

employed by him. By the introduction of the incumbrance, the above surplus is reduced to £3,140 8s. 11½d., the net liability being estimated by Mr. Derrom at £5,063 2s. 1½d. The value of this estimate cannot be ascertained from the data given; but from the faults in principle apparent in respect of some of the matters dealt with, the correctness of the amount may be open to grave doubts.

The result of Mr. Watson's valuation of the North Westland lodges of Odd Fellows is to show a deficiency in all three, although no account has been taken of the liability which will be incurred when members marry who were single at the time of valuation. The results may be summarized thus:—

	Loyal Reefton Lodge.	Loyal Westport Lodge.	Loyal Charleston Lodge.
Date of establishment ...	26th July, 1872	11th September, 1867	12th September, 1867
No. of members ...	121	81	87
Present capital ...	£615 19 8	£874 14 1	£1,146 2 8
Deficiency ...	£1,527 19 6	£684 18 4	£137 14 10

The benefits granted by these three lodges were 20s. per week during the first six months of sickness, 15s. per week during the second six months, and 7s. 6d. during subsequent sickness; £18 at the death of a member, and £12 at death of a member's wife. In the Reefton and Westport Lodges, the contributions to Sick and Funeral Fund were 6d. per week at all ages, and in the Charleston Lodge they were 8d. per week.

By glancing at the several ages of these lodges, and the amounts which, according to Mr. Watson, they ought to have in hand per member in order to be solvent, and comparing these elements with the corresponding ones in their own case, lodges and courts which have charged contributions that are low in amount and uniform at all ages will be able to convince themselves that there is grave reason for alarm as to their financial safety.

VII.—TRADE UNIONS.

By section 16 of "The Trade Union Act, 1878," the Registrar of Friendly Societies became *ex-officio* Registrar for the purposes of that Act, and the duty was imposed upon him of reporting annually with respect to the matters transacted by him in that capacity. The Registrar has deemed it advisable to incorporate the report thus required with that which devolves on him in his capacity as Registrar of Friendly Societies, the two subjects being closely allied, and this being in accordance with the practice of the Chief Registrar of Friendly Societies for the United Kingdom.

Immediately on the passing of the Act, regulations were framed for procedure thereunder. These will be found in Schedule X. hereto.

Applications for registry under the Trade Union Act have been received from the New Zealand District of the Amalgamated Society of Carpenters and Joiners, and from the Dunedin Operative Tailors' Society. The former had previously expressed a desire for registration under the Friendly Societies Act, but had not applied in proper form. An opinion having been asked for as to the status of branches, the matter was referred to the Solicitor-General in the following memorandum:—

"The Solicitor-General.—Can official cognizance be taken of branches of trade unions under 'The Trade Union Act, 1878'? Does the registration of a trade union cover all its branches, so long as they do not require separate laws to be registered for the branches? If so, and each branch has a distinct place of meeting, is not that somewhat in conflict with portions of the Schedule, as, for instance, the portions concerning rules for the appointment of a trustee or trustees? If a branch has its own trustees, can they be considered as the trustees appointed for the union under the rule referred to in section 4 of the Schedule? What is the meaning of the second paragraph of section 9? Is it an extension—*i.e.*, does it extend the 9th section to trustees of a branch (although not specially registered) of a registered union? Or is it a limitation, prohibiting trustees of branches from acting under that section, unless the branch is registered as a separate union?—WM. R. E. BROWN, Registrar of Friendly Societies, 20th December, 1878."

To this the Solicitor-General replied as follows:—

"The Registrar-General.—I do not think the Trade Union Act recognizes the establishment of branch societies as such, although the establishment of branches as a mere matter of convenience among the members would be quite another thing. I mean that no such branch could be registered, except as a distinct society, if it wished to have laws, trustees, &c., of its own. The paragraph in section 9 is a limitation prohibiting branches from acting under it, unless registered as separate unions.—W. S. REID, 23rd December, 1878."

The Registrar then addressed the following further memorandum to the Solicitor-General:—

"The Solicitor-General.—I recognize the fact that rules of branches of trade unions cannot be registered; but it appears to me, from a perusal of the 11th section, that the registration of a union may be considered to cover the registration of its branches so far as it gives the trustees of the branches a legal status. You will observe that the Registrar may, on application from the secretary and members of a branch, direct the transfer of moneys to the trustees of the branch. As I understand, the course is as follows: A registration of a trade union covers all the members who may belong to branches, but the registration only applies to the rules of the union. There is no registration of a branch, but, if action is taken under section 11, it will be incumbent on the branch to prove the connection with the registered union, and the fact that the trustees have been appointed according to rules.—WM. R. E. BROWN, Registrar-General, 24th December, 1878."

To this the Solicitor-General replied as follows:—

"The Registrar-General.—I think that the view put forth in this memorandum is the correct one. Regarding the evidence of the connection of the branch with the union, I think that must be left to specific cases as they arise. The 11th section appears to recognize the trustees of a branch; and if the