

WITH HALIFAX MASONS.

WHAT A ST. JOHN CRAFTSMAN HAS TO SAY ABOUT THEM.

Occasional Comparisons Between the Way Things are Done in the Two Cities—Interesting Features of the Leading Lodges—The Temple and Its Features.

The readers of PROGRESS must have inferred from some recent sketches that freemasonry is a live institution in Nova Scotia, and in particular in the city of Halifax. So it is. The city has no less than eleven lodges, or more than twice as many as the city of St. John, Dartmouth and Carleton not being included in the comparison. Then there are two Royal Arch Chapters, a Preceptory of Knights Templars, and the various bodies, from the Lodge of Perfection to the Consistory in the A. & A. Scottish Rite. It will be seen that it is only in the matter of lodges that it outnumbers this city, but in the province at large, the other bodies have a majority over New Brunswick in all of the bodies named.

There is a good deal of style about Halifax, and it is found within the tyled doors as elsewhere. In Virgin lodge for instance, the dress suit is the rule not only with the officers but the members as well. Virgin is, and always has been, an eminently respectable lodge with a good proportion of the leading military men on its roll. A military man is in the chair now, and the chaplain to the forces sits in the west. The lodge has certain privileges conceded to it by the grand lodge, and one of these is that though on the registry of Nova Scotia it retains the English work. This is allowed so that members of the forces, liable to be called away at any time, may take an active part in it without being called upon to adapt themselves to such changes as they would find in a strict conformity with the Nova Scotia work. One notices a difference in the regalia, too, such as the white collars of office and sleeve gauntlets worn by the officers. In many ways a St. John mason will find much to interest him in Virgin lodge.

Royal Standard lodge, No. 389, on the registry of England, is a purely military and naval body, but it admits to membership no mere privates. The candidate must be an officer of some kind. If a private wants to be made a mason in Halifax, there are ten other lodges in which he can try his chances by the ballot. There is one peculiarity about a mason who is obliged to wear the queen's clothing in public. He never can take part in a public procession of the craft, because he cannot wear an apron, and the reason he cannot is that it is clothing which is not part of his uniform. If he happened to be in St. John and saw the abominably bad marching usually seen on such occasions, he would possibly be thankful that he was not in the ranks. It is probably better in Halifax, because the constant presence of the troops has not been without its effect as an example. Royal Standard is likely to interest the stranger more than any lodge in Halifax. It can be readily understood that everything is done with the precision so essential to good work. A peculiarity about this lodge is, that any number of members, from the master down to the youngest entered apprentice, are liable to be called away at any time in the year, if a regiment is ordered to another station. All the offices can never be vacant, however, because there are enough in the resident departments and the navy to make use of the working tools.

Union lodge is where the colored candidate finds that he is in truth "a man and a brother," as the phrase used to be in the abolition days. The members of Union lodge are generally bright masons, and can prove themselves to be such in any part of the world.

St. Andrew's lodge, No. 1, takes precedence as the senior lodge of Nova Scotia. It has a history full of interest dating as far back as 1719, and has a style about its way of doing things that shows its members are alive to the position it holds in the craft.

The temple itself is well fitted up from basement to roof. There are those who say mistakes were made in its construction, just as there are not wanting some who believe errors of judgment were made in the design of the St. John masonic building. In Halifax they appear to have thought the craft was likely to stand still or grow smaller, while in St. John one would think there had been an anticipation of a tidal wave of immigrant masons. If such were the ideas both were somewhat astray in their predictions. Halifax built too small, and St. John too big. Halifax finished and furnished its building, while St. John succeeded in finishing and furnishing, in a sort of a way, one room which on all but phenomenal occasions is entirely too big for the uses to which it is put. The craft is increasing in Nova Scotia; for the last two years it has fallen off in New Brunswick. It is hard to have to admit all this, but "truth is mighty and will prevail."

The Halifax temple is the third which the craft has built there. The corner-stone of the first was laid by the Queen's father, Edward, Duke of Kent, grand master of Lower Canada in the year 1806. Masonry had, however, been planted in Halifax 50 years before that, with Governor Cornwallis as the master of the first lodge. The corner-stone of the second building was laid by that grand old mason, Alexander Keith, in 1859, while grand master Col. J. Wimburn Laurie laid the corner-stone of the present edifice, in August, 1876.

The lodge room, on the top floor, is a good sized apartment, amply large enough, and it is furnished with comfortable settees in a double row. All the seats in the east are luxurious, high-backed arm chairs, those of the master, immediate past master and chaplain, being somewhat more stately than the others. The walls and ceiling are frescoed with due reference to art, while all the principal emblems of the degrees are found here and there looking out from beneath the clouded canopy. The ante rooms are a trifle small, but take it all in all the lodges are in very snug quarters.

The Scottish Rite hall is small, but it is fitted up in the most complete manner, ready for the work of any of the degrees at any time. It may be said, however, that in this respect, the arrangements in contemplation by the bodies of the Rite in St. John will at no distant day excel those of

Halifax. Here there will be the advantage of two good sized rooms.

