allow the cheques to be presented and paid within a few days, so as to obviate keeping large sums of money at the post-offices in country places.

36. *Mr. Jennings.*] Have you been a member of a friendly society for long?—About ten years.

37. Have you been a member of any other friendly society than the one you are in?—No.

38. At this Colonial Conference you spoke of, I understand the question of clause 16 was never submitted?—No, it was never brought up.

39. Was any other question in connection with the Druids Order referred to at that Conference?—I would like to point out that the North Island Druids voted for the adequate contribution as contained in our amendment of clause 15.

40. There was no objection on behalf of the members representing the Druidical Order to the proposition to make the payments adequate?—There was some objection on behalf of the southern lodges, but the representatives of the North Island lodges agreed with it.

41. Personally, you object to clause 16 being continued because you think it is unsound?—I do not object to clause 16 at all. I am very much in favour of it.

42. Why do you object to the voluntary action of members paying a levy in regard to the death benefit?—Because it is actuarially unsound.

43. Can you prove that any voluntary action is unsound?—The actuary tells us that it cannot last many years.

44. Why not?—Because every member is guaranteed £100 at death, and as no member ever pays £100, because he could not live long enough, where is that money to come from? There are no funds accruing.

45. As a principle, do you object to men who, by the simple deprivation of a couple of cigars or a visit to a theatre, are willing to increase their contributions to enable their widows or children to obtain a great benefit?—No; but how is the widow to obtain the £100 if there is no fund from which to give it to her? That has been the experience in America.

46. This death-levy system has been in existence fourteen years: have you ever heard of any member of the order objecting to pay the levy?—Yes, within the last two days I have met two members who have been for some time past opposed to it. I might say that they are on the staffs of insurance companies, and have some technical knowledge of this sort of thing, and are able to see how absolutely rotten the thing is.

47. I would like you to understand that, as a member of friendly societies of various orders for thirty years, and as one of those who initiated the death-levy scheme on its inception, I am naturally very keen about it. You say you have no objection to its being continued by those lodges which have it in existence, but desire it to be stopped in future?—No. I was speaking of clause 15, in connection with the ordinary contributions, when I said that. I might say that we do not come here as a counterblast to the Druids' action. This Conference was contemplated long before they met the Premier.

48. With regard to clause 41, "Mode of investment of funds of society or branch": Do you think it is right that the majority of the branch should be able to instruct the trustees in every case with regard to the investments?—I think the majority of the members should have the prerogative, but they usually delegate the power to the trustees.

49. Can you not conceive it possible that a number of members might combine to force the hands of the trustees to invest in some property which would be against the interests of the members as a whole?—I must agree with that. If there was a small attendance at a meeting it might be awkward.

50. You hold the opinion in common with the Conference that an investigation of funds by a Government auditor would be a good thing?—Yes.

51. Supposing some of the members of a lodge were not satisfied with the ordinary audit—most of us know that it is often very loose—and wanted a proper audit by a Government audit, do you think they should have power to demand it?—My opinion is that in some societies excellent auditors can be obtained from amongst their members, but if anything suspicious occurs and reaches the ears of the Registrar, he will be able to allow an auditor to make a special audit.

52. We all know from experience that things have sometimes turned out badly?—Quite so.

53. Do you think it is right that loans should be granted to members on personal security?—I think the provision can do no harm. If that were not in the Bill we should have to make grants in certain cases. This provision here would make it obligatory to repay the grant.

54. *Mr. Flatman.*] I understood you to say that some few societies were bringing members into their lodges under false pretences: I want to know from your own knowledge whether any members have left your lodge and joined any of the lodges you have referred to?—No, I do not know of any case.

55. *Mr. Izard.*] Are you in favour of the right of a branch, when its membership has fallen below a certain number, to disband, and divide its accumulated funds among the existing members?—No, we are very much opposed to that. That is already provided against in the Bill.

56. In which clause is it provided for?—Clause 64. If it is not provided for now, the executive will be very pleased if it is.

57. *Mr. Stallworthy.*] I understand you desire the adequate scale of contributions to apply to the existing as well as the new members?—To the new members only, not to the existing members. We think it would be a breach of contract to apply it to existing members.

58. Do you agree with Mr. Jessen that the accounts of the new members who join under the adequate scale should be kept separate from those of the old members?—Yes, we are thoroughly in sympathy with that.

59. You said that young entrants are not of an inquiring mind, and do not inquire into the stability of the society when joining?—That is so. New entrants pay very little attention to the society or its financial position. Their joining is generally a personal matter.