

The expression 'Grand Chapter of Canada in the Province of Ontario'

"Nova Scotia, 1901, is given a page and a half of quotation and comment giving a clear idea of the conditions as they were with us at the time. He is inclined to be severe on our good Companion 'McK.' who reviewed Canada in our report of that year. We fancy his ire was aroused by the use of the expression 'Grand Chapter of Canada in the Province of Ontario.' With all due respect and the most kindly feeling for our western Companions we are compelled to agree with Comp. Warvelle, of Illinois, that the title 'Grand Chapter of Canada' is somewhat of a misnomer at the present time whatever it may have been before 1867. If the name has any significance now, it means a Grand Chapter having jurisdiction over the Dominion of Canada. This the Grand Chapter of Canada has not now nor ever had. No doubt Comp. Bennett will consider us rather dense when we say that we fail to grasp the idea that the Grand Chapter of Canada is the mother of the Grand Chapter of N. S. We have always been under the impression that Royal Arch Masonry existed in Nova Scotia several decades before there was a Grand Chapter of Canada. We are proud of our big sister of the West and rejoice in her prosperity, but it never occurred to us to look up to her as a mother."

How often the emotions, when garbed in cold type, assume an aspect totally at variance with the actual condition of affairs. Through S.J.W.'s glasses, badinage looms up as "severity," and an indulgence in pleasantries takes on the grim appearance of "ire". Too bad, but it is cheering to learn that even in far away Illinois he found something to console him for our frivolity. "Grand Chapter of Canada" is not our doing. Half a century ago the name was conferred with full baptismal rites and the plaudits of the "gossips". Many years later it set up one of its offspring in Nova Scotia and there were none to say nay. When the young "Hiram" then located at Goldenville, with two fellow workers, of English and Scottish origin respectively, decided on starting an independent business, the mother gave him her blessing and thereupon a new Capitular industry was started under the name and title of the Grand Chapter of Nova Scotia. Nor was there any murmuring at the maternal belongings when an officer of the Grand Chapter of Canada was chosen to invest Nova Scotia's first Chief Ruler with the prerogatives of his position. Companion S.J.W.'s "impression" as to the early advent of Royal Arch Masonry in Nova Scotia is so palpably accurate that he need not fear contradiction. Even one of our own Chapters, herein this province, but recently celebrated its centenary. These historical incidents cannot gloss over nor alter the plain immutable fact that the Grand Chapter of Canada was the pioneer sovereign Capitular body of Canadian origin, with Chapters of its obedience in all those provinces now possessing Grand Chapters of their own, that her title is her inalienable birthright no matter how inconvenient or anomalous it may appear to the woolly westerner or our good Companion of dear old "Acadie" and while she continues to hold sway over the fertile provinces of Ontario, Manitoba, British Columbia, Saskatchewan, Alberta and the vast territories yet to be clothed in provincial dignity, it will be conceded that her claim to the title rests upon something even more substantial than sentiment.

"But he that filches from me my good name, robs me of that which not enriches him and makes me poor indeed."

Sources:

Proceedings of the Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons of Canada at the annual convocation, 1906, report on Foreign Correspondence - NOVA SCOTIA