

The averages for the five leading Orders, and for all societies, are given in the following table:—

Order.	Income per Member from		Outgo per Member for		Sick-benefit per Member Sick.	Average Sick- pay per Week.	Gain per Member
	Contributions.	Interest.	Sickness.	Funerals.			
M.U.I.O.O.F. ..	£ s. d. 1 12 0	£ s. d. 0 18 8	£ s. d. 1 4 1	£ s. d. 0 4 7	£ s. d. 6 1 0	£ s. d. 0 14 2	£ s. d. 1 4 1
I.O.O.F. ..	1 10 7	0 15 1	0 15 7	0 7 0	5 1 5	0 15 10	1 7 2
A.O.F. ..	1 7 2	0 15 9	0 19 7	0 5 5	5 1 3	0 13 11	0 17 5
U.A.O.D. ..	1 6 11	0 8 3	0 17 1	0 5 5	4 12 2	0 16 3	0 14 8
I.O.R. ..	1 5 11	0 19 8	1 2 5	0 4 2	6 2 0	0 16 1	1 0 6
All Societies ..	1 9 1	0 15 4	1 1 4	0 5 1	5 9 5	0 14 4	0 19 7

RATE OF INTEREST REALISED.

The total income from investments, less depreciations, credited to the Sick and Funeral Funds for 1903 amounted to £33,862, which is found to yield an average rate of £4·51 per cent. (say, £4 10s. 2d.), as against £4 6s. in 1902.

But, while the average rate for societies in the aggregate may be regarded as satisfactory, affording as it does a fair margin for safety over the rate hitherto employed in valuations—namely, 4 per cent.—it has to be remembered that as each lodge is for most purposes under the control of its own committee of management in matters affecting investments, its position will depend in great measure on the care and attention bestowed on this subject by the responsible officers. Hence the position of a district or Order depends almost entirely upon the good or bad management which has characterized the several branches in respect of the investment of the funds.

While the rate of interest realised by each lodge cannot be set forth here, some idea of the position in the several societies or Orders will be obtained by an examination of the figures in the last column of the following table:—

TABLE showing the Total Worth of the SICK AND FUNERAL FUND as on the 1st January, 1903, and the 31st December, 1903, inclusive of the Accumulations held by the Central Bodies; also the Amount and Average Rate of Interest earned.

Name of Society.	Total Worth of Sick and Funeral Fund as on—		Amount of Interest.	Average Rate per Cent.
	January 1, 1903.	December 31, 1903.		
M.U.I.O.O.F.	£ 368,157	£ 389,444	£ 16,442	£ 4·44
I.O.O.F.	34,484	37,377	1,612	4·59
N.I.O.O.F.	4,156	4,226	192	4·69
B.U.O.O.F.	1,325	1,480	57	4·15
A.O.F.	201,270	211,666	9,422	4·67
A.O.S.	1,069	1,118	50	4·68
U.A.O.D.	65,215	70,635	3,056	4·60
I.O.R.	40,977	42,957	1,902	4·64
S.D.T.	10,439	11,107	544	5·18
H.A.C.B.S.	55,243	5,308	194	3·75
P.A.F.S.A.	10,906	11,304	234	2·13
R.E.B.S.	3,165	2,990	157	5·24
Total	746,406	789,612	33,862	4·51

It may also be added that in the M.U.I.O.O.F., with its seventeen districts, the average rate per cent. realised varies from £3·68 in the case of the Ashley District to £6·12 in the Marlborough District. In the A.O.F., with eight districts, the rate varies from £3·73 in the Auckland District to £5·36 in the Wellington District.

A consideration of the foregoing rates makes it evident that, while the responsible officers in a large majority of the lodges have laboured with zeal and intelligence to invest the funds profitably, there is a minority of managers who, through ignorance, carelessness, or indifference, have never realised the fact that the regular and judicious investment of the funds at the highest rate of interest obtainable consistent with perfect security is a primary condition of success in every friendly society. It matters not how carefully the rates of contribution and benefits may have been adjusted if this important item has been neglected. And, while strongly opposed to other than adequate rates of contribution being charged in any lodge, examples are not wanting where defects in this particular have been successfully overcome by superior management in the investment of the funds.

The bearing of these remarks on the rate of interest to be employed in a valuation is obvious. In lodges where the management of the funds has been good, and the rates realised over a series of years is in excess of 4 per cent., this rate may be continued; but in cases where a less rate has been realised the valuation will have to be made at such rate of interest as the character of the investments and the rate of interest realised may appear justifiable to the valuer.

One way in which the rate realised may be improved is by a strict compliance in all cases with the terms of the statute in regard to the separation of the several funds, and the payment of all expenses of management out of the Management Fund. In a number of lodges it is found that