

I.—EXTRACT FROM THE THIRTY-NINTH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION.

PRIMARY EDUCATION.

NUMBER OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

THE number of public schools open at the end of 1915 was 2,338, as against 2,301 for the year 1914, an increase of 37.

In the table below the schools are classified according to the yearly average attendance. The classification is made in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act, 1914, which came into operation on the 1st January, 1915.

NUMBER OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN EACH GRADE, 1915.

Grade.	Number of Schools.	Grade.	Number of Schools.	Grade.	Number of Schools.
0. (1-8)	191	VA. (241-280)	34	VIIc. (601-650)	16
I. (9-20)	731	VB. (281-320)	14	VII _D . (651-700)	10
II. (21-35)	483	VC. (321-360)	30	VII _E . (701-750)	6
III _A . (36-80)	500	VD. (361-400)	8	VII _F . (751-800)	5
III _B . (81-120)	134	VIA. (401-450)	12	VII _G . (801-850)	3
IV _A . (121-160)	54	VIB. (451-500)	16	VII _H . (851-900)	2
IV _B . (161-200)	46	VII _A . (501-550)	11	VII _I . (901-950)	..
IV _C . (201-240)	23	VII _B . (551-600)	7	VII _J . (951-1,000)	2
Total, 1915	..	..	..	2,338 schools.	
„ 1914	..	..	..	2,301 „	
Increase	..	..	..	37 „	

For the number of schools in each education district classified according to grade, reference should be made to Table A1.

The number of schools with two or more teachers in 1915 was 932, an increase of 33 over the number for the previous year. Of these schools there were 44 with an average attendance exceeding 600 in 1915, the number for 1914 being 38.

Sole-teacher schools, those with not over 35 in average attendance, numbered 1,405 in 1915, an increase of 30 over the previous year; but schools are in some cases maintained in a higher grade than their average attendance would appear to warrant, while on the other hand a number of schools in charge of sole teachers at the beginning of the year had so risen in attendance as to be entitled to assistant teachers before the end of the year. When due allowance is made for such cases the number of sole-teacher schools is 1,406. The aggregate average attendance at these sole-teacher schools in 1915 was 24,754, or 15·3 per cent. of the total primary average attendance of the Dominion; in 1914 the aggregate was 24,622, or 15·5 per cent. The average attendance per school in the case of sole-teacher schools was 17·6, or, omitting schools of Grade 0, 19·5.

The number of small schools with an average not exceeding 20 was 922, and the number with an average attendance of 21 to 80 was 983. The total number, therefore, of schools with not more than 80 in average attendance in 1915 was 1,905, an increase of 18 over the previous year.

COUNTRY SCHOOLS.

It is a source of continual regret that to the hardships and disabilities of the country settler, who is developing our richest natural resources, there is added the lack of proper facilities for the education of his children. There seems to be only one solution for many of the difficulties surrounding the country-school problem.