

But, as was shown the other day in a letter from Mr. Joseph Wood, of Halifax, to the *Montreal Gazette*, two-thirds of the imports of codfish by the United States last year were re-exported to other countries—Cuba, Hayti, Central America. This fact is ascertained from the official returns of Commerce and Navigation, published at Washington, according to which 165,000 quintals of cod was imported by that country from Canada and its export of that fish was 107,000 quintals. The Canadian exports were, to the two markets, in different years:—

	1876. Quin- tals.	1885. Quin- tals.	1887. Quin- tals.
To United States..	50,000	223,143	165,075
" West Indies.....	475,000	507,259	542,801
" Brazil .....	58,000	57,332	93,011

Our exports of these fish to the West Indies in the first of these years were 73 per cent. of our total export; in 1885 they were 60 per cent.; and last year 63 per cent. While to the States they were, in 1876 only 8 per cent.; in the next year 26, and in the third year 19 per cent. of the total. In the first two of these years, it must be remembered, says Mr. Wood, we gave the United States free fishing for free trade, while last year and in 1886 these gave way to close fishing and heavy American duties against us. He seeks to prove from these figures that the imposition of this duty has not injured the trade, for while our exports to the Americans were lessened by 70,000 quintals last year as compared with 1885, this was made up for by an increase of 71,500 quintals in our sales to the West Indies and Brazil.

A very large item of our export of animals and their produce consists of horses. Ontario and Quebec shipped over 15,000 and other provinces about 3,000 last year. The horned cattle, \$887,000 in value, went from the province first named mainly, and out of 363,000 sheep, no less than 343,000 were sent from Ontario and Quebec, New Brunswick coming next. Provisions such as cured meats, lard, tallow, &c., do not bulk largely in these export returns, and butter and cheese are but trivial items in our list of exports to the States; but we sent almost 13,000,000 eggs thither last year, products of Mr. Wiman's 'industrious hen,' from every province east of the lakes, Ontario in especial. Undressed furs is a considerable item, \$366,000; hides and skins another, \$413,000. Home-grown wool to the extent of a million and a quarter pounds is among our exports for the American manufacturer, nearly all of it from Ontario. The price was low, however, averaging 22 cents per pound.

Among goods of our own manufacture sent to the Americans, whose total value in 1887 was \$1,289,000, we find the largest item household furniture \$203,512, and other wood goods unenumerated \$179,594. We send pianos from five provinces into the United States, and organs from four. Ontario whiskey finds its way over legitimately to the value of \$8,189, and perhaps illegitimately in a much larger degree; some Canadian ale is also sent. Sole and upper leather \$23,363, and other leather goods \$15,800, are items worth mentioning; so are steel and steel goods, \$11,565; iron

manufactures, \$39,939; machinery, sewing machines included, \$40,110. Here are some further articles which one is less prepared to find among our sales to our Southern neighbors: stoves, \$13,163; rope and twine, clothing, carriages, books, and agricultural implements. Then there are such goods as lime, marble and stone wrought, ground gypsum and oil cake.

## TWO MASONIC LIFE ASSESSMENT FAILURES.

We have proof of the failure of the Assessment System in two cases, which were both fair trials of it as a basis for life insurance operations. In these instances the failure is evident, even when the companies were operated by a body of brethren so strongly bound to each other as those of the Masonic organization. "That subtle bond which holds the Masonic Fraternity in its embrace, and binds them as bands of steel, infuses itself into our work and gives it strength and permanency." Such was the claim made for the fraternal element in 1875, in connection with one of these Masonic assessment enterprises. But this was in the hey-day of its youth, full of bright anticipations, so soon to be withered and dead.

The London Masonic Mutual Benefit Society was organized on the assessment principle sixteen years ago, for the purpose of providing the "brethren of the mystic tie" in Ontario with cheap insurance—cheaper than it was supposed that the active competition among the regular companies would or could afford it. To make sure of this result, it was made one of the provisions of the society that assessments were never, no never, to exceed fifteen in number in any one year, irrespective of age. The members were to get in as many young men, from year to year, as would keep the average age low, and render the assessments always light. In this impossible undertaking they appeared to succeed for a few years; but Old Mortality eventually asserted his rights, and eighteen calls were needed to meet the deaths of 1880. This stubborn fact brought out a large attendance of members at the next annual meeting to consider the situation. The broken constitution was so amended as to accommodate itself to the stern demands of the Conqueror, and renewed efforts were made to get younger members into the society and stop the depletion of the membership. But despite all that could be done, their numbers continued to decrease steadily as the members grew older, and the assessments came more heavily. From an average membership of 2,250 in the year 1875 the society has now dwindled to 1,135.

For some years the tie of Masonic brotherhood sufficed to induce many members to respond to the increasing assessments of this organization, even after being fully satisfied that there was no equity in men of 21 and men of 45 paying the very same figures, as in the Ancient Order of United Workmen they continue blindly, or good-naturedly, to do. So heavy have the calls become of late, however, and so few

the young men who can be got to enter and suffer, in pocket, that the out-pour of members has become more rapid than formerly.

At the sixteenth annual meeting of the society, held last month in the Masonic Temple, London, the report of the secretary set forth that only eleven new members had been induced to come in during the whole of the latest year. This was deemed a poor result for the salary and travelling expenses of general agent Bro. Hargreaves—who no doubt did his best—and that expense is to be saved in future. Time was when it was no trouble to get new members for this society. They came in of their own accord. That was when all were young together, and only four or five dollars a year was asked of each. At the present time the members are well pleased if their assessments are less than that sum per month. But not one of them says a word about cheap insurance any more, in that society, or urges his son or his nephew or other relative to "come along and join." Failure is written on the signboards of this assessment lean-to of the Masonic body, and many whose hopes of it were high ten years ago, are now free to claim that they "never had much faith in the assessment system any way."

The secretary's report not only chronicles 11 new members, but reports 30 to have gone out by death and 150 by surrender and lapse, reducing the total membership from 1,304 to 1,135 during the year 1887. This is by far the heaviest drop for any one of eleven years. Another year's operations on this scale will bring the number below a thousand. The average age of the 30 deceased brethren was 55, only four of them being under 50 at the time of death, and one had reached the age of 80, while fourteen were over 60 years of age. When men pass the age of 56 the death-rate increases rapidly. At age 57 it is 22 per 1,000, while at 80 it is 144. And this is the same thing as saying that at 57 it costs only \$22.00 and expenses to meet the loss per \$1,000 of insurance carried, while at 80 it costs \$144 and expenses to provide for each \$1,000 carried one year.

The society has been making efforts of late to provide a reserve fund, and possesses now \$60,000, having added about \$5,000 to it in the past year. After 1890 the interest from this sum will be used to alleviate the assessments, but the amount of help from this source will be too small to be sensibly felt. If 1,000 members are each to have \$1,200 paid to their widows at their deaths, then \$1,200,000 must be paid in, less \$60,000, or say \$1,140,000. Their expectancy of life, age 56, is 17 years and if 17 is divided into the \$1,140,000 to be raised, it will be found that each man must pay in an average of \$67.06 per annum, in addition to all he has already paid in, supposing that all lived just 17 years longer. But inasmuch as half will die inside of 17 years, those who live beyond that period will have to shoulder the deficiency and pay double, or drop out. We predict that most of them will prefer to drop out at an early date, as so many are now doing at every monthly call. We have not space today for the tabulated results to each of