

bers. In 1854 and 1855, the Worshipful Master was Bro. J. Pursall, to whom a Past Master's jewel was presented for his services in those two years, at a meeting of the Lodge, on April 8th, 1856. In 1856, the Worshipful Master was Bro. Walker.

We should like much to know whether these Lodges have any ancient records, furniture, portraits, or objects of interest.

The Lodge of Light, No. 689, although dating only from 1840, is one of the most flourishing of the Birmingham Lodges, and counts fifty-four members. It was fortunate in initiating Bro. Lord Leigh, who has been its Master, and is now Provincial Grand Master. In 1856, Bro. Roberts was Worshipful Master; in 1857, Bro. James Tertius Collins; and, in 1858, Bro. Blake.

The Faithful Lodge, No. 696, used to meet in the Assembly Rooms, and adjourn to banquet to a respectable tavern. It dates from 1840, but is not so numerous as its contemporary, the Lodge of Light, for it has only twenty-five members. It has an Organist attached to it. In 1856, the Worshipful Master was Bro. Harry Lees; and, in 1857, Bro. T. Fisher. Bro. Thomas Perkins was the oldest Past Master.

Bro. J. A. Baker, the Secretary of No. 696, is the author of some Craft music, and on the occasion of the death of Bro. Solomon Weiss, No. 947, he composed suitable music, and performed it at the funeral service in the Lodge.

We now come to one of the youngest, but what may be justly styled one of the most distinguished Lodges in Birmingham—one known not only throughout the province, but the country—the Howe Lodge, named in honour of Bro. Earl Howe, the late Grand Master of the province, and founded only in 1850. Already, in 1856, its numbers were forty-five; in 1857, fifty-eight; and, in 1858, fifty-three. It was this Lodge which first took the useful step of providing itself with Masonic rooms, and which, by the energy and liberality of its members, now offers a safe asylum to the Lodges and Chapters of Birmingham. It was in 1856 that the Howe Lodge removed to the new premises in Newhall-street, the alterations of which were carried out by Bro. Frederick Empson, P.M., of No. 51. By the time it had been five years established, this Lodge had expended £300 in the purchase of furniture, and invested £200 more for Masonic purposes in the public funds. Bro. Bassett Smith is a Past Master, and, in 1856, delivered a funeral oration on Bro. Weiss. Bro. J. W. Lloyd, Treasurer, is a Past Master. The Secretary is Bro. Broughton. In 1856, Bro. Ross was Worshipful Master; in 1857, Bro. E. Marshall; and, in 1858, Bro. Hall.

Attached to the temple is a banquet room, capable of accommodating fifty guests, in which the banquets are served by a respectable hotelkeeper, a brother of the Lodge. The nucleus of a library has been formed by an eminent and enlightened Mason, Bro. Broughton, the Secretary of the Lodge, who presented in 1857 a complete set of the *Freemasons' Magazine*, with the *Penny Cyclopaedia* and supplement. This example has been followed by several brethren. This is, however, only one instance of the munificence of Bro. Broughton. The funds for the temple having been provided by a subscription in shares of £5, he presented no less than forty of these shares, or £200, to the Lodge, on the 9th of March, 1857. The grand principle on which this Lodge was established by its founders at the outset was, that the funds contributed for Masonic purposes should be applied to Masonic purposes alone—that Masonic rites shall not be celebrated in taverns, and that the expense of all banquets should be defrayed by those who partook of them. This has been fully carried out with the results we have related, and there can be little doubt that the Howe Lodge has had great influence in promoting the establishment of Masonic halls in the midland districts. It was to be expected that the Howe Lodge should pronounce a strong opinion on the question of purging the hall of the Craft from tavernkeeping, protesting against the continuance of

such a course, and appealing to its own history as an example.

Attached to the Howe Lodge is a Lodge of Mark Masters. In 1858 Bro. A. McCracken was Worshipful Master.

There is also a Royal Arch Chapter, which is, we believe, in good working.

No. 1,051 is the last Lodge founded in Birmingham, dating from 1858. It is called the Temperance Lodge, the object of its founders being to conduct their banquets on the temperance system; one among many instances of the catholicity of Masonry, which gives full latitude to opinion, and places no restraint on conscience. The number of members of this new Lodge was, in 1858, twenty-one. Its Worshipful Master in 1858 was the Rev. T. W. Herbert, P. Prov. Grand Chaplain of Worcester; and in 1859, Bro. Thomas Mills. Of course this Lodge was amongst those which this year expressed its conscientious objections to the Grand Lodge of England keeping a tavern.

The high degrees of the Ancient and Accepted Rite, under the Supreme Council of England, are in Birmingham administered as far as the 18th degree, by the Vernon Chapter. In 1857, the M.W.S. was Bro. Dee, a distinguished Mason of the province, who has held the office of Prov. Senior Grand Warden. In 1858, the M.W.S. was Bro. Ward. The number of candidates admitted to the 18th degree in 1858 was about five. According to their custom of assisting in the working, the Birmingham Chapter has several times been visited by members of the Supreme Council; and Ill. Bro. Vernon is an affiliated member. Several zealous Masons of the province have been by the Supreme Council promoted to higher degrees as far as the 30°.

We shall now leave Birmingham and describe the other Lodge towns of the province, beginning with the antient city of Coventry. Here is the Trinity Lodge, No. 316, founded in 1784. This meets at a tavern in the city, though there must be many public buildings. We know very little about this Lodge, for we regret to say that it is the only Lodge in this considerable city and has only twenty-three members, being a slight increase over 1856. The proportion of Masons to the whole population is not one in 1,000, and has been nearly as low as one in 2,000. This shows something wrong, as it is even worse than Birmingham. There is a Royal Arch Chapter attached to No. 316, called the Cumberland Chapter, which meets in the same place. With from eighteen to twenty-three members in the Lodge it is not likely to be very considerable or very active. Many a smaller town has a hall and library. In 1856 Bro. Bursall was Worshipful Master, and in 1859 Bro. H. Matherson, and that is all we are able to state.

Warwick and Leamington are so close together that they may almost be considered as one town; Warwick is, however, a county and manufacturing town, and Leamington a watering place. They have between them three Lodges, and one Royal Arch Chapter. The total number of Masons who were members of Lodges in the two towns was, in 1856, one hundred and nine; in 1857, ninety-seven; and in 1858, ninety-one; so that the position of the town is retrograde, principally owing to the decline of the Leamington Lodge. The average in the two towns of Masons, to the population, has been as one to 300 and 200.

No. 356, the Shakspeare Lodge, at Warwick, meets at a tavern. It dates from 1791, and is the oldest Lodge now surviving in the towns. It has a Royal Arch Chapter. It is the most considerable Lodge in the province, having about sixty members. We have no further particulars regarding it.

No. 828, the Unity, at Warwick, is a new and small Lodge, dating from 1849, meeting in a tavern, and having about twenty members.

No. 556, Guy's Lodge, at Leamington, dates from 1829, and meets in a tavern. From some cause it appears to be rapidly