

II.—EXTRACT from the TWENTY-SEVENTH ANNUAL REPORT of the MINISTER of EDUCATION.

By a vote of last session a sum of £3,000 was again granted for subsidies to public libraries. Forms of application were sent to all libraries known to the Department, and notice was inserted in the *Gazette* of the 3rd December, 1903. The method of distribution of the vote was the same as that adopted in the previous year, 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 8th February, 1904, and the amount of the vote was divided among the 396 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. 6'63d. in the pound of the nominal income, and the subsidies ranged from £17 15s. 4d. to £4 15s. 11d.

Some libraries supplied with the proper form failed to send in formal claims by the 31st January, 1904, 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 thirty-two 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 in 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	97	2,616	2	2	3,807	8	11	676	9	1
Taranaki	16	496	12	2	778	9	11	138	6	1
Wanganui	26	1,223	10	10	1,372	5	10	243	16	0
Wellington	20	3,111	17	4	1,094	4	11	194	8	0
Hawke's Bay	28	673	19	10	1,262	11	11	224	6	1
Marlborough	5	150	4	6	249	7	6	44	6	1
Nelson	28	737	4	9	1,288	7	5	228	17	9
Grey	5	161	1	4	286	1	4	50	16	4
Westland	4	92	11	0	192	11	0	34	4	1
North Canterbury	68	1,828	19	7	2,660	12	1	472	13	7
South Canterbury	17	362	13	8	763	15	4	135	13	8
Otago	53	950	9	9	2,121	16	9	376	19	2
Southland	27	265	18	0	940	18	0	167	3	1
Chatham Islands	2	17	16	10	67	16	10	12	1	1
Totals	396	12,689	1	9	16,886	7	9	3,000	0	0