

The average number of pupils per teacher in all schools (taking two pupil-teachers as being equal to one adult teacher) was thirty-three, the figure being the same as in the previous year. It will be observed, however, from the above figures that less than 63,000 children are included in the groups in which the average number of children per teacher was thirty-two or less, while over 106,000 are in the groups having one teacher for from forty-two to forty-seven pupils. In many of the large schools classes are much larger than the average figure indicates. The average number in schools of Grades V to VII was four less in 1918 than in 1917; this is possibly on account of the attendance being unusually low and the staffs not being reduced. As a step towards reducing the size of classes provision was made, which became applicable in 1919, for additional assistance being employed in large schools for every additional forty pupils, instead of for every additional fifty, as had previously been the case. It is realized that in the case of the larger schools much yet remains to be done in the direction of reducing the size of classes to a number more compatible with efficiency.

With regard to the sex of public-school teachers, the figures below show that the proportion of men to women teachers is still increasing, although not to the same extent as in recent years. In 1917 there was a decrease of 118 in the actual number of male teachers as compared with the previous year; in 1918 the decrease was only seventeen, and it is considered that with the number of men released from military duty and returning to the teaching profession in 1919 the falling-off in numbers will be entirely arrested. It is to be expected that in small schools with twenty pupils or less in attendance there will be a large preponderance of women teachers, and the figures show that in such schools only one in every six teachers is a male teacher. In schools with over twenty scholars, however, nearly one in every three adult teachers is a male teacher, the ratio of men to women being 100 : 227. If anything in the vicinity of this proportion can be maintained there will be little cause for anxiety, it being freely acknowledged that women are suitable teachers for three-fourths of the school population. The very small number of males among the pupil-teachers and probationers in recent years, and the small proportion of men students at the training colleges, has raised the doubt as to whether a sufficient number of men were entering the profession to maintain the desirable proportion of male teachers in future years. It is reported that the increased salaries and allowances recently provided for pupil-teachers and probationers have resulted in larger numbers of male candidates applying for entrance to the profession in 1919, and an increase in the number of men students at training colleges also took place in 1918, which will probably be still greater in 1919. It is also to be remembered in considering the entrants to the profession that the average length of service of women teachers is much shorter than that of men, so that the disparity between the numbers of the men and women of a given year gradually lessens with the passing of time.

The following figures show in detail the position with regard to the population of men teachers and women teachers in the primary schools:—

	1915.		1916.		1917.		1918.	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
Ratio of adult male to adult female teachers—								
Schools with 1 to 20 scholars ..	100	: 323	100	: 386	100	: 544	100	: 523
Schools with more than 20 scholars ..	100	: 176	100	: 194	100	: 213	100	: 227
All schools	100	: 193	100	: 214	100	: 240	100	: 253
Ratio of male pupil-teachers to female pupil-teachers	100	: 344	100	: 379	100	: 391	100	: 425
Ratio of male to female teachers (including pupil-teachers), all schools ..	100	: 205	100	: 228	100	: 254	100	: 267

Comparisons with the statistics of other countries show that (including junior or student teachers or persons in similar positions) in the United States of America 2 in every 10 teachers are men, in Ontario 2 in every 8, in England 2 in every 8, in Victoria 2 in every 6, in Queensland 2 in every 5, in New South Wales 2 in every 4, while in New Zealand the corresponding figures are 2 in every 7.