

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

SUMMARY OF DISTRIBUTION OF PUBLIC LIBRARIES SUBSIDY.

Education Districts.					Number of Libraries.	Income upon which Subsidy is based.			Subsidy.		
						£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Auckland	..	..	..	..	91	3,627	1	8	890	17	0
Taranaki	..	..	..	..	13	576	2	11	141	10	4
Wanganui	..	..	..	..	28	1,350	17	7	331	15	11
Wellington	..	..	..	..	18	1,028	3	3	252	12	2
Hawke's Bay	..	..	..	..	22	1,140	14	7	280	5	0
Marlborough	..	..	..	..	6	282	2	4	69	6	3
Nelson	..	..	..	..	22	1,057	5	4	259	13	8
Grey ..	..	..	..	..	3	232	6	6	57	1	5
Westland	..	..	..	..	7	279	4	6	68	11	6
North Canterbury	..	..	..	..	61	2,463	2	6	605	2	9
South Canterbury	..	..	..	..	22	980	0	1	240	15	1
Otago ..	..	..	..	..	51	1,991	14	10	489	5	0
Southland	..	..	..	..	34	1,193	1	1	293	3	7
Stewart Island	..	..	..	..	1	45	19	3	11	5	11
Chatham Islands	..	..	..	..	1	35	10	0	8	14	5
Totals	..	..	..	..	380	16,283	6	5	4,000	0	0

SOME GENERAL OBSERVATIONS.

So great an expansion in work and expenditure as the preceding pages of this report disclose in the furtherance of the educational well-being of the children of our schools is only the natural outcome of improved ideas of the duty of the State in this matter that have happily of recent years been gaining a firmer and wider ground; but with every step of advance that has been made there opens to the view a new horizon of educational wants accompanied, of course, by corresponding demands on the public funds, which more or less determine the extent to which they can be met. A few of these wants may now be stated with some of the principles underlying the progress to be made.

1. *Increased Staffing and Improved Organization.*—The size of the classes controlled by a single teacher has long been one of the chief grounds of reproach in educational systems both here and elsewhere, and the chief obstacle to the introduction of desirable reforms in instructional methods. Towards an increase of the staffing and the corresponding reduction of classes something has already been done by recent legislation. The results, so far as expenditure is concerned, have frequently been stated. It may be sufficient to point out here that during the last ten years the amount expended on salaries has doubled itself, increasing from £366,000 in 1904 to £757,000 in 1914, although during the same period the average attendance has risen by less than one-third. Apart from the question of cost, for various reasons, among which the available supply of qualified teachers furnishes a very important limitation, progress in improved organization is necessarily slow. Even with a very small advance in this direction the increase in the cost of salaries to be paid is not the only consequent increase that has to be met. Rooms and buildings that suit, for instance, a pupil-teacher organization are not suitable for an organization in which adult teachers are alone employed, and if an additional teacher on the staff is introduced there is commonly an additional room to be built, or some other demand of reconstruction is fairly to be expected. Until the average number of pupils to be taught by a single teacher, even in the largest schools, is brought down to a maximum that permits of the introduction of the best methods of instruction, and until every school is staffed throughout by a complement of trained certificated teachers, no finality in this respect can be regarded as reached.

2. *Improved Methods and Educational Aims.*—The spread of practical instruction—learning by doing—and the wide application of the undoubtedly sound principle that methods of observation and experiment—in other words, methods of