given locality it is prudent to join. It may be taken for granted that if a society suppresses its valuation report it is because that report is unfavourable.

26. The number of the year's valuations are,

Of societies composed of a central body established within New Zealand and branches	13, with 161 branches.
Of single lodges separately registered, including branches of societies established beyond New Zealand	11.

27. Of the 13 central bodies, 8 hold accumulated benefit funds, and of these 8, 1 shows a surplus and 6 a deficiency.*

28. Of these 6, in regard to 3 "inadequate contributions" is assigned as the sole cause, and in regard to 3 as one of the causes, of such deficiency.

29. Of the 161 branches of the 13 central bodies, 39 show a surplus and 102 a deficiency.*

30. Of these 102, in regard to 18 "inadequate contributions" is assigned as the sole cause, and in regard to 76 as one of the causes, of such deficiency.

31. In 7 of the 39 which show a surplus in respect of the branch benefit fund, such surplus is more than swallowed up by the deficiency in the central body funeral fund.

32. Of the 11 separately-registered lodges, 1 shows a surplus and 10 a deficiency, and of these 10, in regard to 7 "inadequate contributions" is assigned as the sole cause, and in regard to 3 as one of the causes, of such deficiency.

33. The position of the funeral fund of the lodges of the U.A.O.D. established in Victoria is referred to below (paragraph 54).

34. Such being the general result of the valuations of the year, the advocates of an adequate scale of contributions as a condition of registration will doubtless find therein an argument in favour of their contention, while others, recognising how slowly the best changes in human progress are effected, prefer to accept the advance made along some portion of the line as an augury of good omen. For it may be hoped that the ground that is gained by means of voluntary action will be steadfastly held by those who thus in sound financial principles have taken the lead, and that others also may be induced thereby to move forward.

35. It is a noteworthy fact that the societies in which some bond of union, whether religious or social, other than that of mutual insurance of life and health, is a *sine quâ non* of membership, are conspicuously the worst financially.

36. On those societies whose financial position has been declared unsound, and especially on those which for the second time have been weighed in the actuary's balance and been found wanting, the Registrar urges immediate reform both on the ground of self-interest and also on that of honesty. Worse than the folly of a blind disregard of earnest warning is the action of those who admit a new member into their society which has been shown to be actuarially insolvent without informing him that, if he shall live to be old, there is no reasonable probability that he will receive the benefits which he is being led to expect! And it should be borne in mind that the breaking-up of an insolvent society does not affect its own members only. Its collapse brings discredit on all kindred societies, because the general public do not distinguish between the sound and the unsound.

37. Included among the valuations of the year are those of the two districts of the Independent Order of Rechabites as well as the Grand Division of New Zealand of the Sons and Daughters of Temperance. Members of a total abstinence society seem to imagine that in respect of health they possess, on an average, an advantage over the members of societies whose rules do not forbid a temperate use of alcoholic drinks. No satisfactory evidence from colonial experience has, however, been adduced in support of this view. On the contrary, the history of the I.O.R. in Victoria for the years 1877–86 shows that its sickness was more than 6 per cent. higher than the expectation as based upon the M.U.I.O.O.F. 1866–70 experience. It is true that in the said society the mortality during the same period and judged by the same standard was comparatively light, but the combined result, when estimated by its money value, can scarcely be said to prove the existence of any advantage in favour of this special class of society. As a low rate of mortality is necessarily followed in future years by an increased percentage of members at risk, it is not unlikely that the gain resulting from the deferred payment of the funeral benefit will be outweighed by the additional liability on account of sick pay. If all the members of a total abstinence society had been *brought up* in the observance of the vow, possibly among such a low average sickness *for each year of life* might be found to exist; but, even so, the extra number of years during which the members, under the assumption of a high average longevity, would be at risk for the sick benefit would most probably raise the value of the average sickness, when summed up for the *whole of life*, to the disadvantage of the society's position regarded from a pecuniary point of view.

38. The Grand Worthy Patriarch of the Sons and Daughters of Temperance of New Zealand, in his address at the annual meeting of the society last year, urges the members of the order to "try to convince abstainers that the Sons and Daughters of Temperance, as a benefit society, stands pre-eminently above societies whose members are not abstainers." And the Grand Scribe, in his report, speaks of the "stable character of our position." In justice to other societies, and in the interests of those who may be invited to join the S.D.T., the above statements cannot be allowed to pass unchallenged. A reference to the valuation report† dissipates, alas, the claim to pre-eminence and stability.

39. In Appendix II. a table is given, showing, in a graphic form, those of the societies and branches valued as at the 31st December, 1887, which earned as interest during the preceding quinquennium an average rate of 5 per cent. per annum and upwards.

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* A surplus or deficiency of less than 1s. in the pound is disregarded.

† See Paragraph 59.