

CONVEYANCE AND BOARD OF SCHOLARS.

Free passes on the railway to the nearest public or private school are granted to children living near to the railway-line but out of reach of a primary school; and the same privilege is enjoyed by pupils having to travel to attend secondary schools, district high schools, and technical high schools, and also by free-place holders travelling to attend technical schools or classes other than technical high schools.

Education Boards are also authorized to make provision when necessary for the conveyance of pupils to primary schools by road or water. In the case of a child being compelled to live away from home to attend school, provision is made for a boarding-allowance of 2s. 6d. a week.

The following represents the expenditure for the year 1917-18 on the above-named services :—

—				Railway Fares.	Conveyance by Road and Water.	Boarding-allowance.	Total.
				£	£	£	£
Primary	..	..	..	9,885	10,050	1,572	21,507
Secondary	..	..	..	4,251	..	..	4,251
Technical	..	..	..	2,856	..	..	2,856
Total	..	..	..	16,992	10,050	1,572	28,614

The total expenditure for the previous year was £26,703.

CLASS-BOOKS AND SCHOOL AND CLASS LIBRARIES:

During the year grants were given for establishing and maintaining school and class libraries. These grants came under two heads :—

(a.) A capitation grant at the rate of 3d. per head on the average attendance was paid to Boards for the purpose of supplying schools with supplementary continuous readers in sufficient numbers for class reading in P to S6 inclusive, and also for the free supply of class-books in necessitous cases or in cases where a newly entered pupil had already purchased elsewhere class-books different from those in use in the school. After provision was made for the supply of such books, the balance of the grant, if any, was spent on approved books suitable for individual reading in school or at home.

(b.) Further to encourage the establishment and the satisfactory maintenance of school libraries provision is made for the payment of subsidies of £1 for £1 on moneys raised by voluntary contributions. In addition to this departmental subsidy a subsidy is payable by the Education Board under section 37 of the Education Act, but the Board is not required to pay a sum exceeding 3d. for each child in average attendance at a school, or exceeding £5 for any one school. The books purchased are to be suitable for individual reading in school or at home, and are to be approved by the Senior Inspector.

The complaints regarding the expense to which parents are put by reason of their having to purchase new books for their children when they move from one district to another are not so common as formerly, and there are good grounds for believing that the attention drawn by the Department to the provision that in these cases class-books must be supplied free has resulted in the relief of parents with respect to such charges. There are also similar grounds for believing the provision of the free supply of class-books in necessitous cases is being more generally complied with.