

NATIONAL GREAT PRIORY OF CANADA.

TEMPLARY OF THE BRITISH DOMINIONS.

In Great Britain and Ireland during the last century, the Chivalric Orders were formally introduced and adopted by the Masonic Fraternity, but altogether as separate and honorary degrees.

At the Union of the English Grand Lodges of 1813, the second article, in defining the degrees of Ancient Masonry, provides for the practice of the Chivalric Orders in these words:—"But this article is not intended to prevent any Lodge or Chapter from holding a meeting in any of the degrees and orders of Chivalry according to the constitutions of said orders," thus acknowledging the alliance and the historic truth and value of the Chivalric degrees.

Templary then, as now constituted, has become part of the Masonic system, that is to say, the Society is based upon Masonry in so far that we admit none but such as are Masons, therefore the basis and qualification is Masonic, but properly speaking it is not essentially so, but at the most quasi-Masonic.

The election of H. R. H. the Prince of Wales to be the sole Grand Master of the Order was strictly in accordance with ancient usage, and the wish to have but one Governing head (at least over the English speaking branches of the Order), had nothing to do with national or political events, the allegiance being to the sovereign head of the Order, who might, as of old, be chosen from any nationality. This does not appear to have been generally understood by those brethren who merely looked upon it in a Masonic point of view.*

The nationalities of England, Ireland and Canada are justly proud of the honor of having the heir to the Throne as their Supreme Head, and gratified at the interest evinced in the Order by His Royal Brothers, the Duke of Connaught, as Great Prior of Ireland, and Prince Leopold, as Constable of the Great Priory of England, acknowledging with loyal pride the high distinction conferred upon them by Her Most Gracious Majesty the Queen declaring herself Patron of the Order.

* According to our views of the Templar Order, in its cosmopolitan and Chivalric character, there can be but one Grand Master: The Great Priors, as of old, ruling in their own Nationalities, acknowledging H. R. H. the Prince of Wales as Supreme Head of the Chivalric Order; but we do not pretend to dictate or exercise control over the opinions of others who differ with us.