

of our complete independence as a Sovereign Body, sprung from the good old English stock.

Sir Knights ! Much as I prize the high honor that has fallen to my lot—and be assured I do feel it as such—of becoming the Supreme Head, under Royal authority, of this National Grand Body, I feel prouder and more gratified, after having introduced, and for so many years conducted the affairs of, the Order in Canada, in maintaining your good opinion ; and the more than cordial manner with which you have always been pleased to receive me, and the steady support and co-operation you have so long afforded me, has now been in the most gratifying and constitutional manner more than crowned by success, in the establishment of our independent National Great Priory without severing our connection with the Parent Body. I trust you will give me credit for the sincerity of my motives when I say it was not in the least degree the love of authority or a desire to enforce “the one man power,” that induced me so persistently to maintain my own opinion as to the advisability of continuing a dependency of the Great Priory of England, until the time arrived when we could separate with honour and dignity to ourselves. Looking to the future of the Order, when I shall no longer be at the head of affairs, I never allowed expediency to stand in the way, being determined, if possible, to ensure the Order being placed upon a firm basis and its future status permanently secured.

OF THE CONVENT GENERAL AND UNION OF THE ORDER.

It may not be quite clear to some of our fraters why we should still wish to continue under the “Convent General ;” but I need scarcely point out to you, that as a National British Society, no more honourable position could be held than that of being united with the other national branches of the Order over whom H. R. H. the Heir-apparent to the Throne is the governing power, and which Her Most Gracious Majesty the Queen has been pleased especially to patronize. This I look upon alone as a great distinction and privilege, the countenance of Her Majesty being a guarantee of the purity, thorough conservative doctrines, and Christian principles, of our Order.

The avowed object of this Templar Union was to incorporate the branches in England, Ireland, and Scotland under one Royal Head, by the reciprocation of rites, privileges, and disabilities ; as, correctly speaking, there should not be any separate bodies in the society, which is or should be, one, and indissoluble ; although want of knowledge of the correct principles of the Order in some cases, and political exigencies in others, have divided it into several branches, holding themselves entirely independent of each other. The desire is now to unite the scattered elements of this ancient Chivalry into one harmonious whole, as was originally the rule of the Order.

The formation of a “Convent General” and “Great Pories” is nearly analogous to the system pursued in the United States, their State Commanderies being similar to the National Great Pories of the British Empire. These Commanderies yield submission to the triennial Parliament of the Order, the Grand Encampment of the United States, which is very similar in constitution and authority to our “Convent General.”