

The Great Prior of England, in moving that the Canadian Memorial be taken into consideration, said he would state what was asked, and what was the present position of the Templars in Canada. The governing body there was now called a Grand Priory, but it was in fact a Provincial Priory under the Great Priory of England, but with this exception, that it was allowed to retain some of the funds for local purposes. The Canadian Templars felt that they and their officers occupied an inferior position in their intercourse with the Templar Order in the United States. They therefore desired that the Priory of Canada should be created a Great Priory, with powers of self-government. Before Convent General considered the question it would be advisable to refer to the Clause of the Convent General Statutes relating to Great Priors. It was as follows:

"The Grand Master shall appoint Great Priors to represent him in England and Ireland, or, with the consent of the Convent General, in any of the Colonies or British Possessions abroad."

It was clear that the appointment of a Great Prior took with it the constitution of a Great Priory. It would naturally flow from him. That was the Statute bearing on the question, and there was, he thought, no doubt of the power of the Grand Master, with the consent of Convent General, to create Great Priors. Politically, Canada, as all knew, had been created a Dominion, with a local Parliament, subject only to the Imperial Legislature. Masonically, it had independent Grand Craft Lodges, and he believed that the same state of things existed with regard to the Royal Arch. As regarded numerical strength, Canada possessed seventeen Preceptories, which were in a fairly flourishing condition. It was for Convent General to consider whether the position of Canada was such as to induce it to grant the members there the local self-government which was asked, entirely subject to Convent General and the Grand Master, but not the English Great Priory. The Memorialists expressed the most loyal sentiments, and had no desire to separate themselves from the authority of the Grand Master. As Great Prior of England, he had anxiously considered the prayer of the Memorial, and he was of opinion that both the local circumstances and the numbers of the members of the Order in Canada rendered it desirable that it should be granted. He therefore moved—

"That the Convent General, as provided in Convent General Statutes, page 17, lines 26 to 30, assents to the prayer of the Memorial, and respectfully recommends the same to His Royal Highness the Grand Master."

Sir Knight Major S. H. Clerke, Sub-Prior of England, seconded the motion.

Sir Knight Dr. Ringland wished to assent to every word that had been said as to the expediency of granting the prayer of the Memorial; at the same time he asked whether the assent of the English Great Priory should not first be obtained.

Sir Knight Colonel A. Ridgway thought it was advisable that the general policy of conciliation should be made evident to the Canadians. He was of opinion that the question was not one in which the Great Priory of England was concerned. It appeared certain that the Statutes of the Convent General had been wisely framed for an event such as was now before it. No difficulty should be thrown in the way. The Memorial was couched in terms that must recommend itself.

The Great Prior of England said he had carefully considered the question, and was of opinion that, as the right to create Great Priors arises out of the Convent General Statutes, it was not necessary to refer the question to the English Great Priory. Convent General could do so, however, if it thought proper. The right to decide on the Memorial existed in the Convent General alone.

Sir Knight S. Lloyd Foster, K. C. T., agreed generally with the remarks that had been made. He, however, wished to know whether Canada could be acknowledged as a "nation" as contemplated by the Convent General Statutes, and referred to the Clause, page 8, lines 1 and 2.

The Great Prior of England said that the word "nation" was there used in a special sense.

Sir Knight Major A. C. Crookshank asked if the ruling were correct as related to the Great Priory of England; what would be the result if the Great Priory of Ireland desired to be consulted.

The Great Prior of England said his ruling was that the Convent General was supreme.

The motion was then put and carried *nem. con.*

We further subjoin the roll of the National Great Priory of Canada for 1876-7, as adopted at the meeting in Montreal:

THE V. H. & E. THE GREAT PRIOR.—Colonel ‡ W. J. MacLeod Moore, G. C. T., Laprairie.