

greatly exceed that of a wooden building, as is the case in certain parts of the Dominion, the more durable material is to be preferred.

Though the high cost of building at the present time prohibits the initiation of a general scheme of reconstruction, the matter, with respect to the more urgent cases at any rate, cannot be deferred indefinitely.

### ROLL NUMBER.

(E-2, Tables B1 and B2.)

The number of children in attendance at public schools, as shown by the mean of the average weekly roll for the four quarters of the year, maintained, in 1917, the increase that has been recorded during past years, the percentage increase being greater than in the previous year. The following figures show the average weekly roll number and the roll number at the end of 1917 :—

	Mean of Average Weekly Roll.		Roll Number at end of Year.	
	Including Secondary Departments of District High Schools.	Excluding Secondary Departments of District High Schools.	Including Secondary Departments of District High Schools.	Excluding Secondary Departments of District High Schools.
Year 1917 .. .. .	187,954	185,549	190,354	188,174
Year 1916 .. .. .	184,056	181,670	185,884	183,769
Increase in 1917 ..	3,898	3,879	4,470	4,405
Increase per cent. in 1917	2.1	2.1	2.4	2.4

The percentage increase in the average roll during the last five years has been as follows: 1913, 3.1 per cent.; 1914, 3.6 per cent.; 1915, 3.2 per cent.; 1916, 1.6 per cent.; 1917, 2.1 per cent. There was a fall in the increase in 1916, but the figure for 1917 is again upon the upward grade. The increase in number is spread over children of all standards, with the exception of the preparatory classes, where there has been a slight decrease. This appears to have resulted not so much from a reduction in the number of new entrants as from the tendency to shorten the length of time spent by pupils in the preparatory classes. The increase in the roll number was greater in the North Island (including Marlborough) than in the South Island, the percentage increases being 2.9 and 0.9 respectively.

The table below shows the mean average roll number for every fifth year from 1878 to 1903, and for each of the last eleven years; the table gives also the total average attendance for each year, the average attendance as a percentage of the roll (including secondary departments of district high schools), and the number of teachers employed in the public schools.

### SCHOOLS, ATTENDANCE, AND TEACHERS.

Year.	Number of Schools.	Mean of Average Weekly Roll.	Average Attendance, Whole Year.	Average Attendance as Percentage of Weekly Roll.	Number of Teachers.					
					Adults.			Pupil-teachers.		
					M.	F.	Total.	M.	F.	Total.
1878 .. .. .	748	..	*48,773	..	707	454	1,161	118	332	450
1883 .. .. .	971	90,859	69,838	76.9	905	656	1,561	159	571	730
1888 .. .. .	1,158	113,636	90,108	79.3	1,039	887	1,926	219	694	913
1893 .. .. .	1,375	125,692	109,321	79.8	1,107	1,096	2,203	238	825	1,063
1898 .. .. .	1,655	133,782	111,636	83.4	1,234	1,370	2,604	229	831	1,060
1903 .. .. .	1,786	134,748	113,047	83.9	1,270	1,726	2,996	147	552	699
1907 .. .. .	1,963	141,946	120,226	84.6	1,332	1,955	3,287	172	478	650
1908 .. .. .	1,998	145,974	127,160	87.1	1,331	2,021	3,352	161	476	637
1909 .. .. .	2,057	151,142	132,773	87.8	1,406	2,208	3,614	166	530	696
1910 .. .. .	2,096	154,756	135,738	87.7	1,456	2,252	3,708	174	526	700
1911 .. .. .	2,166	159,299	142,186	89.3	1,493	2,351	3,844	179	528	707
1912 .. .. .	2,214	164,492	146,282	88.9	1,555	2,550	4,105	162	476	638
1913 .. .. .	2,255	169,530	151,242	89.2	1,603	2,659	4,262	142	474	616
1914 .. .. .	2,301	175,570	158,134	90.1	1,628	2,820	4,448	139	470	609
1915 .. .. .	2,338	181,229	163,092	90.0	1,591	3,077	4,668	141	485	626
1916 .. .. .	2,355	184,056	163,156	88.6	1,501	3,209	4,710	137	519	656
1917 .. .. .	2,368	187,954	168,711	89.8	1,383	3,224	4,707	132	517	649

\* Average of three quarters. † Strict average. ‡ Working average. § Exclusive of male and female probationers.

The above figures relate to public schools. To estimate the total number of children receiving primary education in the Dominion it will be necessary to include public schools (exclusive of secondary departments of district high schools),