

The following figures represent the total number of children (of whom the average weekly roll number was given above) in average attendance at registered schools giving primary instruction :—

|   | 1916.          | 1917.          |
|---|----------------|----------------|
| Public schools (excluding secondary departments of district high schools) .. .. . | 160,980        | 166,510        |
| Native village and mission schools .. .. .  | 4,622          | 4,619          |
| Registered private primary schools .. .. .  | 15,199         | 16,429         |
| Lower departments of secondary schools .. .. .                                    | 403            | 530            |
| Special schools .. .. .   | 570            | 588            |
| <b>Totals .. .. .</b>   | <b>181,774</b> | <b>188,676</b> |

### CLASSIFICATION, AGE, AND EXAMINATION OF PUPILS.

(E.—2, Tables C1—C7.)

#### *Classification and Age of Pupils.*

The classification of primary-school pupils is left for the most part in the hands of the teachers, Inspectors of Schools supervising and assisting in the work where necessary. The importance of correct classification has been frequently emphasized, special attention being drawn to the danger of retaining children too long in the preparatory classes. At the same time it is to be regretted that the age at which children in general qualify for a certificate of proficiency entitling them to free education at a secondary school on the completion of the primary course is still too high. Care in avoiding waste of time in the classification of the pupils, and the reduction where possible of the size of the classes, are essential for any advance in this respect. The problem of classification, especially where large classes have to be dealt with, is a particularly delicate task demanding the best experience and judgment that the teacher has to bring to bear upon it.

The table below sets forth the ages and classification of the pupils of public schools in the Dominion :—

CLASSIFIED RETURN OF THE NUMBERS ON THE ROLLS OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS AT THE END OF 1917, EXCLUDING SECONDARY DEPARTMENTS OF DISTRICT HIGH SCHOOLS.

| Ages.                  | Class I.      |               | Standard I.   |               | Standard II.  |               | Standard III. |               | Standard IV.  |              | Standard V.  |              | Standard VI. |              | Standard VII. |            | Totals.       |               |
|------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|------------|---------------|---------------|
|                        | Boys.         | Girls.        | Boys.         | Girls.        | Boys.         | Girls.        | Boys.         | Girls.        | Boys.         | Girls.       | Boys.        | Girls.       | Boys.        | Girls.       | Boys.         | Girls.     | Boys.         | Girls.        |
| 5 and under 6 ..       | 7,907         | 7,218         | 1             | 1             | 1             | ..            | ..            | ..            | ..            | ..           | ..           | ..           | ..           | ..           | ..            | ..         | 7,909         | 7,219         |
| 6 .. 7 ..              | 10,358        | 9,304         | 116           | 123           | 7             | 5             | ..            | ..            | ..            | ..           | ..           | ..           | ..           | ..           | ..            | ..         | 10,481        | 9,432         |
| 7 .. 8 ..              | 9,547         | 8,426         | 1,572         | 1,758         | 120           | 147           | 5             | 9             | ..            | ..           | ..           | ..           | ..           | ..           | ..            | ..         | 11,244        | 10,340        |
| 8 .. 9 ..              | 4,907         | 4,177         | 4,653         | 4,761         | 1,520         | 1,671         | 144           | 164           | 3             | 10           | 1            | 1            | ..           | ..           | ..            | ..         | 11,228        | 10,784        |
| 9 .. 10 ..             | 1,614         | 1,307         | 3,824         | 3,392         | 4,331         | 4,284         | 1,401         | 1,389         | 133           | 133          | 6            | 8            | 1            | 1            | ..            | ..         | 11,310        | 10,514        |
| 10 .. 11 ..            | 496           | 373           | 1,545         | 1,217         | 3,679         | 3,380         | 3,719         | 3,718         | 1,218         | 1,194        | 153          | 129          | 7            | 2            | ..            | ..         | 10,817        | 10,013        |
| 11 .. 12 ..            | 149           | 145           | 507           | 368           | 1,723         | 1,464         | 3,556         | 3,339         | 3,342         | 3,268        | 1,179        | 1,164        | 138          | 122          | 1             | 2          | 10,595        | 9,872         |
| 12 .. 13 ..            | 58            | 88            | 176           | 115           | 668           | 533           | 1,926         | 1,696         | 3,383         | 3,101        | 3,066        | 2,962        | 895          | 948          | 17            | 12         | 10,189        | 9,455         |
| 13 .. 14 ..            | 26            | 12            | 62            | 38            | 194           | 158           | 765           | 630           | 1,863         | 1,667        | 3,194        | 2,890        | 2,510        | 2,490        | 57            | 77         | 8,671         | 7,968         |
| 14 .. 15 ..            | 8             | 5             | 14            | 13            | 51            | 42            | 197           | 136           | 626           | 439          | 1,382        | 1,149        | 1,922        | 1,776        | 38            | 70         | 4,238         | 3,630         |
| 15 .. 16 ..            | 2             | 1             | 2             | 6             | 8             | 10            | 30            | 20            | 100           | 81           | 357          | 240          | 670          | 597          | 7             | 13         | 1,176         | 968           |
| 16 .. 17 ..            | ..            | 1             | 2             | ..            | 1             | ..            | 1             | ..            | 3             | 3            | 12           | 9            | 32           | 38           | 3             | 4          | 54            | 55            |
| <b>Over 17 ..</b>      | ..            | ..            | ..            | ..            | ..            | ..            | ..            | ..            | ..            | 1            | 3            | 1            | 3            | ..           | 2             | 2          | 8             | 4             |
| <b>Totals, 1917 ..</b> | <b>35,072</b> | <b>31,057</b> | <b>12,474</b> | <b>11,792</b> | <b>12,303</b> | <b>11,694</b> | <b>11,744</b> | <b>11,101</b> | <b>10,671</b> | <b>9,897</b> | <b>9,353</b> | <b>8,559</b> | <b>6,178</b> | <b>5,974</b> | <b>125</b>    | <b>180</b> | <b>97,920</b> | <b>90,254</b> |

The table is useful in showing the retardation occurring in the school-life of the pupils. The average age of children in the Dominion in S1 at the end of the year is nine years, in S2 ten years, and so on. These ages are one year higher than would be the case if all children began school at the age of five and spent two years