

1913.
NEW ZEALAND.

FRIENDLY SOCIETIES AND TRADE-UNIONS.

THIRTY-SIXTH ANNUAL REPORT BY THE REGISTRAR OF FRIENDLY SOCIETIES, FOR THE
YEAR ENDING 31ST DECEMBER, 1912.

*Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly pursuant to the Friendly Societies Act, 1909, Section 9,
and the Trade-unions Act, 1908, Section 16.*

The REGISTRAR OF FRIENDLY SOCIETIES to the Hon. the MINISTER.

SIR,—

I have the honour to submit herewith, in accordance with the Act, the annual report of this Office for the year ended 31st December, 1912.

I have, &c.,

ROBT. E. HAYES,

Registrar of Friendly Societies.

Wellington, 20th June, 1913.

OFFICE.

The work of the Office has, during the past year, been carried out by the staff in a satisfactory manner, particularly the additional duties following from the extended policy adopted by the National Provident Board. At all times the Department's officers have performed their duties with zeal, and when required have given extra time in order to cope with the increased volume of business.

SOCIAL INSURANCE.

I refer elsewhere to the establishment of the National Insurance Act in Great Britain, the introduction of which has stimulated interest in friendly-society work throughout the world. This scheme has brought the friendly societies prominently into public view, and has made manifest the nature of their thrift work, so well and unobtrusively carried on for the last century. Their work has now come to be appraised at its real value as an agency in social insurance, no extension of which can be undertaken without discussing their position.

The organization adopted in the British scheme is a standing illustration that friendly societies' functions are of a national character, whether the societies are aware of it or not. If the societies fulfilled all the national requirements in this direction, nothing better could be wished for. But they do not: they only occupy part of the field, with the result that the State cannot take up its responsibilities in regard to the remainder of the ground without considering the position of the societies. In Great Britain the result is that the State works its huge scheme through the societies. The acceptance of this scheme in Great Britain has indicated a remarkable change in the friendly societies' relative position in the State. The societies can no longer be regarded with the benevolent indifference which the British legislation has hitherto adopted towards them. A century's experience in social reform has convinced England that the contributory and self-help system stands to cure more evils than free State aliment, and it is a great compliment to the friendly societies that their organization, methods, and social discoveries have now to be adopted almost in their entirety by the State. There are many who deplore the fact that the State has touched the societies, but it is the inevitable outcome of conditions that only partially dealt with great evils.