

abuse of the ballot are extremely *apropos*, as showing the difference between the legitimate use of the blackball, as a means of protection, and the cowardice of making an assassin's use of it as a stiletto for revenge:—

“And now, my Brothers, I would warn to carefully guard the ballot box.

It is one of our greatest dangers—one conscientiously handled will beautify, purify and magnify the Order; yet, controlled by evil passions, wrongs society and shakes our splendid temple to the very foundation. The ballot-box is as a faithful tyler guarding the outer door to keep bad men away; but it was never intended as a murderous stiletto in the hands of a dark-hearted assassin. Fearlessly cast your voice against evil associations, but go not before the great lights, and, with seeming sanctimony, wickedly and cowardly stab your neighbor from personal motives. If you know aught why the applicant should not be admitted, do not a moment hesitate to silence him, and boldly tell your brethren too, that they may forbid his entrance when perchance you are gone. Through no fear or favor hesitate to speak. From my standpoint of manhood and right, I would speak if frowning edicts piled mountain high, and all the Grand Masters from Sainted Solomon to Honored Clayton lifted their spiritual and living fingers, in token of silence.”

RETENTION OF MEMBERS.

M. W. Bro. William F. Bunting, of St. John, Past Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of New Brunswick, in a letter to the editor expresses his views on the above subject as follows:

“The letter of Bro. Rea published in the February number of THE CRAFTSMAN under the above caption, contains matter for thought to all who have the welfare of Freemasonry at heart. Members of the fraternity who are loyal to their engagements, both in attendance to lodge duties and the payment of lodge dues, are at a loss to comprehend the reason why many Masons—some of them substantial citizens, and considered honorable in their general business transactions—allow their unpaid lodge dues to accumulate, and eventually subject themselves to the ulterior measure of suspension.

“A remedy for this formidable evil has engaged the attention of brethren in New Brunswick, and although much thought has been given to the subject, and many propositions have been suggested—some of them put into practical operation—the evil continues to exist.

“Bro. Rea suggests, as a means of some slight relief in the present unfortunate state of affairs, ‘the adoption by lodges of a by-law disqualifying these members from the right to vote at the annual election of officers, if twelve months in arrears for dues.’ Possibly such a measure may prove effective in the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Canada. I regret to say it has been of little avail with us in New Brunswick. Many, perhaps nearly all, of our lodges have a provision in their by-laws similar to the one proposed by Bro. Rea, and notwithstanding the disability our lodge members labor under by the enforcement of this law, dues remain unpaid, and suspensions or exclusions become the inevitable result.

“Statistics produced by you, Mr. Editor, in your reference to Bro. Rea's letter, show that suspensions in your jurisdiction number somewhat less than three per cent. of the membership. In New Brunswick, where we have the restriction law above mentioned in operation, the percentage of suspensions