

In order to obviate the necessity of continually repeating all the various terms by which the several societies designate their respective branches, the meaning of the word "lodge," which has been used in such cases, is to be understood as including all the corresponding terms, viz., court, sanctuary, tent, division, and branch.

The only new societies to be added to the list given in last year's report (page 8) are the Sickness and Accident Mutual Assurance Association of New Zealand,\* established at Christchurch, and the Grey Valley Accident Relief Fund, established at Brunneron.

The total number of benefit societies (reckoning each separate lodge, court, &c., as a unit), which are dealt with in the tables relating to the year 1880, is 243, of which 147 were registered and 96 were unregistered. This total number includes,—

Independent Order of Odd Fellows, Manchester Unity ... ..	15 Districts	and	117 Lodges.
Independent Order of Odd Fellows (American) ... ..	1 Grand Lodge	"	19 Subordinate Lodges.
National Independent Order of Odd Fellows ... ..	1 Grand Lodge	"	2 Subordinate Lodges.
Ancient Order of Foresters ... ..	7 Districts	"	77 Courts, and 1 Sanctuary of Shepherds.
United Ancient Order of Druids ...	1 Grand Lodge†	"	8 Subordinate Lodges.
Loyal United Friends' Benefit Society	1 Grand Lodge	"	1 Subordinate Lodge.
Independent Order of Rechabites ...	3 Districts‡	"	5 Tents.
Sons and Daughters of Temperance	1 Grand Division	"	5 Subordinate Divisions.
Hibernian Australasian Catholic Benefit Society ... ..	1 District	"	6 Branches.
Railway Benefit Societies ... ..	...	"	2 Societies.

Of the registered lodges, returns for the year 1880, available for statistical purposes, were received from 138, exclusive of the returns furnished by the central bodies. A few returns were excluded from the tables, owing to their incompleteness. In view of the general improvement which I have referred to above as noticeable in the returns for 1881, I have reason to anticipate that exclusion on this ground will less and less be necessary in future.

The registered lodges which are dealt with in the tables are respectively as follow:—

Manchester Unity Independent Order of Odd Fellows	...	59 Lodges.
Independent Order of Odd Fellows (American)	...	6 Lodges.
National Independent Order of Odd Fellows	...	2 Lodges.
Ancient Order of Foresters	...	45 Courts.
Ancient Order of Shepherds	...	1 Sanctuary.
United Ancient Order of Druids	...	8 Lodges.
Loyal United Friends' Benefit Society	...	1 Lodge.
Independent Order of Rechabites	...	3 Tents.
Sons and Daughters of Temperance	...	5 Divisions.
Hibernian Australasian Catholic Benefit Society	...	6 Branches.
Railway Benefit Societies	...	2 Societies.

This number represents an increase of 16 upon the number of registered lodges included in the tables for the previous year.

Taking some of the most noteworthy results of the tables in detail, I regret to say that the returns for the year 1880 show an actual loss of members. The figures are as follow:—

Number of members admitted during the year	...	...	1,863
" " lapsed	"	"	2,031
" " died	"	"	90

—showing a total loss of 258.

This serious falling-off in numbers was, in all probability, caused by the commercial depression recently experienced in the colony, which had the effect of driving many artizans and labourers away from New Zealand, and which, doubtless, prevented many of those who remained from keeping up their subscriptions and membership.

It is satisfactory to find from the corresponding table for 1881 (Table VII.) that there was in that year a sufficient excess of admissions over lapses to more than outweigh the mortality, and thus to secure a slight net increase in the number of members.

Of the 138 lodges included in these tables, 40 had, on the 31st December, 1880, less than 50 members each, 55 had between 50 and 100 members, 16 had between 100 and 150, 15 between 150 and 200, 5 between 200 and 250, 3 between 250 and 300, 2 between 300 and 350, 1 between 350 and 400, and 1 between 400 and 450.

The average number in each lodge, if the Railway Benefit Societies, which are not strictly local societies, be excluded from the calculation, is 93·6.

The number of deaths of members for the year was 90, or 6·77 per 1,000 members, as against 6·96 in the year 1879.

The number of deaths of members' wives was 50, which is equivalent to 3·76 per 1,000 members, as against 3·25 in 1879.

The number of members sick during the year was 1,665, *i.e.*, 12·5 per cent., as against 12·7 per cent. in 1879.

The total amount of sickness, 11,778 weeks 5 days, gives an average of nearly 0·9 week per member, and an average of somewhat more than 7 weeks per member sick. If with these figures we

\* This society has since ceased to exist. † Central body in Australia. ‡ One of these has its central office in Australia.