

STAFF.

I am pleased to report that the officers of the Department have worked well during the past year, particularly as it has been necessary at times to require them to carry out many additional duties owing to the rapid increase of business consequent on the growth of the National Provident Fund, which is co-ordinated with the Friendly Societies Branch of the Department.

GENERAL STATISTICS.

MEMBERSHIP AND FUNDS.

The following table shows the increased membership in 658 lodges* which furnished returns for 1911 :—

Number of members, 1st January	69,228
Number admitted by—	
Initiation, &c.	7,885
Clearance	734
	<u>8,619</u>
	77,847
Number who died	475
Number left by—	
Clearance	886
Arrears, &c.	4,715
	<u>6,076</u>
Number of members at 31st December	71,771

The increase in membership during 1911 was 3·67 per cent., as compared with 3·29 per cent. for 1910, thus showing a slightly better result than the previous year, and indicating that the societies are slowly recovering the normal rate which obtained prior to 1909.

I give below an interesting table covering a period of ten years to the 31st December last, showing the proportion of lapses to initiations each year. The marked departure in 1909 from the normal rate is significant, and would appear to indicate that the forces which go to increase membership in good times are quickly affected when a set-back is experienced.

Year.	New Members initiated.	Members lapsed by Arrears.	Percentage of Lapses to New Members.
1902	4,635	2,818	60·8
1903	5,285	2,719	51·5
1904	5,264	2,965	56·3
1905	6,352	3,223	50·7
1906	6,564	3,178	48·4
1907	7,690	3,265	42·5
1908	7,700	3,754	48·8
1909	6,772	4,880	72·1
1910	7,453	4,751	63·8
1911	7,885	4,715	59·7

The total funds of the societies and branches as on the 31st December, 1911, amounted to £1,441,352 17s. 5d., made up as follows: Sick and Funeral Funds (inclusive of amounts transferred to special funds out of surplus), £1,333,998 19s. 2d.; Medical and Management Funds, goods, &c., £107,353 18s. 3d. Dividing the total funds by the number of members at the end of the year, it is found the average capital per member is now £20 1s. 8d.

Taking the several years 1902–1911, the number of lodges whose returns were tabulated, the number of members, total funds, and average capital per member at the end of each were as under :—

Year.	Number of Lodges tabulated.	Number of Members.	Total Funds	Average Capital.
1902	462	43,408	£ 846,315	£ s. d. 19 9 11
1903	465	45,255	883,751	19 10 7
1904	479	47,302	936,388	19 15 11
1905	501	51,103	996,224	19 9 11
1906	500	53,759	1,057,821	19 13 6
1907	516	56,817	1,118,217	19 13 7
1908	505	58,517	1,123,886	19 4 1
1909	567	64,428	1,266,297	19 13 1
1910	609	68,006	1,367,282	20 2 1
1911	658	71,771	1,441,353	20 1 8

* The word "lodge," when applied to all societies, is to be understood as embracing the synonymous terms "court," "tent," &c., as used in the various orders.