

dence as public property and the columns of *The Gavel* are open to any response you may desire to make to any article of mine at all times.

I have the honor to remain,

Yours &c.

ROBERT RAMSAY.

EDITOR *Gavel*.

MONTREAL, 13th Nov., 1871.

W. BRO. RAMSAY,
Worshipful Sir,

I should have earlier answered your letter of the 16th ult., had not other matters of more immediate importance engaged my attention. Indeed I at first had grave doubts as to the necessity for any reply; but consideration led me to feel that it was not wise to permit a matter of this kind to rest without thorough sifting. The tendency to looseness of expression in the secular press, when private or public character are involved is a matter for regret to all honest men. That it should extend to the masonic press, whose writers are supposed always to act under a controlling sense of their obligations as masons would be a calamity, which every honest Freemason should do his utmost to prevent.

I have not troubled myself to ask from Bro. Isaacson in writing a repetition of his verbal disavowal made to me in presence of M. W. Bro. Stevenson, of having authorized your assertion that I had, refused to move." Having had, frequent conversations with him at the time, I know that he could have given you no such information; and I therefore prefer his denial to your assertion. Yet I cannot but regret that you did not, when repeating your original statement, give the exact words of his letter to you. Even your report of them does not justify the words used by you in the *Gavel*. Your statement there was that; "Brother Thomas White, upon whom "so many very properly relied, has it is rumoured, refused to move." Now you say Bro. Isaacson informed you that I "did not seem inclined to move." There is a wide difference between the two statements. At the same time let me repeat, that as Bro. Isaacson knew that I had, immediately upon my return from Ottawa, written to Bro. Racicot to consult him as to the measures to be adopted to give effect to the resolution of Grand Lodge; as he knew that I had called a meeting in Montreal for the 7th August, three weeks before the *Gavel*, with your accusation, appeared; as he knew that I had summoned a general meeting of representatives of the Canadian Lodges in this Province for an early day in September; I do not believe that, knowing these things he ever wrote you to say that I did not seem inclined to move and nothing but the production of the letter, would make me think so badly of him.

As to the second point you say that you were not informed that I had called the meeting in Montreal, although you were informed that one had been called Brethren present at Hamilton are very confident that my name was mentioned; but this is a matter of little confidence and I, therefore, readily accept your statement. But knowing as you admit you did, that a meeting had been called how came you in the *Gavel* to say "We have waited, waited, and at last we are forced to issue the *Gavel* without being able to hint at one circumstance that would point to any "amicable settlement of present difficulties." Was a meeting of "the Worshipful Masters and Wardens of Montreal Lodges" with special reference to this very matter, so insignificant a "circumstance" as to be unworthy even of a "hint"? You say you wrote for particulars. To whom did you write? Was it to any of the Worshipful masters and Wardens of Montreal Lodges, who alone had a right to know what had been done? I am not covetous of correspondence, and yet it does seem to me that had you had such anxiety to learn what was being done as your emphasized "waited" would lead one to suppose, you might have asked me the question. You did not hesitate to send me a postal card when you wanted the address of a couple of brethren; but when it was a question affecting my personal honour, the fulfilment of a pledge made by me on the floor of Grand Lodge, and when the simple words "what are you doing in Quebec matter?" would have saved you from uttering the slander, you had not time to write them.

I know nothing of the obligations of those "higher degrees" of which you are so bright and shining a light, and which I regret to believe are, by the establishment of a masonic *Imperium in Imperio*, ruining ancient craft masonry in America. If I am to judge of them by the tone of the *Gavel* their power to restrain the tongue of slander is not great, while their influence in causing a forgetfulness of the simple vows of the blue lodge are little less than omnipotent, I know not, therefore, whether it is worth while reminding you that the words to which you listened when you were