

I.

EXTRACT FROM THE THIRTY-FIFTH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE
MINISTER OF EDUCATION.

PRIMARY EDUCATION.

Number of Public Schools.

THE number of public schools open at the end of 1911 was 2,166, as against 2,096 for the year 1910, an increase of 70.

In Table A the schools are classified according to the yearly average attendance. In a number of cases schools maintained in grades under Schedule A of clause 2 of the staffs and salaries regulations are included in this table in such grades, although the average attendance of these schools respectively for 1911 was below the minimum of the grades as indicated in Table A. The classification is in accordance with the provisions of the Education Amendment Act, 1908, which came into operation on the 1st January, 1909.

The number of small schools with an average attendance not exceeding 15 has increased since 1910 from 527 to 555. There has likewise been a marked increase in schools with an average attendance of 16 to 80—1,225 as compared with 1,196. Of schools with an average attendance of over 80 the number has also increased by 13—386 as against 373. It will thus be seen that the increase in attendance has been general throughout all grades of schools, a fact commented upon in the section dealing with attendance in the primary schools.

Schools with an average of 35 or under are sole-teacher schools. On referring to Table A it will be seen that there were 1,318 such schools. But, as already stated, 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. Thus in Grade IV there were, in 1911, 27 schools the average attendance of which did not warrant the appointment of an assistant teacher, but in Grades II and III nine schools had the services of an assistant teacher. There were therefore altogether 1,336 schools in 1911 in charge of sole teachers, an increase of 45 over last year. In other words, in 1911 sole-teacher schools formed 62 per cent. of the total number of public schools in the Dominion. The aggregate average attendance at these sole-teacher schools in 1910 was 22,793, or 16·7 per cent. of the total average attendance of the Dominion; in 1911 the aggregate was 24,579, or 17·1 per cent. The average per school was 17·8 per cent., or 23·76 omitting schools below 16 in average attendance.

The number of schools with two or more teachers was, in 1910, 805. In 1911 the number was 830. Of these schools there were, in 1910, 28 with an average attendance exceeding 600, and 31 in 1911.

During the year 1911 85 schools were closed. Several of these schools, although reckoned as closed in their original form, were reopened in another: in some cases two schools were amalgamated; in some, half-time schools became separate full-