

I.

EXTRACT FROM THE THIRTY-THIRD ANNUAL REPORT OF THE
MINISTER OF EDUCATION.

PRIMARY EDUCATION.

Number of Schools.

The number of public schools open at the end of 1909 was 2,057, or 59 more than at the end of 1908.

In Table A the schools are classified according to the yearly average attendance. The classification is in accordance with the provisions of the Education Amendment Act, 1908, which came into operation on the 1st January, 1909.

The number of small schools with an average not exceeding fifteen, which in 1908 rose from 447 to 504, shows a further increase for 1909, the number of such schools in operation last year being 569, or more than a quarter of the number of public schools in the Dominion.

There was a decrease of 28 in the number of schools with an average attendance of sixteen to twenty-five (1908—466 schools; 1909—438 schools).

The number of schools graded with an average attendance of twenty-six to forty was 329 in the year 1908; the number of such schools in 1909 was 349 (an increase of 20); of the last-named number, 90 schools, having thirty-six to forty pupils in average attendance, were accordingly grouped with the other schools of Grade IV (36–80), in which two adult teachers are provided by the new scale. In estimating the total number of schools under the charge of one teacher it is therefore necessary to deduct the 90 schools referred to; the total number of such schools—that is, schools with an average attendance not exceeding thirty-five—was last year 1,266; in 1908 the number of sole-teacher schools—namely, schools with an average of not more than forty—was 1,299. In other words, in 1908 the sole-teacher schools formed 65 per cent. of the total number of public schools, and in 1909 such schools formed 61·5 per cent. of the total. The aggregate average attendance at schools of this kind in 1908 was 24,812, or 19·4 per cent. of the total average attendance for the Dominion; in 1909 the aggregate was 22,859, or 17·1 per cent. In 1908 the number of schools with two or more teachers was 699, in 1909 it was 791. Of these schools there were in the former year 24 schools with an average attendance exceeding 600; last year there were 28 schools with such an attendance.

During the year 1909, 61 schools were closed; as in previous years, several of these schools, although reckoned as closed in their original form, were reopened in another; some were amalgamated, some half-time schools became full-time schools; and so on. Including such reopened schools, the total