

SESSION II.
1921.
NEW ZEALAND.

FRIENDLY SOCIETIES AND TRADE-UNIONS.

FORTY-FOURTH ANNUAL REPORT BY THE REGISTRAR OF FRIENDLY SOCIETIES,
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER, 1920.

*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 August, 1921.

I have the honour to submit herewith, in accordance with the Act, the annual report of this Office for the year ended 31st December, 1920.

I have, &c.,

R. E. HAYES,

Registrar of Friendly Societies.

GENERAL.

The year has been for friendly societies an exceptionally good one. The increasing membership recorded in the previous year continues to be more than maintained. The losses experienced during the war will at the present rate of improvement soon be recovered, and thus again prove the strong hold these important organizations have on the working population. The membership rose during 1920 from 70,598 to 74,210, representing an increase rate of 5·12 per cent. This is the highest rate of increase since 1908, and a return to the best pre-war years.

The gross funds of the societies increased by £136,523, from £2,184,653 to £2,321,176, the average capital per member being £31 5s. 7d.

The management of the societies indicates good business methods and attention to present conditions in the investment of funds, the total interest-earnings in respect of sick and funeral funds amounting to £102,847, or a rate equal to 5·33 per cent.

The operations of the societies' sick and funeral funds also show improvement for the year. The mortality-rate has dropped to 9·17 per thousand, practically back to pre-war rates; sick-pay per member at risk reduced from £7 6s. 4d. in 1919 to £6 15s. 4d.; while contributions and interest earned per member rose from £3 2s. 4d. to £3 4s. 5d.: the whole representing a net gain per member of £1 11s. 3d. as compared with 14s. 5d. for the previous year.

VALUATIONS.

A satisfactory year was experienced by the Actuary's staff in dealing with valuations, as will be gathered from that officer's report appended hereto. The Actuary's references to the establishment of funds and schemes on doubtful bases should receive careful attention from societies' managers.

ADDITIONAL BENEFITS.

The past year has been somewhat noteworthy as disclosing more than the average number of schemes and proposals to introduce what may be termed "novelties." To any reasonable increase of the present benefits, adequately provided for, there can, of course, be no objection, but the attempts in many quarters to launch into new systems of benefits are not always to be justified, as there is a danger they may submerge those objects proper to friendly societies and which give them the unique position they hold in assisting the mass of wage-earners.

PROSECUTION.

On receipt of an application from the Auckland Pioneer Lodge of the Auckland Provincial District of the N.I.O.O.F., I appointed on the 20th November, 1920, a licensed auditor to audit the accounts of the branch. As a result of the auditor's report, proceedings for theft of moneys were taken against the previous lodge secretary, who pleaded guilty, and was subsequently sentenced by the Supreme Court.