

SESSION II.
1921.
NEW ZEALAND.

EDUCATION: SUBSIDIES TO PUBLIC LIBRARIES

(PAPERS RELATING TO DISTRIBUTION OF).

[In continuation of E.—10, 1920.]

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.

I. EXTRACT FROM THE FORTY-FOURTH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION.

THE sum of £3,000 was voted by Parliament in 1920 for distribution as a subsidy to public libraries in country districts, the libraries participating in the vote being those situated in places having not more than fifteen hundred inhabitants. It is considered that small libraries stand in the greatest need of some financial assistance, and while the small sum available for each library is a material help to such libraries, the benefit to large libraries would be almost negligible.

The vote was distributed in March, 1921, the conditions requiring that a library participating in the benefits must be public in the sense of not being under the control of an association or society the membership of which is composed of only part of the community, and if a borough library, a reading-room open to the public free of charge must be provided. In addition, there must have been at least eight members subscribing to the library, the receipts from subscriptions and donations to the funds of the library during the year being not less than £2. An application to share in the grant must be accompanied by statements of the annual receipts and payments of the body controlling the library, the membership, and the general arrangements for the carrying-on of the library.

The grant is distributed as a subsidy, the sum paid to each library being based upon the amount received during the year by the library by way of subscriptions, donations, and special rates. To this amount is made a nominal addition of £25; but no library receives credit for a larger income than £25—that is, in no case does the amount upon which subsidy is based exceed £50. In this manner the interests of smaller and less prosperous libraries are protected.

The number of libraries participating in the vote in 1921 was 295, as compared with 273 in 1920, the incomes of the libraries from subscriptions, &c., ranging from £2 to £169. The subsidies paid ranged from £7 4s. to £13 6s. 8d.; being paid at the rate of 5s. 4d. in the pound on the amount upon which subsidy was based.