

to this report, that on 31st December, 1879, these lodges had respectively 358 and 215 members, and that their sick funds amounted respectively to only £2,421 and £2,462. These lodges are amongst the very oldest in the colony, having been established in 1845 and 1847 respectively. They already contain a considerable proportion of old members, and yet, with substantially similar benefits guaranteed, the amount per member of the sick fund is seen to be smaller than that of comparatively very young lodges in the Hokitika and Otago Districts of the same order, which have been valued and found insolvent. In the case of the older lodge, the Loyal Britannia, the following figures speak for themselves:—

	No. of Members.	Amount of Sick Fund.	Per Member.
31st December, 1877	283	£2,262 5 1 ..	£7 19 11
„ 1878	292	2,422 1 5 ...	8 5 11
„ 1879	358	2,421 2 0 ...	6 15 3

There is indeed reason to believe that the numbers of members on 31st December, 1877 and 1878, were understated, owing to the exclusion of members who, though “bad on the books,” would be again entitled to full benefit on payment of arrears; yet on the most favourable view it is clear that the amount of fund per member is at best stationary. Now, although there is already a considerable sprinkling of old members, in consequence of the great age of the lodge, yet the sick claims at present are probably not one-half of what may be expected in another ten years, when the members at present between 50 and 60 will be between 60 and 70, unless death shall have previously taken place, in which latter case the District will become liable for a certain payment of £20. The fact that the amount of fund per member has already become stationary, when the proportion of members over 60 is as yet so small, affords the worst possible augury for the future prospects of the lodge.

The case of the Britannia Lodge has been entered into at some length because a parallel chain of reasoning will apply to several lodges of other Districts, which may thus be enabled to recognize the perilous nature of their position even before a valuation.

What the actual scales of contributions and benefits were under the rules registered in 1866 is not very clear, as the rules on the subject seem hopelessly confused. That the former must have been very low is evident from the following facts for 1879 (*see* Tables IX. and X. hereto):—

	Mean No. of Members.	Contributions to S. and F Fund.	Average per Member per Lunar Month.
		£ s. d.	s. d.
Britannia	347	353 10 5 ..	1 7
Antipodean ..	203·5	118 16 3 ..	0 11
Rose of the Valley ...	194	122 6 0 ..	1 0

Rule 13, introductory to the new scale of contributions, enacts that “Members of all lodges in this district established before the passing of these rules shall continue to receive the benefits and pay contributions as heretofore; all new members joining established lodges shall pay in accordance with the following table. If deemed necessary, any lodge may adopt the following table of payments and benefits, if a majority of members at a summoned meeting shall determine to do so. All lodges hereafter established shall pay the following.”

The scale of benefits and contributions thus referred to is given hereunder:—

Age at Entry.	Contributions per Lunar Month, with appropriate Intermediate Amounts for Intermediate Ages.	Benefits.
	s. d.	
20 ..	2 9	} £1 per week during the first six months of sickness, 10s. per week during the next six months, and 7s. 6d. per week for remainder of illness. £20 at death of member, £10 at death of member's wife.
30	3 7	
40	5 1	

The amendments of rules of the Nelson District of the Ancient Order of Foresters do not unfortunately include any improvement in the rates of contribution.

4. CANCELLATIONS OF REGISTRY, DISSOLUTIONS, &C.

As already mentioned, seven societies have had their registry cancelled during the six months, under section 23 of the Act, for the purpose of being registered as branches of the registered “Districts” of which they were already *de facto* branches. Besides this, four other cancellations have been effected:—

1. *Sons of Perseverance Lodge, I.O.O.F., M.U., Invercargill.*—Dissolution by instrument.

2. *Hand-in-Hand Division, Sons of Temperance, Waimate.*—Various communications to this body had been answered by statements that no meetings had been held for a long while, and the former secretary expressed his unwillingness to be troubled with further correspondence. He was requested to ascertain whether any persons were left who were entitled to retain membership under the rules. On receiving a negative answer, the Registrar, after giving the usual notice in a local paper and allowing a considerably longer time to elapse than the minimum required by the Act, cancelled the registry of the society. The evidence was clear that the society had ceased to exist.

3. *Goldsborough Lodge, I.O.O.F., M.U., Goldsborough.*—This lodge having been declared hopelessly insolvent by the Valuer (*see* page 11 of the Registrar's Third Annual Report), it was decided to amalgamate with another lodge of the same District. Technical difficulties arose which prevented this from being done in pursuance of section 22 of the Act, and the difficulty was surmounted by transferring all the members of the Goldsborough Lodge to the other lodge by the process known as “clearance.” The Goldsborough Lodge thus ceased to exist through lack of membership, and its registration was cancelled in accordance with the provisions of section 11.

4. *Court Lord Clyde, A.O.F., Wairoa, Hawke's Bay.*—This Court seceded from the Wellington District, in accordance with permission granted by one of the registered rules of the latter, for the purpose of becoming affiliated to the Hawke's Bay District of the same order. Its registration was