

bodies (*e.g.*, Otago District, Manchester Unity; Grand Lodge of New Zealand Independent Order of Odd Fellows; New Zealand Central District of Rechabites) have intimated a desire to be registered as societies having branches. It is greatly to be desired that all central bodies may follow this course. Since the 1st January, 1878, twelve friendly societies and one working men's club have applied for original registration; eight friendly societies have applied to register new sets of rules as amendments of, and instead of, the rules already registered, and there have been two applications for the registry of amendments (of one or more rules) strictly so called.

It appears necessary to explain why the new sets of rules as amendments should be distinguished from amendments of one or more rules. A difficulty has been experienced from the operation of the 3rd subsection of the 12th section of the Act, which provides that all amendments of rules should be published in the *Gazette* before they become valid. This clearly did not imply that a complete new set of rules should be published, as there was not any such condition in respect of publication in the case of an original registration, nor evidently was such a publication intended, the amendments referred to being manifestly considered as distinct amendments of an existing rule, or the addition of one or more rules, limited in number, but not the substitution of a complete set of new rules. As many societies amend their rules by passing a new set of rules, the operation of this subsection acted as a bar to the registration of a complete set by way of amendment; and yet for practical purposes the adoption of a complete set would be of greater general advantage, and make the rules better understood, than fragmentary amendments. The Registrar felt that the operation of this subsection acted disadvantageously for societies, without conferring any corresponding benefit, and, therefore, he adopted in all such cases the following course: Societies sending complete sets of rules as amendments on existing rules were desired to send simultaneously a request for cancellation of the existing registration, and an application for fresh registration under the Act of 1877; the Registrar requiring that the request for cancellation should be similarly signed to the application for registry, and considering it admissible under the circumstances to dispense with the *Gazette* notice, and the publication in a local newspaper as necessarily accompanying the cancellation, deeming the cancellation rather in the light of a substitution of registry than in that of a final cancellation, and thus corresponding in character more with the cancellation of the registry of a lodge, court, &c., as a distinct society with a view to its registration as a branch; no publication being required in the latter case. This expedient enabled the Registrar to tide over the difficulty, but the process is cumbrous; and it would be far more convenient if the provision of the Act respecting the publication of amendments were repealed, so that complete sets of rules might be received as amendments.

The several applications under each of the specified headings are set forth in Schedule VII., and opposite each is stated the action that has been taken in respect thereof. None of the applications for original registration have as yet been complied with. The incorrectness of the form in which most of the applications were made was not merely technical, but constituted a non-compliance with the requirements of the Act. One application has been made for the registration of a working men's club, but the difficulty experienced in making the rules of such societies contain all the provisions required by Schedule II. of the Act raises the question whether or not it would be better that they should, if desirous of registration, be allowed to obtain it in the capacity of specially authorized societies rather than as societies bound by the general provisions of the Act, many of which cannot be made applicable to them, or whether they should be relieved from some of the obligations imposed on them in common with friendly societies.

Although no registrations of societies have been effected since the 1st of January, 1878, yet there are indications that, when the tables of contributions that are in process of preparation by the Actuary are issued, and the model rules distributed, many societies at present registered will register under new rules and with fresh tables of contributions, and that unregistered societies will be desirous of obtaining the advantages accruing from registration.

These advantages do not appear in general to be sufficiently understood or appreciated. It therefore seems desirable to make an enumeration of the principal advantages which are enjoyed by registered societies, and from which unregistered societies are necessarily shut out. The following list of these advantages has accordingly been prepared.

*Advantages accruing to a Society by Registration, no fee being payable on the registry of any friendly, benevolent, or cattle insurance society, or working men's club.*

1. It can hold, purchase, or take on lease, in the names of the trustees for the time being, any land, and can similarly hold other kinds of property, all such land and property vesting in any succeeding trustees immediately upon and as a consequence of their appointment.

2. All legal proceedings can be carried on in the names of the trustees.

3. A registered society has a remedy on summary conviction whenever any person—

(1.) Obtains possession of any of its property by false representation or imposition;

(2.) Having possession of any of its property, withholds or misapplies it;

(3.) Wilfully applies any part of such property to purposes other than those expressed or directed by the rules, and authorized by the Act:

the penalty for either of these offences being a fine not exceeding £50 and costs, and in default of payment imprisonment, with or without hard labour, for any time not exceeding six months.

4. The treasurer and other officers of the society, or persons acting in such capacity, are constituted servants of the trustees within the meaning of "The Larceny Act, 1867," and in cases of larceny and embezzlement can be proceeded against as in the case of larceny or embezzlement by a clerk or servant.

5. If an officer of the society dies, or becomes bankrupt or insolvent, or if an execution is issued against him whilst he has money or property of the society in his possession by virtue of his office, the trustees of the society are entitled to claim such money or property in preference to any other creditor.

6. If the society has funds, debentures, securities, or moneys in the names of trustees, and a