular, signed by seventeen brethren, calling a convention; to be held on the 20th October, to take into consideration the present state of Freemasonry in the