

in the preparatory classes and one year in each of the following standards. It is therefore taking a liberal view to regard a child in S1 between the ages of eight and ten years as being of normal classification. The table is based on this assumption, the numbers below the lower horizontal lines representing cases of retardation the numbers above the upper horizontal lines representing children brighter than the average. It is not possible from the table to show cases above normal classification in the preparatory classes, or cases of retardation in S7. An examination of the figures discloses the following results :—

Class.				Normal Classification.	Above Normal Classification.	Below Normal Classification.
				Per Cent.	Per Cent.	Per Cent.
Class P	..	..	..	..	..	8
„ S1	..	..	..	68	15	17
„ S2	..	..	..	66	14	20
„ S3	..	..	..	63	13	24
„ S4	..	..	..	64	13	23
„ S5	..	..	..	68	15	17
„ S6	..	..	..	72	17	11
Classes S1-S6				67	15	19

The average percentage of cases of retardation in S1 to S6 inclusive is 19, the highest rate - 24 per cent.—obtaining in S3. This means that 24 out of every 100 children enrolled in S3 at the end of the year were over twelve years of age. In S4 the percentage of retardation is only slightly less—namely, 23. That the retardation is so emphasized in these classes must be set down to two causes—namely, first, that in these classes is represented the accumulated retardation of the child's earlier school life; and, secondly, that many of the retarded cases leave school without reaching the higher classes at all. Many of the causes of retardation such as mental backwardness, physical incapacity, and migration from school to school are impossible or difficult to remove. On the other hand, delay in beginning school life is responsible for many children being over the average age, although when measured by the length of time spent at school they cannot be regarded as cases of retardation. The fact remains that a very appreciable number of children are doing the work of a standard that should have been reached at an earlier age, the delay representing a wastage in time and efficiency that parents and teachers should endeavour to avoid. This position points to the necessity, as opportunity permits, for the establishment of a special auxiliary class with a special teacher for the care of backward children in every large school, in which class backward children should remain for a longer or shorter period to get special training to enable them to take their places with their fellows in classes of normal age. That more has not been done in this direction must be set down to the fact that only recently has legislative authority been obtained for the payment of a special teacher, but still more to the fact that before anything effective can be done a supply of suitable teachers is essential. The question of the necessary accommodation is also a factor in the matter.

The average ages of the pupils in the several classes for the two years 1916 and 1917 as at the end of the year's instruction were as follows :—

				1916.		1917.	
				Yrs. mos.		Yrs. mos.	
Preparatory classes	..	..	..	7	0	7	1
Class S1	..	..	..	9	1	9	1
„ S2	..	..	..	10	1	10	2
„ S3	..	..	..	11	2	11	3
„ S4	..	..	..	12	2	12	3
„ S5	..	..	..	13	0	13	1
„ S6	..	..	..	13	9	13	10
Mean of average age				9	9	9	9

The figures for each education district are shown in Table C5 of E.-2. There is still a considerable range of difference in the average ages for the