

permanently employed become contributors as from date of appointment; other persons in the Education service have a similar option to that possessed by the original members.

On the 10th October, 1908, the former Acts were repealed by "The Public Service Classification and Superannuation Amendment Act, 1908," Part I; but under the provisions of this Act former contributors were allowed six months in which to elect to remain subject to the provisions of the former Acts if they so desired. At the end of 1908, 164 contributors had so elected. At the same time the number of contributors under the provisions of the Act of 1908 was 2,767.

The chief difference between the Act of 1908 and the former Acts affects the basis of calculation of the retiring-allowance of a contributor. The retiring-allowance is now one-sixtieth of the average rate of salary received during the three years next preceding retirement, for each year of service, provided that in no case may the allowance exceed two-thirds of that salary: under the former Acts the basis was one-sixtieth of the total salary received by the contributor during the period of contributing to the fund (or, in other words, one-sixtieth of his average salary during the whole period of contribution for each year of service). In both cases "original" members, in addition to the period during which they have contributed to the fund, are also entitled to count service prior to the 1st January, 1906, but not prior to the 1st January, 1878.

At the end of 1908,—

The number of contributors was	..	..	..	..	..	2,931
of whom original members number	..	..	..	..	..	2,416

The annual rate of contribution paid as at the end of the year was over £33,000. The number of retiring-allowances in force was 168, representing an annual charge of over £7,000. Of these,—

Ordinary allowances were	..	..	..	..	100,	representing	£5,516
Allowances in medically unfit cases	..	..	..	..	17,	"	907
Allowances to widows	..	..	..	..	26,	"	473
Allowances to children	..	..	..	..	25,	"	325

The balance at the credit of the fund and invested by the Public Trustee at the end of the year was £82,933

The average rate of interest earned by the investments at the end of the year was 4·66 per cent.

The report of the Superannuation Board is printed as a separate paper (E.—9)

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 8th October, 1908, 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 4th February, 1909, and the amount of the vote was divided among the 437 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. 3·5d. in the pound on the nominal income, and the subsidies ranged from £4 8s. 10d. to £16 9s. 2d.

The number of libraries participating in the vote shows an increase of twenty 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.

Further particulars are given in E.—10.