

Conveyance of Children.

Conveyance by Rail.—Since the year 1895 children out of the reach of a primary school, but living near to a convenient line of railway, have been granted free passes to the nearest public school or private school; in 1902 this privilege was extended to holders of scholarships and free places in secondary schools, district high schools, and technical schools; and at the beginning of the present year, 1909, the same concession was granted to other secondary pupils who were compelled to travel by rail in order to attend school.

The amount paid in railway fares on this account for 1908 was £9,437, made up as follows:—

	£
Primary pupils	4,145
Holders of free places in—	
(a.) Secondary schools	1,489
(b.) District high schools	1,043
(c.) Technical schools	2,760
Total	£9,437

Conveyance by Road and Water.—For the last five years grants have been made to Education Boards for the conveyance of children from outlying localities to central public schools as contemplated by section 44 of the Act. The allowance has been made at the rate of 6d. per child per day of attendance at school; and in 1908 the grants to ten Boards for conveyance by road and water amounted to £1,905. The Grey and Westland Boards did not arrange for the conveyance of school-children in this manner. The six districts in which the plan was most used were Auckland, Wellington, North and South Canterbury, Otago, and Southland.

The total amount paid for the conveyance of pupils was thus £11,342.

Board of School-children.—A similar allowance—namely, 2s. 6d. a week—is made, on the approval of the Minister, in aid of the board of any child who, through the impracticability of conveyance, has to live away from home in order to attend a public school. In 1908 £57 was paid for the board of school-children whilst attending public schools.

Further reference to this subject is made in E.—2.

Free School-books.

Last session an item of £3,500 was included in the vote for elementary education to provide free text-books for the pupils of the preparatory classes and the classes of Standards I and II in the public schools. The rate of payment to the Boards, based on the number on the roll at the end of 1908, is 6d. for each child in the preparatory classes, 1s. 3d. for each child in Standard I, and 1s. 6d. per head in Standard II. As the grants did not begin until the 1st January, 1909, the matter is not strictly one for the present report; but it may be interesting to note that now (August) all the Boards have accepted the conditions of the grants. The alternative proposed, the adoption of a uniform series of reading-books, was strongly condemned by nearly all the experts consulted, as tending to a cast-iron uniformity of method. If such a series, moreover, were to be published in the Dominion, the expense of publication would be out of all proportion to the benefits sought to be gained, if the quality of the books bore any sort of comparison with that of corresponding books produced by leading firms in Great Britain, and the cost of renewal from time to time, to bring the contents up to date, would be almost prohibitive.

The School Journal, &c.

The *School Journal* has now completed its second year of issue, the first number having been published in May, 1907. It is published in three parts—viz., Part I (sixteen pages), for Classes I and II; Part II (sixteen pages), for Classes III and IV; and Part III (thirty-two pages), for Classes V and VI. There are no issues for December and January, but the November number is enlarged to provide reading-