

STATISTICS OF MEMBERSHIP AND FUNDS.

The following table shows the membership of 717 lodges* of the Dominion, which furnished returns for 1914:—

Number of members, 1st January	..	..	..	..	74,643
Number admitted by—					
Initiation, &c.	..	..	..	..	5,064
Clearance	..	..	..	..	718
					5,782
					80,425
Number who died	..	..	..	..	506
Number left by—					
Clearance	..	..	..	..	798
Arrears, &c.	..	..	..	..	5,047
					6,351
Number of members at 31st December	..	..	..	..	74,074

It will be seen from the above figures that the members admitted by initiations during the year only exceeded the lapses through arrears by the small number of 17; and with the addition of the deaths and the adverse clearance balance, there is shown on the whole a small decrease in membership equal to 0.76 per cent. Apart from the effect of the war on general trade-conditions the call for the Expeditionary Forces would naturally divert from the friendly societies' ranks many of the young lives that go to create the increase in their membership, an effect which is also noticeable in other States.

It is satisfactory to note that the propaganda work of the New Zealand societies has been well maintained, the number of new branches opened being well above the average.

The total funds of the societies and branches as on the 31st December, 1914, amounted to £1,744,456, made up as follows: Sick and Funeral Funds (inclusive of amounts transferred to special funds out of surplus), £1,604,895; Medical and Management Funds, goods, &c., £139,561. 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 £23 11s.

Taking the several years 1905-1914, the number of lodges whose returns were tabulated, the number of members, total funds, and average capital per member at the end of each year were as under:—

Year.	Number of Lodges tabulated.	Number of Members.	Total Funds	Average Capital.
			£	£ s. d.
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
1912	664	73,243	1,553,339	21 4 2
1913	681	73,691	1,643,177	22 6 0
1914	717	74,074	1,744,456	23 11 0

The above figures include only the statistics of those lodges which furnished annual returns by the legal date in each year.

The following statement shows the disposal of the total funds (including those of the central bodies) as on the 31st December, 1914:—

Funds.		Assets.	
	£		£
Sick and Funeral Funds	1,548,417	Investments at interest	1,479,775
Surplus Appropriation Funds, &c.	56,478	Value of land and buildings	184,217
Management Funds, goods, &c.	90,332	Cash not bearing interest	51,522
Widow and Orphans' Funds	13,866	Value of goods	14,018
Distress, Benevolent Funds, &c.	35,363	Other assets	12,997
		Owing by Management Fund	1,927
Total	£1,744,456	Total	£1,744,456

The next table shows the number of members of friendly societies, the amount of their accumulated capital, and the average capital per member, in each of the Australian States and in the Dominion of New Zealand, according to the latest received statistics, arranged in order of membership:—

State or Dominion.	Date of Return.	Number of Lodges.	Number of Members.	Amount of Funds.	Capital per Member.
				£	£ s. d.
New South Wales	31st December, 1913	1,965	190,725	1,720,394	9 0 5
Victoria	" 1913	1,501	157,280	2,190,957	15 16 9
New Zealand	" 1913	710	73,691	1,643,177	22 6 0
South Australia	" 1909	529	58,292	863,998	14 16 5
Queensland	" 1913	535	50,461	685,401	13 11 8
Tasmania	" 1912	187	22,480	216,334	9 12 6
Western Australia	" 1913	287	19,616	218,832	11 3 1

* 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.