

"Great Priory" called for the 25th inst., my medical attendant not considering it advisable for me to leave home at this inclement season. Be good enough therefore on presiding at the Special Meeting of Great Priory to read the following explanation to the members present relative to the object of the meeting:—

"It was entirely a misapprehension on my part granting a Dispensation to open a Preceptory in Melbourne, South Australia, and I should not have thought of doing so, but from the representations made to me that The Order of the Temple was dormant there, and great difficulties thrown in the way of reviving it, where no governing independent Grand Body existed in the Colony. I was aware that the National Great Priory of England claimed jurisdiction over all the Colonies of the British Empire, but always understood it was a concurrent one, with all the Masonic Bodies, as proved in the case of Canada—each country ruling over their own subordinates, until independent Bodies were established.

I do not know of any Masonic Law forbidding Grand or Independent Bodies opening Subordinates within a territory where no Supreme Body of the country exists, and this law appeared to be fully understood in England a few years ago, as shown by a correspondence of the Grand Secretary of the Grand Lodge of England with that of Canada, page fifty-four, Proceedings of Grand Lodge of Canada. Under all the circumstances I was induced to grant the "Preliminary" Warrant for Melbourne, South Australia, unanimously confirmed at the last meeting of Great Priory.

From the action now taken by the Great Priory of England, it would seem that I had made an error in judgment not to have first referred the matter to them and ascertained whether they claimed sole jurisdiction and on what grounds, it never being my wish or intention that the Great Priory of Canada should in any way be involved in a dispute with the Parent Body, or intrude upon their jurisdiction. I have, therefore, deemed it necessary to lay the matter before this Special Meeting that Great Priory may fully consider their decision of granting a Warrant to Australia, and adopt such a course as may seem expedient to relieve the Great Priory of Canada from all appearance of undue interference with that of England. It is by no means my wish to suggest any course not dictated by a careful examination of all the circumstances demanded by strict Masonic Justice, and the just rights of both jurisdictions,—the