

# CHARACTERISTICS OF CANADIAN CITIES

BY "ROLLINGSTONE"

**I**N the older countries, where human history is measured by centuries, the cities are not so apt to possess individual characteristics as in the newer lands where time is counted by decades. They vary in size, in style of architecture, and in wealth, of course, but otherwise they are much alike, and there is no possibility of change.

Quite different is it with the cities of Canada for instance. They each manifest features of their own whereby they may easily be differentiated, and they are not yet fixed in any mould precluding novel development.

It is the purpose of this article to pay a brief visit to the chief cities of Canada, and to glance at those characteristics which may be considered peculiar to each.

## Halifax

To begin with Halifax, bearing in mind that throughout its history the capital of the Bluenose Province has been a fortified outpost of the British Empire, and has always had its contingents of red-coats and blue-jackets, it is easy to understand why the prevailing atmosphere is essentially English. The ideas and ideals, the manners and customs, the accent and the fashions of the Mother Land hold sway in spite of the fact that every summer brings an invasion of our American cousins who are cordially welcomed indeed, but whose influence works no change in the aspect of things.

Haligonians are wont to speak as naturally of England as "home" as if they had really been born there. They go "home" on business or pleasure; they send "home" for their clothes or their books; they write "home" to their friends, and this is no mere affectation,

but the expression of a genuine state of thought and feeling which may endure for generations yet.

Society in Halifax accordingly has a dignity of its own which inevitably commands respect. There is practically no attempt at ostentation or lavish expenditure. Many of the wealthiest families live in wooden houses that are simply very commodious cottages furnished for solid comfort, not for show. There are balls, and dinners, and receptions, and teas galore the year round, but there is no feverish anxiety on the part of the entertainers to eclipse other people's hospitality.

The military and naval officers, it need hardly be said, are the spoiled darlings of the drawing-rooms, and they occasionally manifest their appreciation by wedding one of the Bluenose belles.

They are capital fellows, as a rule. Gentlemen to the core, widely travelled, and full of spirit, and sometimes when their term of active service is over, they return to the country to spend the remainder of their days there.

Some would maintain that they have been a detriment rather than an advantage to the city. But to this we would not assent, and we think it would be cause for profound regret if Halifax ever ceased to be a military and naval station.

## St. John

Crossing the Bay of Fundy to the capital of New Brunswick, we find ourselves in an entirely different atmosphere. Here the buildings, the dress of their occupants, their accent, their brisk, bustling movements, unmistakably reveal the American influence. In fact, were St. John to be lifted from its present picturesque situa-