

warded after the 31st December, the Department would be in a position to effect the reform. The result has been most satisfactory, and the tables for 1906 will be found with those for 1905 in the appendices. At the end of April the number of returns received for 1906 was 529, and at the end of May 560, out of a possible total of 634. The tables were closed with 574 returns furnished for five months, against 586 included in the 1905 tables furnished in fifteen months. The promptitude of district secretaries in forwarding the branch returns to the Department during January, February, and March assured the success of the undertaking, and with the improving accounting methods of the leading societies the difficulties should be lessened in future.

The following societies forwarded all returns in time for inclusion in the report:—

M.U.I.O.O.F.—	Otago District.	A.O.S.—
Auckland District.	Southland District.	Sanctuary Sir George Grey.
Hawke's Bay District.	N.I.O.O.F.—	U.A.O.D.—
New Plymouth District.	Auckland Provincial District.	Grand Lodge of Canterbury.
Wanganui District.	B.U.O.O.F.—	Lodges separately registered.
Wellington District.	Aorangi Lodge.	I.O.R.—
Marlborough District.	A.O.F.—	New Zealand District.
Nelson District.	Hawke's Bay District.	Star of Hope Tent.
Motueka District.	Taranaki District.	S.D.T.—
North Westland District.	Nelson District.	National Division.
Hokitika District.	Canterbury United District.	Divisions separately registered.
Ashley District.	South Canterbury District.	R.E.B.S.—
Lyttelton District.	United Otago District.	Otago Railway Employees' Benefit
Ashburton District.	Court Coromandel.	Society.
South Canterbury District.		

The first return to hand was received on 2nd January from Court Robin Hood, A.O.F., Nelson District.

On the 31st May, two months after due date, the following societies' returns were outstanding:—

Society.	Central Bodies.	Branches.	Society.	Central Bodies.	Branches.
M.U.I.O.O.F.—			Grand Lodge of Otago and Southland	..	2
Auckland District	..	1	I.O.R.—		
North Canterbury District	..	2	New Zealand Central District	..	5
I.O.O.F. of New Zealand	..	7	H.A.C.B.S.—		
A.O.F.—			New Zealand District	1	16
Auckland District	..	1	P.A.F.S.A.—		
Hawke's Bay District	..	1	Grand Council of New Zealand	..	1
Taranaki District	..	1	Isolated Friendly Societies	..	3
Wellington District	..	2	Working-men's Clubs	..	4
Court Star of Tuapeka	..	1	Specially Authorised Societies	..	10
U.A.O.D.—			Total	1	73
Grand Lodge of North Island	..	15			
Grand Lodge of Canterbury	..	1			

MEMBERSHIP AND FUNDS.

The following table shows the increased membership in 501 lodges which furnished returns for 1905, and the increase in 500 lodges during 1906:—

			1905.	1906.
Number of members, 1st January	..	..	48,230	50,710
Number admitted by—				
Initiation, &c.	..	6,352	6,564	
Clearance	..	402	425	
			6,754	6,989
			54,984	57,699
Number who died	..	351	348	
Number left by—				
Clearance	..	307	414	
Arrears, &c.	..	3,223	3,178	
			3,881	3,940
Number of members at 31st December	..	..	51,103	53,759

The increase during 1905 was almost 6 per cent., and during 1906 it was 6.01, as compared with 4½ per cent. for 1904.

The total funds of the societies and branches as on the 31st December, 1906, amounted to £1,057,821 7s. 2d., made up as follows: Sick and Funeral Funds (inclusive of amounts transferred to special funds out of surplus), £975,137 0s. 2d.; Medical and Management Funds, goods, &c., £82,684 7s. Dividing the total funds by the number of members at the end of the year, it is found the average capital per member is now £19 13s. 6d.

* The word "lodge," when applied to all societies, is to be understood as embracing the synonymous terms court, "tent," &c., as used in the various orders.