

by the depositor of the piece of blank paper should rob him of his franchise, and not place him upon the same footing as the more thoughtful brother who expressed his preference in some way by writing upon the ballot paper. Since then it has been decided in this jurisdiction that such ballots do count, but nevertheless we hold to our opinion, and find that it is endorsed by Bro. Henry W. Rugg, editor of the *Freemason's Repository*, Providence, R.I. Bro. Rugg says:—"There is no such thing as a 'blank ballot.' A ballot is a written or printed vote,—a token intended to express the voter's choice,—and by the very terms of the definition, a blank piece of paper cannot possibly constitute the required expression of favour."

Our brethren in Quebec City are preparing to tender the Grand Lodge a rousing reception upon the occasion of the annual communication to be held in that city this month. The Grand Lodge, it is expected, will be even more largely attended than for several years past, in view of the great interest taken in the present position of the question with regard to the relations existing between the Grand Lodges of England and Quebec. The removal of the edict of non-intercourse by the Quebec Grand Master, it is hoped will clear the way for a settlement, but it does not actually produce a settlement. The Grand Master's action has met the enthusiastic approval of all the Montreal lodges, but it is scarcely expected that those who upheld the edict so long will allow the Grand Lodge meeting to pass over without expressing disapproval. What is to be gained by acting in an obstructive manner cannot readily be conceived, and

we therefore, hope that Grand Master Stearn's action will receive full endorsement, so that peace and harmony will be fully established between the two Grand Bodies who have been so long at variance.

Will some brother connected with the Grand Lodge Committee on Benevolence explain why drafts or cheques have not yet been forwarded to persons entitled to receive them, especially as the grants were made in July last? We have received a letter from a brother belonging to Morning Star Lodge, No. 309, who states that in July last grants were given to two widows and one brother in his locality, the widows receiving \$20 each and the brother \$50, and at the time he wrote, (December 2nd), the money had not been received. If the grants were made as the brother states some one is criminally negligent in the discharge of duty. A widow with seven children, or a penniless brother over three score years old, to be debarred from enjoying the necessaries that the grants would purchase, merely because some brother is careless, is a sad state of affairs, and should be remedied. We certainly hope that our brother has been misinformed, for if he has not been the removal of the negligent brother or brethren should be demanded. Such remissness in the discharge of duties, where so much good can be accomplished, should not be tolerated one moment longer than possible, as the distribution of benevolence to be of value to the recipient should be prompt.

Bro. J. B. Traves, Port Hope, writes that he has for sale a complete File of THE CRAFTSMAN.