

PUBLIC LIBRARIES.

[See also E.-10.]

As in the previous year, Parliament voted the sum of £4,000 in 1912-13 for payment of subsidies to public libraries.

In the *New Zealand Gazette* of the 24th October, 1912, a notice was inserted stating that £4,000 had been voted by Parliament for distribution to libraries. 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 distributed 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 3rd February, 1913, and the amount of the vote was divided among the 408 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 4s. 7.72d. in the pound on the nominal income, and the subsidies ranged from £6 5s. 4d. to £23 4s. 3d. The number of libraries participating in the vote shows an increase of seventeen as compared with the number aided in February, 1912.

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.

An analysis of the books added to the public libraries during the year indicates that 81.5 per cent. of the books purchased during the last year were novels. If the additions made by the large libraries at Auckland, Onehunga, New Plymouth, Palmerston North, Wanganui, Wellington, Nelson, Westport, Christchurch, Timaru, and Oamaru are not included the proportion of novels is 89 per cent. One hundred and twenty-three public libraries purchased no books other than fiction.

The following table shows the distribution according to the education districts:—

SUMMARY OF DISTRIBUTION OF PUBLIC LIBRARIES SUBSIDY.

Education Districts.	Number of Libraries.	Income.	Income upon which Subsidy is based.	Subsidy.
		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Auckland	91	3,216 10 5	3,644 9 9	846 1 8
Taranaki	15	302 9 7	613 0 1	142 6 5
Wanganui	30	1,585 16 8	1,516 7 5	352 0 8
Wellington	20	4,964 14 2	1,212 10 3	281 9 6
Hawke's Bay	29	1,165 3 3	1,348 6 2	312 19 8
Marlborough	5	145 9 10	255 3 0	59 4 9
Nelson	25	626 13 7	1,134 6 9	263 6 8
Grey	4	330 15 5	278 0 6	64 10 8
Westland	7	115 1 0	290 1 0	67 6 8
North Canterbury	68	1,640 0 0	2,655 14 0	616 10 5
South Canterbury	21	327 10 10	852 10 10	197 18 3
Otago	52	835 11 3	1,957 8 9	454 8 8
Southland	39	421 4 3	1,396 4 3	324 2 5
Stewart Island	1	17 3 6	42 3 6	9 15 9
Chatham Islands	1	9 0 0	34 0 0	7 17 10
Totals	408	15,703 3 9	17,280 6 3	4,000 0 0