

while last year it reached 111,797, which is the highest number attained in any year except 1897, when it was the highest which has as yet been recorded. But for the unfortunate falling-off during the third quarter of the year, owing to the sickness then prevalent, there is little doubt but that the average for 1897 would have been exceeded, as the averages of the other three quarters of 1901 were all higher than those of 1897.

TABLE A.—SCHOOL ATTENDANCE AND YEARLY INCREASE FROM 1877 TO 1901.

Year.	School Attendance.					Yearly Increase on			
	Number belonging at Beginning of Year.	Number belonging at End of Year.	Average Attendance.*		Average Attendance expressed as Percentage of Roll-number.	Number belonging at Beginning of Year.	Number belonging at End of Year.	Average Attendance.†	
			Fourth Quarter.	Whole Year.				Fourth Quarter.	Whole Year.
1877	..	55,688	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
1878	50,849	65,040	49,435	45,521	..	..	9,352	..	..
1879	59,707	75,566	57,301	53,067	73·8	8,858	10,526	7,866	7,546
1880	68,124	82,401	62,946	60,625	74·6	8,417	6,835	5,645	7,558
1881	74,359	83,560	63,009	61,822	74·2	6,235	1,159	63	1,197
1882	76,309	87,179	66,426	63,709	73·6	1,950	3,619	3,417	1,887
1883	79,416	92,476	70,077	67,373	74·0	3,107	5,297	3,651	3,664
1884	84,883	97,238	74,650	72,657	75·1	5,467	4,762	4,573	5,284
1885	90,670	102,407	80,183	78,327	76·6	5,787	5,169	5,533	5,670
1886	95,377	106,328	83,361	80,737	76·1	4,707	3,921	3,178	2,410
1887	99,206	110,919	87,386	85,637	77·0	3,829	4,591	4,025	4,900
1888	103,534	112,685	90,849	90,108	79·3	4,328	1,766	3,463	4,471
1889	104,919	115,456	94,308	93,374	80·3	1,385	2,771	3,459	3,266
1890	108,158	117,912	96,670	94,632	79·9	3,239	2,456	2,362	1,258
1891	110,665	119,523	96,264	97,058	80·3	2,507	1,611	[-406]	2,426
1892	112,279	122,620	100,917	99,070	80·6	1,614	3,097	4,653	2,012
1893	114,305	124,686	99,872	98,615	78·5	2,026	2,066	[-1,045]	[-455]
1894	116,819	127,300	107,032	104,996	81·8	2,514	2,614	6,279	4,875
1895	119,900	129,856	108,708	108,394	82·8	3,081	2,556	1,676	3,398
1896	122,425	131,037	110,274	110,517	83·3	2,525	1,181	1,566	2,123
1897	123,533	132,197	111,952	112,328	83·9	1,108	1,160	1,678	1,811
1898	123,892	131,621	109,561	111,636	83·4	359	[-576]	[-2,391]	[-692]
1899	123,207	131,315	109,050	110,316	82·6	[-685]	[-306]	[-511]	[-1,320]
1900	123,416	130,724	111,498	111,747	84·1	209	[-591]	2,448	1,431
1901	122,725	131,351	112,354	111,797	84·1	[-691]	627	856	50

* From 1877 to 1893 (inclusive) the "strict" average is given, and for subsequent years the "working" average.

† From 1877 to 1894 (inclusive) the increase on the "strict" average is given, and for subsequent years that on the "working" average.

The average of the weekly roll-numbers throughout the year 1901 was almost the same as for the year 1900, the figures being 132,869 for 1901 and 132,897 for 1900. The number on the rolls at the end of the year 1901 shows an increase of 627 over the number on the rolls in December, 1900, the actual totals being respectively 131,351 for the former year and 130,724 for the latter. An analysis of these figures shows that there was an increase of 687 in the children under nine years of age, a decrease of 88 in the number between the ages of nine and fourteen, and a slight increase (28) in the number of children over fourteen years of age. The increase in the number of young children enrolled raises the expectation of an increased roll-number for the present year, 1902; while the establishment of district high schools should have the effect of increasing the number of pupils over fourteen years of age, an effect which will probably be somewhat more marked as time goes on.

The standard of regularity of attendance reached in 1900 was maintained in 1901, the total average attendance being again 84·1 per cent. of the average weekly roll-number, as against 82·6 in 1899. There seems to be good reason to hope that, partly through the operation of the School Attendance Act of 1901, partly from other causes, attendance at public schools may still further improve. It is, however, interesting to note in this connection that for the primary day-schools in England in 1900 the average attendance was 82·1 per cent. of the number on the registers, in Scotland 70 per cent., and in Ireland 64·1 per cent. As nearly as can be ascertained, the average attendance in the primary schools of the various Australian Colonies during the year 1900, expressed as a percentage of the net enrolment, was as follows: New South Wales, 72·3; Victoria, 67·54; Queensland, 72·7; South Australia, 69·0; Western Australia, 81·2; Tasmania, 74·9. The significance of these figures