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15/- per half-year and 5% on moneys taken; the treasurer received 5/- for the same period. The names of many of Cheltenham's early families are among the officers - Comport, Le Page, Erwin, Penny, Potts, Rippon, Judd, Clayton and others.

The Branch had friendly relations with two other friendly societies in the district. The Protestant Alliance Friendly Society send complimentary tickets for their social; the Foresters Lodge forward an invitation to their anniversary. Sometimes the local societies hold a combined smoke night (admission 6d.). It is interesting to note, that the Branch instructs its representative at the annual conference not to support a motion suggesting that the Association should adopt a badge and regalia.

Today the most interesting thing about the early records of the Branch is the attempt to provide some social life and culture for its members. Apart from the churches the friendly societies and the mechanics' institutes were the only organizations which tried to do this. There were smoke nights and socials, tea meetings and church parades and an occasional ball; there were quoits matches and indoor rifle shooting. In 1902 there was a "Welcome Home Social", presumably for the local soldiers just returned from the Boer War. And once a year there was a Gala Day. In its early years Cheltenham seems to have taken part in the Brighton Gala Day when several friendly societies held a procession with banners and regalia and brass bands, sports, a concert and a ball. Then it dropped out but took part in the Moorabbin Gala, sometimes entering a decorated vehicle and sometimes not. At one meeting £2 was voted to supply a six-horse drag (wagon) to carry members; once the Branch received first prize in the floral procession.

And there were more serious things. In those days when - before 1905 - there were no state secondary or technical schools, very inadequate libraries, no radio or T.V. and when few people could afford to buy books the hunger for knowledge and self-expression must often have been sharp. The friendly societies tried to satisfy this by lectures, debates, question boxes and impromptu speeches, concerts and musical evenings. Dr. Scantlebury, one of Cheltenham's early doctors lectured on his trip to England, others spoke on Western Australia and the Northern Territory, then very far away; another doctor talked about "the Red Plague". There was a lecture on early Melbourne, another on technical education, illustrated by "lime-light views". Several organizations - the Free Trade League, the Victorian Silk Alliance (?), the Vegetarian Society - wrote asking for permission to give talks. There were debates on temperance, on "fear of punishment or hope of reward - which

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