

“local” friendly societies (such as the New Plymouth Friendly Society) on the one hand and branches of the affiliated orders on the other, endeavours to obtain business throughout a whole country, and the relation amongst whose members has nothing of the semi-social character marking the affiliated brotherhoods; 1 benevolent society, the Southland Benevolent Institute; 1 working-men’s club, the Christchurch Working-men’s Club and Mutual School of Arts; and 1 “specially authorized” society, the well-known Independent Order of Good Templars, 84 of the subordinate lodges of which—scattered over the length and breadth of the colony—are at present included in the registration. The following table, by instituting a comparison between the numbers of societies registered in the several periods of six months since the date when the Act came into force, will convey an idea of the rate at which registration is progressing :—

From 1st Jan., 1878, to 30th June, 1878	No societies registered.
1st July, 1878, to 31st Dec., 1878	One society
1st Jan., 1879, to 30th June, 1879	Six societies
1st July, 1879, to 31st Dec., 1879	Five
1st Jan., 1880, to 30th June, 1880	Three
1st July, 1880, to 31st Dec., 1880	Twelve

On the whole, it is evident that the progress of registration has been becoming gradually more satisfactory, and this result would be still more obviously manifest if the numbers of new branches registered in the several periods were compared. Nevertheless, from the knowledge acquired by the Registrar in various ways of the unregistered societies in existence, he regrets to be compelled to report that the progress of registration is still not as rapid as could be desired—probably hardly as rapid as the establishment of new societies and branches. The objections to registration appear to be mainly two : (1) the alleged difficulty of framing rules to include satisfactorily all the matters specified in the Second Schedule to the Friendly Societies Act; and (2) the subsequent burden of furnishing returns and of submitting to valuations. The improvement shown by the above table in the rate of registration is attributed by the Registrar in a great degree to the legalization, through section 12 of the Amendment Act of 1878, of a reference to the rules of parent societies in the United Kingdom and Australia. From Table VIII. of the Statistics of 1878–80 (appended to this report), which has been made to include, as far as possible, all the friendly societies and branches of friendly societies, registered and unregistered, known to exist in the colony, it will be seen that these are, with very few exceptions, neither more nor less than branches and “twigs of branches” (to use an expression of the Chief Registrar of Friendly Societies of the United Kingdom) of orders, the central offices of which are either in the United Kingdom or in Australia; and it may therefore be easily understood how heavily the interdicting of all reference or expression of subordination to the rules of the parent societies must previously have pressed on the districts and lodges in this colony intending to register.

A list of registered societies, with their registered branches, as on the 31st December, 1880, is given in Schedule I. to this report. The names of “societies having branches” within the meaning of section 30 of the Act—*i.e.*, districts of the affiliated orders, whether or no they have branches registered as such—are given in italics.

From a comparison of this list with the corresponding one given in the Registrar’s Third Report, it will be seen that 92 branches have been newly registered during the six months under review, and that 7 *de facto* branches have had their registry as separate societies (acquired under the Act of 1867) cancelled, and have been re-registered as legal branches of the districts, grand lodges, &c., to which they belong. Of the 92 newly-registered branches, it will be seen that the Manchester Unity of Odd Fellows claims 2, the National Independent Order of Odd Fellows 2, the Ancient Order of Foresters 3, the Independent Order of Rechabites 1, while the Independent Order of Good Templars (not a benefit society) claims the lion’s share of 84.

The various affiliated orders are now represented on the register in the following manner :—

Name of Society.	Statement as on 30th June, 1880.	Statement as on 31st December, 1880.
Manchester Unity of Odd Fellows	11 Districts and 63 Lodges	11 Districts and 62 Lodges.
Independent Order of Odd Fellows (American)	1 Grand Lodge and 16 Subordinate Lodges	1 Grand Lodge and 15 Subordinate Lodges.
National Independent Order of Odd Fellows	Nil	1 District and 2 Lodges.
Ancient Order of Foresters	6 Districts and 44 Courts	6 Districts and 45 Courts.
Ancient Order of Shepherds	1 Sanctuary	1 Sanctuary.
United Ancient Order of Druids	2 Lodges	8 Lodges.
Loyal United Friends’ Benefit Society	1 Lodge	1 Lodge.
Independent Order of Rechabites	1 District and 3 Tents	1 District and 3 Tents.
Sons and Daughters of Temperance of Australasia	6 Subordinate Divisions	5 Subordinate Divisions.
Hibernian Australasian Catholic Benefit Society	7 Branches	7 Branches.
Independent Order of Good Templars	Nil	1 Grand Lodge and 84 Lodges.

3. AMENDMENTS OF RULES REGISTERED.

Four partial amendments of rules, and three complete amendments, *i.e.*, substitutions of completely new sets of rules for previous rules, have been registered during the half-year.

The partial amendments were in all cases of minor importance.

As regards one of the complete amendments, that of the Wellington District of the Manchester Unity Independent Order of Odd Fellows, the Registrar is pleased to report that it includes a new scale of contributions based on the standard recommended by the Government Actuary. Unfortunately, however, its adoption is left optional in regard to existing lodges, except so far as new members are concerned, in the case of whom it is made compulsory. This option is the more to be regretted, as, in the case of the two city lodges at least of this District, it needs no valuation to see that actuarial insolvency is already almost certainly a fact. Thus it will be seen from Table VIII., attached