

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 23rd November, 1905, 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—viz., 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, 1906, and the amount of the vote was divided among the 430 libraries from which applications, each accompanied by a statutory declaration on the proper form, had been received at that date. The vote, as thus dealt with, afforded a subsidy of 3s. 4·46d. in the pound of the nominal income, and the subsidies ranged from £16 17s. 3d. to £4 11s. On account of irregularities in the returns sent in, the subsidy in two cases was withheld, and the net payment out of the vote was therefore £2,989 1s. 6d.

The number of libraries participating in the vote shows an increase of seventeen 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	106	2,748 3 10	4,123 6 6	695 3 9
Taranaki	16	377 17 8	726 7 6	122 9 4
Wanganui	34	1,508 16 6	1,672 9 11	281 19 10
Wellington	22	4,179 19 11	1,129 10 9	190 10 0
Hawke's Bay	28	989 12 0	1,274 19 3	214 19 9
Marlborough	4	134 17 1	215 1 9	36 5 5
Nelson	27	824 16 1	1,238 8 3	208 16 1
Grey	5	138 8 6	263 8 6	44 8 4
Westland	5	72 14 10	197 14 10	33 6 8
North Canterbury	69	1,784 14 5	2,635 0 5	439 12 8
South Canterbury	22	717 3 0	979 7 0	165 2 3
Otago	60	902 17 3	2,240 13 6	371 8 8
Southland	31	287 15 1	1,062 15 1	179 3 7
Chatham Islands	1	9 2 6	34 2 6	5 15 2
Totals	430	14,626 18 8	17,793 5 9	2,989 1 6