

1920.  
NEW ZEALAND.

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## EDUCATION :

# SUBSIDIES TO PUBLIC LIBRARIES

(PAPERS RELATING TO DISTRIBUTION OF).

[In continuation of E.-10, 1919.]

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

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

As in the previous year, £3,000 was voted by Parliament in 1919 for distribution as a subsidy to public libraries. Previous to the year 1915 £4,000 was the sum annually voted, all libraries making application and complying with certain conditions being eligible to participate in the grant. The distribution of the recent grant of £3,000, which was made in March, 1920, was confined to libraries in places having not more than fifteen hundred inhabitants, for the reason that small libraries in country districts have greater need of financial assistance than have libraries supported by a large number of subscribers, the benefit of so comparatively small a sum to libraries with a large income being almost negligible.

The conditions under which the vote was distributed required 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, the receipts from subscriptions and donations to the funds of the library during the year must not have been less than £2, this sum being regarded as a very low minimum to ensure that the library receives a certain amount of local support. 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 1920 was 273, the incomes of the libraries from subscriptions, &c., ranging from £2 to £124. The subsidies paid ranged from £8 0s. 3d. to £14 16s. 4d.

In order that the purpose intended to be served by the vote may be attained, it is made a condition that the whole of the subsidy granted to each library must be expended in the purchase of books. It is further enjoined upon the authorities in charge of the libraries that a due proportion of the books purchased shall be books