

From the CLERK OF COURT, Napier.

I am instructed by the Stipendiary Magistrate (Mr. Brabant) to reply to your circular letter, F 23 of 17th May, 1906, and have to inform you that I am not aware of any payment by way of sick-allowance or funeral benefit from any registered friendly society having been treated as income.

From R. L. STANFORD, Esq., Stipendiary Magistrate, Wanganui.

In reply to your circular F 23, I beg to say that no pensions have been reduced or in any way affected by the pensioner's receipt of benefits from friendly societies.

From H. Y. WIDDOWSON, Esq., Stipendiary Magistrate, Dunedin.

In reply to your circular letter of the 17th instant, inquiring if members of friendly societies have been penalised in this Court in respect of sick-allowance or funeral benefits, I have the honour to inform you that I certainly have no knowledge of any sick-allowance ever having been taken into account, and I cannot remember any case of a funeral benefit having been treated as income. The Act is explicit that such cannot be done, and I cannot understand the reference to the recent amending Act penalising recipients of friendly society benefits.

From H. EYRE-KENNY, Esq., Stipendiary Magistrate, Nelson.

(Telegram.) Pensions never been charged with sick-pay or funeral benefits in Nelson and Motueka Districts since I have been here, nor in Wanganui and Hawera in my time.

From A. D. THOMSON, Esq., Stipendiary Magistrate, Palmerston North.

I am in receipt of your circular of the 17th instant, and in reply have to state that I am not aware of any instance in which pensions have been reduced in consequence of the receipt of sick-allowance or funeral benefit from a friendly society.

From T. SCOTT SMITH, Esq., Stipendiary Magistrate, Blenheim.

In reply to your circular letter of the 17th instant, I beg to state that no pension in this district has been affected by receipts from friendly societies. In the few cases that have come under our notice in which pensioners have been receiving sick-allowance from such societies, we have carefully excluded the amount so received in computing the pensioner's income.

From VICTOR GRACE DAY, Esq., Stipendiary Magistrate, Christchurch.

Replying to your circular letter, F 23 of the 17th instant, I have to state that in no instance in any application before me has any deduction been made in the amount of the pension by reason of the pensioner being entitled to benefits from any friendly society.

From Dr. McARTHUR, Stipendiary Magistrate, Wellington.

In reply to your circular letter of the 17th instant, I beg most emphatically to state that members of friendly societies have never been penalised in any way in this Court.

From T. HUTCHISON, Esq., Stipendiary Magistrate, New Plymouth.

(Telegram.) Regret having overlooked your circular of the 17th May last. My reply is that so far as I know I have had no applicant for an old-age pension who is a member of a friendly society.

From F. J. BURGESS, Esq., Stipendiary Magistrate, Queenstown.

(Telegram.) No old-age pensioner in this district has ever been penalised on account of friendly societies' benefits.

WEALTH OF PENSIONERS.

A summary of the accumulated property owned by pensioners is as follows :—

Freehold	..	..	..	..	..	..	£	265,768
Leasehold	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	27,055
Life interest	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	17,375
Cash	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	40,364
Stock, furniture, &c.	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	70,987
								<hr/> 421,549
Less mortgages on property	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	61,568
								<hr/> 359,981
Total property owned by pensioners	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	359,981
Total property owned by husbands and wives of pensioners (not themselves pensioners)	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	141,435
								<hr/> £501,416
Grand total	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	£501,416

The average amount of property held by each of the 12,582 pensioners on the roll, after the deduction of mortgages, is therefore £28 12s., as against an average of £25 2s. held last year.

The total annual income earned by pensioners is £103,237, being an average of £8 4s. per annum per pensioner, as against £7 13s. per pensioner in the previous year.

The particulars which go to make up these figures are set out in detail in the Appendix.

J. EMAN SMITH, Registrar.