weight with the new entrants. Here are a few reasons why the clause should be passed as it left the Conference: That societies with adequate rates of contributions have for many years been in unfair competition with others not in a sound position owing to inadequate rates; that the tendency of the low-rate societies is to attract older men on account of the low rates they have to pay, and, as the average age increases, the position becomes worse, and the danger of collapse, of course, becomes more imminent—some few of the societies are practically bringing members in under false pretences, and unless some drastic measures are adopted their position will become irretrievable; that nothing unfair is contemplated in connection with the amendment of the clause we propose, for it is not intended to disturb the contract entered into with present members; that the longer coercive measures are delayed the longer it will take the societies to arrive at the normal results with regard to valuation, and the more unfair it will be to the young entrants whose contributions will be the means of bringing the society to a solvent condition. That is all I have to say in connection with clause 15, other than that the executive consider it to be desirable to strike out subsections (2) and (3) of the clause.

7. *Mr. Hayes.*] Why is that, Mr. Hunt?—Because we thought the Registrar should not have the right to make any exemption.

8. The exemption is intended to apply to societies which have dispensaries, and so on; we must have exemption for them?—We have no objection in that case. In connection with clause 16 I may say that, although we have not asked for what is contained in this clause, still we recognise that it has many virtues. We have for a long time felt the unfair competition which has been carried on, particularly by the Druids in connection with their death-levy scheme. They have a scheme which provides that on the death of any of their members they raise a levy of 3d. on every member of their order throughout the Dominion, thus providing a death benefit of £100 for the relatives of the deceased member. Now, we quite understand that, as this clause has been introduced by the Government, they must have had good and sufficient reason for putting it in, and we hope they will have good and sufficient reason before they remove it. We have only to turn to the enormous number of assessment companies which have been established in America from time to time to see the disastrous results which must inevitably come from any such scheme.

9. *The Chairman.*] Have you any figures or data with regard to that?—Yes, I have a few figures here. I would like to point out that the fallacy of the thing is obvious, inasmuch as for every new member the Druids take into their ranks they incur a liability of £100 from the very day he becomes a member. Now, at the present time I understand they are levying about 8s. a year. If you work that out you will find it is absolutely impossible for them to guarantee the benefit they say they will give. I have a table which has been worked out by a competent actuary.

Table showing the Necessary Increases in Membership required to equalise the Average Age of a Society at present consisting of 10,000 Members, Average Age 30 Years. In Five Years, the Average Age being 35 years, it will require—

Years.	Number of Members required.	Average. Age.	Years.	Number of Members required.	Average. Age.
5	10,000	25	35	640,000	25
10	20,000	25	40	1,280,000	25
15	40,000	25	45	2,560,000	25
20	80,000	25	50	5,120,000	25
25	160,000	25	55	10,240,000	25
30	320,000	25	60	20,480,000	25

This is favourable to the Druids at the present time, taking the average at thirty, and the table shows that in sixty years' time, if they had only a membership of 10,000 now, how they would have to introduce no fewer than 20,480,000 members whose age did not exceed twenty-five to maintain their present average age and be able to fulfil the obligations they have undertaken in connection with their death-levy scheme. My lodge, the Southern Cross, in Wellington, some three years ago, through the competition, thought it might do something similar, because we were not increasing our membership anything like what the Druids were; but before doing so we consulted a competent actuary, and the reply we got was to the following effect: The annual premiums for an allowance of £100 payable at death, and the annual death-rate per 100 living, are as follows:—

Age.	Annual Premiums for £100 payable at Death. £	s.	d.	Death-rate at each Age per 1,000 living.
20	1	4	11	6
30	1	13	5	8
40	2	7	1	10
50	3	10	10	14
60	5	14	4	30
70	9	17	4	62
80	17	17	6	145
90	33	2	9	279
95	67	0	11	637

A comparison of the premiums shows that any system charging all alike, independent of their age, is very unfair to young men. The death-rate shows that while the members are young the assessments will be very small, but will increase with the age of the members until they become im-