

1920.
NEW ZEALAND.

FRIENDLY SOCIETIES AND TRADE-UNIONS.

FORTY-THIRD ANNUAL REPORT BY THE REGISTRAR OF FRIENDLY SOCIETIES,
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER, 1919.

*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,—

Wellington, 1st July, 1920.

I have the honour to submit herewith, in accordance with the Act, the annual report of this Office for the year ended 31st December, 1919.

I have, &c.,

R. E. HAYES,

Registrar of Friendly Societies.

A GOOD YEAR.

The results of the past year's operations of the friendly societies of the Dominion indicate a vitality and buoyancy in the movement that must be gratifying to those who have advocated and worked for the voluntary system of providing social insurance for the working population. The increase in membership is the highest in any year since 1908, while the annual contribution income, which in 1915 and 1916 was actually decreasing, has also made substantial recovery. In whatever light the 1919 figures are viewed they read well, and it speaks volumes for these organizations and their benefits that, notwithstanding the losses in membership and the heavy strain on their resources during the five years of war and epidemic, they exhibit such satisfactory signs of recovery and progress.

WAR REINSURANCE OF DEATH BENEFITS.

The fund established by the Department in 1916, in co-operation with societies, for the protection of Funeral Funds against war liabilities still continues to receive belated claims, although the period covered under the agreement expired on the 31st March, 1920. Since that date death claims amounting to £260 have been received, but the additional liabilities are not expected to amount to more than a few isolated cases.

The following statement as at the 31st March, 1920, gives the result of the operations of the fund from its inauguration :—

Transactions from 1st October, 1916, to 31st March, 1920.

	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
Premiums from societies at 3½ per cent. . .	31,496	12	9	Death claims	55,950	0	0
Penalties, &c.	368	18	0	Expenses	1,330	7	6
State subsidy at 3½ per cent.	31,496	12	9	Surplus	6,081	16	0
	£63,362	3	6		£63,362	3	6

It will be remembered that the original rate charged was at 4 per cent., but, as the experience indicated this could be reduced, the societies have been debited with the lower rate—viz., 3½ per cent. It would now appear that this rate is more than sufficient to cover the risk, and one-half of the above-mentioned surplus will be available for distribution to the societies, subject to any further claims that may be received. The fund has successfully carried the societies through a very serious crisis as regards funeral risks, and has maintained the security of these benefit funds, many of which would have been heavily involved but for the consolidation of all societies' interests in this scheme.

REBATE OF SOLDIER MEMBERS' CONTRIBUTIONS.

Claims from societies in respect of the sick and funeral contributions of soldier members during the period of active service have been received and paid up to the 31st March, 1920, amounting to £23,613 19s. 2d.

Secretaries of societies are advised to complete their claims and forward them to the Registrar without delay, as the vote for this purpose will expire with the current financial year.

AFTER-DISCHARGE SICKNESS.

In accordance with the plan adopted by Cabinet of assisting societies in regard to the above liability, lists of soldier members were compiled by this office for each society from data previously received and sent out for completion by secretaries. The work of furnishing these returns was made as light as possible for societies, and after the first period had been returned to the Registrar the maintenance of the system involved very little extra work.

The number of returns to hand, however, are far from complete, and it is necessary to remind societies that unless the lists are furnished no determination of the liability is possible. From