

QUEBEC vs. ENGLAND.

BY P. G. M. BRO. J. H. GRAHAM.

No. II.

The unfraternal state of affairs existing between the Grand Lodges of Quebec and of England, has arisen chiefly from divergency of opinions regarding certain of the rights, privileges and prerogatives of Grand Lodges, especially it would seem, of those in the Colonies.

The founders of the Grand Lodge of Quebec, of whom the writer was one, held that it was and is entitled to have and to exercise exclusive sovereign jurisdiction over all Craft Lodges situated within the Geographical limits of the Province of Quebec.

These opinions were thus entertained, and embodied in the Grand Regulations for the government of the Craft in Quebec, because they were deemed to be not only in accord with inherent and inalienable rights of the Craft,—but also with the correct interpretation of the evolutionary history of the Fraternity there— and with the provisions *in re* of the Constitution of the United Grand Lodge of England and of those of Ireland, Scotland, and of the United States of America—whether established prior to, about the same period, or after the formation in 1813, only 75 years ago, of the United Grand Lodge of England (and Wales).

The writer has heretofore stated certain "conclusions" *in re*, as follows:

"It therefore clearly appears that the principle of coincidence (or coterminality) of political and Masonic

boundaries, is an acknowledged law of the British Constitutions; that the jurisdiction of each Grand Lodge is exclusive within its Geographical limits; that each of these Grand Lodges is absolutely sovereign; and that each of them may, and does enforce its territorial, exclusive sovereign authority by the most extreme Masonic penalties, against all lodges existing within its boundaries in contravention thereto, or in violation thereof."

"The doctrine of Exclusive Grand Lodge Sovereignty is not, therefore, (as has been flippantly said) a Masonic "Yankee Notion," nor can it properly be called an American Doctrine (although generally accepted, and admirably applied with the most beneficial results to the Craft throughout the United States of America and the Dominion of Canada); but it is the doctrine of the ancient Constitutions—a part of the unalterable body of true and genuine Freemasonry, which must be forever upheld and maintained."

"Since the principle of the exclusive, sovereign jurisdiction of each of the British Grand Lodges is acknowledged and prevails within their respective Geographical limits, which are still the same as they were prior to the union of their formerly separate Kingdoms, into *one* United Kingdom; it therefore follows that the same law of exclusive Masonic sovereignty ought, (*a fortiori*), to prevail within the Geographical limits of the Province of Quebec; because since the Federation of Quebec with the other British North American Provinces into *one* Dominion,—Quebec (like all the other Federal Provinces) possesses separate political *autonomy*, having a Parliament (Legislature) of its own, with ample legislative, judicial, and executive powers, such as is not possessed by England, Scotland, or Ireland, as parts of the United Kingdom.

Richmond, Quebec,
Canada May 8, 1888.