86. Are you not aware that is not so with the other societies in New Zealand?—We have a rule by which we can assist those lodges, but it has not yet been brought into operation.

87. How would it operate?—We can make a levy on all lodges in New Zealand to assist a lodge in straitened circumstances.

88. Through chronic illness, for instance?—I suppose illness would have the effect of reducing a lodge's position more than anything else, but we have the power and authority to levy on every lodge in the Dominion under the New Zealand branch, which controls practically the whole of the Odd Fellows in the Dominion. We have not yet brought that into operation, because we have not yet had any necessity to do so.

89. I suppose you know that of the six hundred-odd lodges in New Zealand there are over four hundred actuarially unsound?—Whose fault is that?

90. Do you not think it would be a good thing for the Government to help with subvention in order to put those lodges in a sound financial position?—I do not. There are other ways by which the Government could help to make those lodges financial without subvention.

91. Are you aware of the huge amount that is paid yearly to all branches of the Civil Service, including the police, and those in the Education Department, and now to the National Provident Fund?—Yes.

92. Seeing that is the case, do you not think it is fair for the societies to demand subvention to help those who are really unsound financially, even to that extent?—No, there are other ways that they can do it. They should amend the Act so as to help the lodges to conduct their affairs on sound financial lines. If members are to be admitted into lodges which are not solvent lodges, and which cannot provide the benefits they profess, then the Government should compel the lodges to do so. All new members who come into the lodges should pay rates which are actuarially sound.

93. They are doing that now?—That is with new branches. What is the use of doing that in the case of new members, and allowing old branches to bring in new members at contributions which are not sufficient?

94. Your own society in New South Wales is a clear answer to what you say, and negatives it?—I am sorry I do not follow you there.

95. *Mr. Harris.*] Did I understand you to say that you personally are paying only 16s. a year to your own lodge?—Yes, that is all.

96. What benefits do you get for that?—I have here a list of the reductions prepared by the Actuary which have been made to all members, and this practically applies to all members in Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch, and Wanganui, and very many other leading towns in the Dominion, which shows how the society is operating.

97. You work on practically the same lines as companies with life policies in reducing the premiums?—Yes.

98. In the case of a new member joining your own lodge, what would he pay?—In the case of a man joining at the age of 25, which is the average age of joining, his contributions to the sick and funeral fund would be £2 1s. 8d.; doctor and medicine, £1 5s.; and management, say, 10s. That is a total of £3 16s. 8d. per year, which is under 1s. 6d. per week. For that 1s. 6d. a week he will get sick-benefit of £1 a week for the first six months, 15s. a week for the second six months, and 10s. per week afterwards, and the lodge pays £20 on the decease of a member and £10 on decease of a member's wife. At the end of the valuation period—every five years—if a lodge is solvent and there is more money than necessary to carry on the work, that money is returned to members again.

99. By way of reduced contributions?—It will be taken either in reduced contributions or added to the funeral fund.

100. So that there is a tabulated form made out after every five years which shows what the contributions will be?—Yes. Here is a man whose contributions were 11s.; at the last five-year period he had a reduction of 3s. 7d. upon the valuation, and now his contributions are 7s. 5d. to the sick and funeral fund. Of course, he must pay the doctor in addition. It was reduced from 11s. to 7s. 5d. We have very many members who are paying just two or three shillings a year.

101. Those have been in for a long period?—Yes. The valuations are made out every five years.

102. You were referring to the mismanagement of some lodges?—Yes.

103. And in that connection you mentioned a lodge?—I would not like it to be inferred that I meant mismanagement there. Some of the lodges are not as well managed as others.

104. You called attention to the fact that while one of the lodges was showing a deficiency another lodge by different management showed a surplus?—Yes.

105. Was that not due to the fact that they either increased the contributions or reduced the benefits?—No, they were not touched. It was entirely management. There are many members who, for instance, are in arrears with their payments, and the rule is that after twelve months those members should be cut off, but out of kindness they keep those men on and pay the levies to the central bodies. Those members should be cut off after they have been given a certain amount of privileges, because they are only dead-weight to the society. There is also another matter, in connection with the investment of money: many lodges allow their money to lie at the post-office, and I pointed out a way in which that could be improved.

106. You said that in your opinion the increase in membership in New South Wales was not due to subvention?—No, certainly not.

107. What in your opinion is the reason?—There is no doubt in my mind that within the last few years, before smallpox appeared in New South Wales, this State was looked upon as one of the most prosperous States. Ships were full, and passages had to be refused to people who