

ing, and 760 withdrew from their Lodges lawfully, or in all 2,491; while the total makings, admissions, and reinstations were only 2,905. In 1879, in the same State, there were 1,655 suspended for non-payment of dues, (only 31 suspended for any other cause,) 820 withdrew, and 296 were expelled, in all 2,771; while the total of makings, admissions, and reinstations was 2,768. Of the expulsions in 1878, the same being 102, I have said nothing; yet it is reasonable to surmise that the trebling of that number in 1879 grew to a large extent, out of persistence in remaining suspended for non-payment of dues, into expulsion as the next and final penal step.

I have quoted Ohio, not to be invidious, but as a good average State example of Freemasonry at the present time in America; and those two years' operations of that State's lodges, exhibit the Fraternity in that State at the present as a stand-still—as having reached its zenith; and, although the population of the State has increased naturally, also the lodges attained to a higher number, the aggregate increase of the members of those lodges is nothing.

At the present time—and within ten years the number has been larger—the aggregate membership of the Masonic Lodges of the United States is about 500,000, in round numbers, who have not been suspended or, as the next and final step, expelled for non-payment of dues, or any other cause, or have not withdrawn from their lodge connection. If we, from the relative data furnished, estimate those living Freemasons who have withdrawn, or been suspended or

eventually expelled for non-payment of dues, we can safely add 100,000 to this half-million. Put this estimate in its proper light, and what do we behold? Why, that through the improper constitution of Freemasonry in America, one-sixth of the whole number who have been initiated, passed and raised members of this society, and are now living, have been driven from that membership; and from being its friends, have probably, to a considerable extent, become its enemies! Startling, this, is it not? Every sixth man who has been made a Freemason in America, within the past forty years, has withdrawn from the membership of his lodge, or been suspended or eventually expelled for non-payment of the dues that by the laws of his lodge, as the requirements of the laws of his Grand Lodge, he engaged to pay, but subsequently refused to pay because he regarded them unjust, and their payment as affording him no value!

When an extensive evil is indicated as existing in any organization of men, and admitted, the next proceeding is to suggest a remedy. Well, the evil is here admitted as constitutional. What may be the suggestion of a remedy? That, necessarily, must also be constitutional.

I have stated that neither in Connecticut nor Rhode Island has there ever been a Freemason suspended or expelled for non-payment of dues, nor, except to become a member of another Lodge, has one withdrawn from the lodge of which he first considered himself a member. The reason for this condition is simply that the lodges are supported by the fees for makings; and dues, as such, are