

PUBLIC LIBRARIES.

By a vote of last session a sum of £3,000 was again granted for subsidies to public libraries. Notice thereof was inserted in the *Gazette* of the 1st December, 1904, and forms of application were sent to all libraries known to the Department. The method of distribution of the vote was the same as that adopted in previous years, as follows: A nominal addition of £25 was made to the amount of the income of each library derived from subscriptions, donations, and rates, provided that the receipts for the year were not less than £2, and the vote was divided according to the amount thus augmented; but no library received credit for a larger income than £75—that is, in no case did the augmented amount on which distribution was based exceed £100. In accordance with the *Gazette* notice, the day appointed for the distribution of the subsidy was the 6th February, 1905, and the amount of the vote was divided among the 411 libraries from which applications, each accompanied by a statutory declaration on the proper form, had been received. The vote, as thus dealt with, afforded a subsidy of 3s. 5·38d. in the pound of the nominal income, and the subsidies ranged from £17 4s. 9d. to £4 13s.

Some libraries supplied with the proper form failed to send in formal claims by the 30th January, 1905, the date fixed by the *Gazette* notice, and did not therefore participate in the vote.

The number of libraries participating in the vote shows an increase of fifteen as compared with the number aided in the previous year. In order that the purpose intended to be served by the vote may be attained, it is made a condition for participation that the whole of the subsidy granted to each library in the previous year shall have been expended in the purchase of books.

The following table shows the distribution according to education districts :—

SUMMARY OF DISTRIBUTION OF PUBLIC LIBRARIES SUBSIDY.

Education Districts.	Number of Libraries.	Income.	Amount on which Subsidy is calculated.	Amount of Subsidy.
		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Auckland .. .. .	101	2,608 10 7	3,947 5 3	680 9 7
Taranaki .. .. .	16	459 17 3	774 16 2	133 10 11
Wanganui .. .. .	31	1,542 9 0	1,497 18 11	*258 4 9
Wellington .. .. .	22	3,818 11 4	1,186 10 2	*204 10 10
Hawke's Bay .. .. .	27	752 15 11	1,241 13 9	214 1 3
Marlborough .. .. .	5	149 18 0	249 16 0	43 1 3
Nelson .. .. .	27	682 16 9	1,237 4 3	213 5 1
Grey .. .. .	5	179 17 6	297 8 0	51 5 4
Westland .. .. .	5	76 11 9	201 11 9	34 15 6
North Canterbury .. .. .	68	1,727 7 10	2,608 5 10	449 13 1
South Canterbury .. .. .	18	494 14 0	824 2 6	142 1 6
Otago .. .. .	54	934 19 11	2,159 14 11	372 6 6
Southland .. .. .	31	363 15 10	1,138 15 10	196 5 1
Chatham Islands .. .. .	1	12 10 0	37 10 0	6 9 4
Totals .. .. .	411	13,804 15 8	17,402 13 4	*3,000 0 0

\* The subsidy to which the Mangaweka Library would have been entitled (£7 1s. 5d.) was not paid owing to the non-completion of the form of application; and the sum of £1 8s. 4d. was deducted from the subsidy payable to the Whareama Library in consequence of an over-payment in the previous year, due to an error discovered in the form of application. The net payment out of the vote was therefore £2,991 10s. 3d.