The Royal Arch chapter room is also fully furnished, but it seems wholly too small for its purpose, so far, at least, as the R. A. degree is concerned.

The same may be said of the Knights Templars asylum, which is furnished with veritable stalls, and has all the paraphernalia in position ready for the conferring of the orders. The encampment of St. John of this city, can, however, boast of what the Nova Scotia Preceptory has not—an armory handsomely furnished and expensively maintained for the benefit of the chosen few who avail themselves of its privileges.

There is, however, a recreation room for the craft, supplied with billiard and pool tables and facilities for other games. It is a good sized apartment, originally used as the grand lodge library, but when the club applied for it, not only were the books bundled into the grand secretary's office, but the room was donated to the fraternity free of charge. They do things differently in St. John. A few years ago a few unofficial members of the fraternity here formed a masonic club which should be open to all members of the craft for a merely nominal annual fee. The rent charged for a room in the masonic building was, however, a good deal larger than a membership about as large as that of the Halifax club warranted. For want of encouragement in quarters where it had the most right to expect it, the club ceased to live after the first year of its existence.

The grand secretary has an office in the Halifax temple, and Mr. Ross appears to be a man who feels it his duty to show himself at the lodge meetings and otherwise keep in touch with the craft.

On the ground floor is a large hall which can be used either for public meetings, grand lodge sessions or banquets. There is also a smaller banqueting hall, and a kitchen in the basement where the banquet can be made ready.

The masons of Halifax, and especially those who are at the head and front of the various bodies, are a fine class of men. There may or may not be "bosses" among them, but if there are they do not appear to antagonize others or to retard the prosperity of the craft.

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TWO SPEEDY YACHTS.

THEY ARE OWNED IN HALIFAX AND WILL RACE TODAY.

The "Youla's" One Year Record a Good One—Mr. Murray's "Lenore" and her Victories—A Great Event in Halifax Yachting Circles.

Everything favorable, today will see a pretty scene and some excitement in Halifax harbor. Yachting is a popular sport in Halifax, and has hundreds of devotees and numbers of good yachts. The race today is over the inside course for the Lansdowne cup, and a good deal of interest is felt in the result. Two leading Halifax yachts which will start in the race are the Lenore and Youla. Both these yachts have brought fame and honor to their owners.

The cutter Youla is owned by Mr. H. W. Wylie, secretary of the Royal Nova Scotia yacht squadron. Her length on water line, is 26 feet; beam, 7 ft. 4 in.; draft, 6 ft., 3 in.; registered tonnage, 5.75; length over all, 37 ft. She was designed by Wm. Fife, jr., the celebrated Scottish designer, and built by the Nova Scotia ship building company of Halifax. Last year she was first in the Scotia regatta, and she took the following prizes: June 13, Chauncey cup; July 18, Lansdowne cup; July 23, Wemona cup; August 8, Ladies' race; Sept. 5, Lord Alex. Russell's cup; Sept. 22, Rath cup.

August 14 of last year there was a match race at Chester which excited a great deal of interest among Nova Scotia yachtsmen. It was over a 23 mile course, and the starters were the Youla, Lenore and Esme. The race was a good one from start to finish. The Youla won, beating the Lenore by four seconds. This shows how evenly matched the two boats are, and it is small wonder that excitement runs high over a yacht race in Halifax.

Mr. Fred H. Murray, chief clerk of the Queen hotel is the owner of the Lenore and he has a yacht to be proud of. Her list of victories is a long one. A race between the Lenore and Youla is one of the prettiest sights to be seen in Halifax harbor. Each yacht has crossed a winner, and a race between them is a great event in yachting circles. In the match race August 1, 1891, in which the Lenore, Youla and Esme were entered, the Lenore won. This cutter was designed by Mr. H. C. McLeod, manager of the Bank of Nova Scotia, and built by Messrs. Chambers, Turner and Layton, of Truro, in 1887. Her length on water line is 27 ft. 1 in., beam 7 ft. 1 in., depth 4 ft. 1 in., registered tonnage 4.58, length over all 30 ft. 2 in. The Lenore sailed her first race July 9, 1887, and won it, taking the Lorne cup. Since that time she has distinguished

herself as follows: Sept. 3 of same year, Lansdowne cup; Sept. 10, Lieut.-Gov. Richey's cup; (final win); Sept. 21, Archibald cup; not in commission in 1890 owing to absence of owner; June 6, 1891, Archibald cup, (final win); Aug. 1st, match race between Lenore, Youla and Esme won by Lenore; Aug. 29, Capt. Leonard Russell's cup.

The result of today's contest will be awaited with a good deal of interest among the yachtsmen in St. John. In this city the interest is certainly not so great as in Halifax, nevertheless the men who own yachts are not inactive, and before the summer is over, there will probably be some lively contests. If a race is arranged between Halifax and St. John yachts the winner today will probably be in it, and everything about her will be of interest to St. John people.

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The enthusiasts should lose no time in making arrangements. A subscription could easily be raised to defray any expenses, and the sport would amply repay for any trouble there might be.

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