

Age and Sex of Pupils.

(E.-2.—Table C1.)

Table C shows the age and sex of the pupils on the rolls of the public schools of the Dominion at the end of 1911, and the percentage of the roll for each age.

TABLE C.—AGE AND SEX OF PUPILS, DECEMBER, 1911.

Ages.	1911.			Percentages for Five Years.				
	Boys.	Girls.	Total.	1907.	190 .	1909.	1910.	1911.
5 and under 6 years .. .. .	7,131	6,408	13,539	8.0	8.2	8.7	8.4	8.4
6 " 7 " .. .. .	9,307	8,556	17,863	10.5	10.6	10.8	11.2	11.1
7 " 8 " .. .. .	10,094	9,246	19,340	11.6	11.7	11.6	11.5	12.0
8 " 9 " .. .. .	9,587	8,977	18,564	11.1	11.3	11.4	11.4	11.5
9 " 10 " .. .. .	9,300	8,638	17,938	11.4	11.0	11.2	11.3	11.1
10 " 11 " .. .. .	9,114	8,575	17,689	11.3	11.2	10.7	10.9	10.9
11 " 12 " .. .. .	8,799	8,101	16,900	11.0	10.9	10.6	10.2	10.5
12 " 13 " .. .. .	8,346	7,417	15,763	10.5	10.4	10.2	10.0	9.6
13 " 14 " .. .. .	7,132	6,420	13,552	8.7	8.4	8.5	8.5	8.4
14 " 15 " .. .. .	3,997	3,270	7,267	4.0	4.2	4.3	4.5	4.5
15 and over .. .. .	82,807	75,608	158,415	98.1	97.9	98.0	97.9	98.0
	1,755	1,478	3,233	1.9	2.1	2.0	2.1	2.0
Totals .. .. .	84,562	77,086	161,648	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

It will, however, be found that Table B, on page 5, gives very much fuller information in regard to both age and sex.

Age.—Of the children, 53.8 per cent. are under ten, and 46.2 per cent. are over ten. This proportion has remained constant for the past three years.

Sex.—For every 100 boys on the rolls of the public schools there were 91 girls. This proportion has remained practically stationary for several years past. According to the census returns for 1911 there were 100 boys between the ages of five and fifteen for every 97 girls. Now that it is compulsory for all children of school age to attend a school whenever it is open, it may well be asked what is the reason for this discrepancy. Certainly it is true that a larger proportion of girls attend private primary schools, but even after taking these into consideration we find that the numbers are 100 boys to every 94 girls. An examination of the figures set out in Table B reveals two important sources of leakage. In the first place, we find that for every 100 boys between the ages of five and six in attendance at public schools there were between 89 and 90 girls; and, secondly, of children thirteen years and over there were 100 boys to every 87 girls. With regard to this last figure, it might be supposed that girls, being somewhat quicker at passing through the standards than boys, enter the high school at an earlier age; but a glance at the figures for the secondary schools immediately negatives such an argument—there are only 70 girls in attendance to every 100 boys. We then arrive at three conclusions: (1) A considerable number of girls never enter the primary schools; (2) generally speaking, girls enter the primary schools at a later age than boys; (3) generally speaking, girls leave the primary schools at a much earlier age than boys.

In regard to (1), the census figures for 1911 throw some light on the matter; a larger proportion of girls than boys receive instruction at home—2,791 as against 2,057. Such home instruction, if reasonably efficient, is a ground for exemption under section 150 of the Education Act.

No. (2) is no doubt due to the reluctance of parents to send their girls to school at too early an age. The compulsory age is seven years.

No. (3) may be due to two causes, both of which, however, are closely related. It will be seen that, although there are only 87 girls to every 100 boys in attendance over the age of thirteen years, there are 92 girls to every 100 boys in Standard VI. The reason is that girls develop mentally at a more rapid rate than boys, and consequently pass through the standards at an average rate of a year quicker than boys. Hence a proportionately large number of girls succeed in obtaining an exemption certificate a year or more before they reach the age of exemption, and of these many are withdrawn from school immediately, before the child has obtained the full benefit of school discipline and instruction. A somewhat greater degree of differentiation in the work of the girls from that of the boys in the