

The self-help afforded to the members of these societies by their voluntary combination is obtained by adding the sums disbursed in providing the three chief benefits assured—namely, sick-pay, funeral benefits, and medical attendance and medicine. The total sum is found to be £89,387, and the receipt thereof, instead of lowering the irrepence or self-respect of any member as charitable donations would do, is felt to be but the honestly earned reward of the member's own prudence and forethought.

VALUATIONS.

The Friendly Societies Act is based on the assumption that men who combine for mutual aid may be trusted voluntarily to take such action as may be found necessary to secure the solvency and permanence of their institutions. By means of periodical investigation the State has provided that, if any loss is suffered through errors in finance, members shall not be able to plead ignorance of their society's unsound position.

The values of the prospective assets and liabilities have been calculated on the general mortality experience of the colony, on the sickness experience of New Zealand friendly societies up to age 70, and on English sickness-rates (Sutton's Friendly Societies, 1876–80) above that age, the rate of interest assumed being 4 per cent. But in the future it may be found necessary to modify this rate, for reasons stated in the paragraph relating to rate of interest realised.

Valuations were made of the following societies:—

M.U.I.O.O.F.—Wellington District: Wellington District Widow and Orphans Fund; Marlborough District.

U.A.O.D.—Bud of Hope Lodge.

Summarised results of the valuations are given in two tables A and B (Appendix V.).

Societies, on application to the Registrar, may have their valuations made free of cost. The experience of the societies valued in the office during the year represents 7,752·5 years of life at risk. This experience has been grouped with that published in tabular form in last year's report, and the combined results are exhibited hereunder.

SICKNESS and MORTALITY EXPERIENCE of Societies valued in the Office (Men Members only).

Age of Members.	Number of Years of Life at Risk.	Sickness (Weeks).				Number of Deaths.	
		First Six Months.	Second Six Months.	After Twelve Months.	Total.	Of Members.	Of Wives.
Under 25	33,244·0	23,337	2,051	2,243	27,631	144	16
25–30	34,783·0	22,066	1,722	2,780	26,518	150	64
30–35	31,949·5	21,063	1,674	3,616	26,353	159	93
35–40	28,199·0	19,693	1,734	4,028	25,455	132	113
40–45	23,124·0	19,343	2,379	6,778	28,500	134	107
45–50	17,773·0	18,608	2,348	8,605	29,561	154	86
50–55	13,764·5	18,278	3,244	11,734	33,256	192	95
55–60	9,024·5	14,359	2,887	14,937	32,183	163	72
60–65	4,886·5	9,192	2,275	17,152	28,619	118	41
65–70	2,063·5	4,876	1,539	13,907	20,322	82	22
70 and upwards ..	993·5	2,897	1,197	13,918	18,012	71	19
All ages	199,805·0	173,712	23,050	99,648	296,410	1,499	728

The following table shows the ratio to the total of the sickness in the first six months, in the second six months, and after twelve months respectively, in quinquennial age-periods:—

Age.	Ratio (per Cent.) to Total Sickness.		
	First Six Months.	Second Six Months.	After Twelve Months.
Under 25	85	7	8
25–30	83	7	10
30–35	80	6	14
35–40	77	7	16
40–45	68	8	24
45–50	63	8	29
50–55	55	10	35
55–60	45	9	46
60–65	32	8	60
65–70	24	8	68
70 and upwards ..	16	7	77

Averages and percentages deduced from the tabulated returns for 1881–1901 are given in Appendix I.

Information as to the forms kept in the Registry Office for the convenience of societies, and sent free on application, is to be found in Appendix IV.