

The following extract from the *English Journal of Education* is pertinent to the question in hand: "At secondary schools, speaking broadly, the child is a personality, and is taught and treated as such; at elementary schools, again speaking broadly, he is treated far too much as an item in a mass. This has nothing to do with the outlook and ideals of elementary and secondary teachers; it is simply due to the fact of the overwhelming size of classes in the primary schools. Thirty children in a schoolroom are thirty individuals; sixty is a mass. . . . The first objective of educational reformers should be the reduction in the size of the classes."

The following figures show a comparison of conditions in other countries compared with those prevailing in New Zealand:—

AVERAGE NUMBER OF CHILDREN PER ADULT TEACHER (COUNTING TWO PUPIL-TEACHERS AS ONE ADULT).

London (County Council schools)	..	..	..	..	..	36.1
England (Board of Education schools)	..	..	..	..	..	32.7
Scotland	..	..	..	..	..	36.2
New York State	..	..	..	..	..	26.4
United States	..	..	..	..	..	24.1
Switzerland	..	..	..	..	..	44.0
New South Wales	..	..	..	..	..	31.7
Victoria	..	..	..	..	..	31.2
New Zealand (schools over 240)	..	..	..	..	..	45.6
„ (all schools)	..	..	..	..	..	32.5

The following figures show the ratio of males to females, adult teachers and pupil-teachers being considered separately. For purposes of comparison the figures for the previous years are also given.

	1913.		1914.		1915.	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
Ratio of adult male to adult female teachers, schools with 1 to 20 scholars	100	: 349*	100	: 385*	100	: 323
Ratio of adult male to adult female teachers, schools with more than 20 scholars	100	: 152†	100	: 159†	100	: 176
Ratio of adult male to adult female teachers, all schools	100	: 166	100	: 173	100	: 193
Ratio of male pupil-teachers to female pupil-teachers	100	: 334	100	: 338	100	: 344
Ratio of male to female teachers (including pupil-teachers), all schools	100	: 180	100	: 186	100	: 205

* Schools with 1 to 15 scholars; grade altered in 1915. † Schools with over 15 pupils.

Owing to the alteration in the maximum attendance of Grade I schools a fair comparison cannot be made in the first group given above. It will be observed, however, that in each of the other groups, especially the groups comprised of adult teachers, there is a marked increase in the proportion of female teachers compared with the previous year. This can to a great extent be accounted for by the enlistment of male teachers for military service, and the consequent temporary filling of their positions by women. The conditions prevailing in this respect in New Zealand and in other parts of the world are shown in the table below. As in the more densely populated countries there is not likely to be the large proportion of small schools, with salaries attached too low to attract male teachers, that there is in New Zealand, primary schools with an average attendance of less than 21 are excluded from the New Zealand figures.

RATIO OF WOMEN TEACHERS TO MEN TEACHERS IN OTHER COUNTRIES.

	England (Board of Education).		Scotland.		United States.		Manitoba.		New Zealand.	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
Adult primary teachers	100	: 299	100	: 278	100	: 399	100	: 598	100	: 176
Secondary teachers	100	: 99	*		100	: 131	*		100	: 72
Training-college students	100	: 178	100	: 494	100	: 411	*		100	: 387

* Information not available.

It is apparent from these figures that in the supply of male teachers New Zealand compares favourably with other countries. As about one-half of the children in our public schools are under ten years of age, and one-half of the remainder are girls, it is contended that women teachers are the most suitable for about three-quarters of the school population. It is clear, therefore, that if the proportion of women to men on the staff was much greater, there would still be no great cause for alarm as to the efficiency of our staffing.