

The Canadian Craftsman.

Port Hope, August 15, 1883.

We have to apologize to our readers for the late appearance of the August number of *THE CRAFTSMAN*, occasioned by a number of causes, but principally on account of our printing the Reports of the Grand Lodge, the Grand Chapter, and the Great Priory of Canada, which are now completed. The September and October numbers will be issued immediately, and we will endeavor to be on time in future.

A SUIT FOR CRIMINAL LIBEL.

While accompanying our fellow journalists on the annual excursion of the Canadian Press Association, through the Province of Quebec, and while at Montreal, the following letter was sent us:—

MONTREAL, Aug. 7, 1883.

JOHN B. TRAYES, ESQ.,
Proprietor of *THE CANADIAN CRAFTSMAN*,
Windsor Hotel.

DEAR SIR,—In pursuance of instructions from Mr. William Ross, the W. M. of St. George's Lodge, E. R., we shall this afternoon institute criminal proceedings against you for the publication of divers libellous statements in your magazine, *THE CANADIAN CRAFTSMAN*, of the 15th of June. Desiring to cause you as little inconvenience as possible, we request that you will be present with bondsmen, in the Police Office in the Court House, at 2.30 o'clock, for the purpose of giving bail, and thus obviate the necessity of executing a warrant for your arrest.

Yours truly,

MACLAREN, LEET & SMITH.

We lost no time in complying with the request, and appeared at the Court House, and gave bonds for our appearance on the 27th August,—Bros. Henry Dunn and Jos. Usherwood becoming our bondsmen.

On our return home we were notified by our solicitors, (Messrs. Davidson,

Cross & Cross,) that arrangements had been made which would render it unnecessary for us to be present on the 27th, but on that date we were informed by telegraph to put in an appearance on the 29th. We accordingly went to Montreal, and on being informed fully of the facts in connection with W. Bro. Ross' case, we at once became convinced that he had been unjustly dealt with by the Grand Lodge of Quebec in publishing him as a suspended member of King Solomon's Lodge, of which we do not consider he ever was a member. On meeting the plaintiff in the Court an arrangement was made by which we tendered the following apology:—

"In the *CANADIAN CRAFTSMAN AND MASONIC RECORD*, of the 15th of June last, under the heading "Facts for English and Canadian Masons to contemplate," there were published a series of statements reflecting seriously upon St. George's Lodge, No. 440, E. R., Montreal, P. Q., and upon its Worshipful Master, Mr. William Ross. Among other paragraphs was one to the effect that English Warranted Lodges were doing a gross injustice to the Craft by accepting the rejected material of other lodges, and another which stated that the Worshipful Master of St. George's Lodge is at this present writing a suspended member of King Solomon's Lodge, Q. R." This was termed 'a gross outrage on Masonic decency,' and it was further avowed that the English Lodges were 'by their determined resistance to anything approaching Masonic courtesy, throwing open the portals of Masonry to the unworthy.'" Upon the publication of these aspersions the Master of St. George's Lodge took criminal proceedings against the proprietor and publisher of *THE CRAFTSMAN* for libel. Mr. Ross informed us that his course was not at all dictated by malice or any vengeful spirit, but because he considered it but due to himself that he should place himself right before the public and before the Craft to which he had devoted much time and in which he took a very deep interest. It is only right to state that the publications complained of arose from a misapprehension of the difficulties which have unhappily disturbed Freemasonry in the Province of Quebec for some time past. We have since learned that these accusations against Mr. Ross and the English Register Lodges,