

FUNCTIONS OF COMMITTEE.—The functions of the committee are to combine with other local authorities on health and sanitation matters, to consider the general needs of district on public health questions, and to provide for lecture and publication of information on these subjects.

FUNDS AND INCOME OF COMMITTEE.—The committee, in addition to controlling the sick-pay and medical treatment of “deposit contributors,” is to administer the consumptive sanatoria that the scheme proposes to establish throughout the country, and towards which the State is to pay a capital sum of £1,500,000 in grants, to be supplemented by local funds.

The annual income of the committee for this consumption preventative work is derived from a yearly grant from approved societies of 1s. 3d. per insured member and a further 1d. per head annually from the State.

One of the most important functions of these committees is that of fixing the responsibility for excessive sickness in the district. When an approved society or local Health Committee proves to the Commissioners that excessive sickness is due to bad housing, insanitary conditions for workers, bad water-supply, or neglect of statutory provision for the protection of health, the owner, company, or local authority is compelled to make good the cost of the excessive sickness, which is calculated on actuarial tables to be compiled by the Commissioners.

NATIONAL INSURANCE FUND.—All moneys received in respect of contributions and moneys provided by Parliament for benefits are to be paid into a fund entitled “National Insurance Fund” under the control and management of the Commissioners, and the sums legally incurred by approved societies and local Health Committees shall be paid out of this fund.

FRIENDLY SOCIETIES.

INTRODUCTION.

In presenting the details of our friendly societies’ work during the past year I have much pleasure in drawing attention to the advance in membership and finance.

The number of members returned at the end of 1910 reached the total of 68,006, an increase of 3·29 per cent.—a most satisfactory result when it is remembered that the rate of increase had dropped to 2·27 in 1909.

It is even more gratifying on turning to the finances of the societies to find that capital has reached the record figure of £20 2s. 1d. per member, representing total funds of £1,367,282. This large capital per member does not necessarily imply complete solvency, to ascertain which many contingencies, such as ages, contributions, and benefits, have to be taken into account, but compared with other countries where these may be reckoned on a somewhat similar basis, the position of the New Zealand societies is pre-eminent.

There are indications that our societies still retain the health and vigor which has been such a feature of their growth, and their extensive organization must continue for a long time to exert a considerable influence on our social and industrial life.

REGISTRATION OF SOCIETIES AND BRANCHES.

There were registered during the past year 36 new branches, distributed among the various orders as follows: M.U.I.O.O.F., 5 lodg s; I.O.O.F., 8 lodges; A.O.F., 2 courts; U.A.O.D., 4 lodges; I.O.R., 12 tents; H.A.C.B.S., 5 branches.

The registration of the following was cancelled by dissolution: A.O.F.—Pride of the Lake (United Otago District).

The following amalgamation was registered: M.U.I.O.O.F.—Awarua Lodge with Rangitikei Lodge (Wanganui District).

The position of the orders in respect of registration is shown by the following summary as at the beginning and the end of 1910:—

Name of Order.	Registrations at 1st January, 1910.	Established.	Closed.	Registrations at 31st De- cember, 1910.
Manchester Unity Independent Order of Odd Fellows	208	5	1	212
Independent Order of Odd Fellows	66	8	..	74
National Independent Order of Odd Fellows	3	..	..	3
British United Order of Odd Fellows	1	..	..	1
Ancient Order of Foresters	140	2	1	141
Ancient Order of Shepherds	2	..	..	2
United Ancient Order of Druids	125	4	..	129
Independent Order of Rechabites	44	12	..	56
Sons and Daughters of Temperance	11	..	..	11
Hibernian Australasian Catholic Benefit Society.. .. .	42	5	..	47
Protestant Alliance Friendly Society of Australasia	12	..	..	12
Railway Employees’ Benefit Society	1	..	..	1
Isolated Friendly Societies	16	..	..	16
Working-men’s Clubs	17	..	..	17
Independent Order of Good Templars	55	..	..	55
Specially authorized societies	17	..	..	17
Totals	760	36	2	794

A complete list of societies and branches on the register as at the end of 1910 is given in Appendix I.