

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.

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-matter until the schools close, about the middle of December. For each year there are 168 pages in each of Parts I and II, and 336 pages in Part III. Public schools, Native schools, and special schools (such as industrial schools) are supplied with copies free, and an increasing number of private and secondary schools purchase copies at the rate of ½d. per copy for Part I, and 1d. per copy for each of Parts II and III. The monthly free distribution to children is—Part I, 37,163; Part II, 36,885; Part III, 29,718. The sales during the year 1909 are at the rate of 16,780 per annum for all parts.

The public schools are supplied with sufficient copies to provide for every child on the rolls of the various classes one copy of the appropriate Part of the *Journal*, Part I, II, or III, as the case may be.

Although the *Journal* aims primarily at being instructive rather than recreative, there is ample evidence from the Inspectors and teachers that its appearance each month is welcomed by the children, and that its influence tends to the very desirable end of fostering the habit and the love of reading. It differs from most of the miscellaneous Readers in that, being composed largely of articles belonging to well-defined series of courses, it preserves a continuity absent from ordinary readers. These courses deal with the history and geography of New Zealand, of the rest of the British Empire, and foreign countries, from the point of view of the human interests involved, so far as these appeal to a child's mind; with nature-knowledge of various kinds—the object being to extend what the pupils have learnt by their own observation, not to give information as a substitute for actual observation; with practical matters of hygiene; with civics and moral instruction; and with current topics, such as Antarctic exploration, Empire Day, Arbor Day, and so forth. It is believed that these subjects are so presented as to cultivate the imagination as well as to arouse thought.

The *Journal* is regularly illustrated; but, in addition to the illustrations contained in its pages, pictures and prints illustrating history, geography, and

* NOTE.—Further reference to this subject is made on page 34.