

# No. 1.—EXTRACT FROM THE REPORT OF THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION.

## PRIMARY EDUCATION.

### NUMBER OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

(Tables A1 and B3.)

The number of public schools open at the end of 1918 was 2,365, as against 2,368 for the year 1917, a decrease of 3. In the following table the schools are classified according to the yearly average attendance, and the total number of children at the schools in each grade is shown.

Grade of School.	Number of Schools.	Total Average Attendance.	Grade of School.	Number of Schools.	Total Average Attendance.
O. (1-8) .. ..	170	1,013	VIA. (401-450) .. ..	11	4,655
I. (9-20) .. ..	672	9,438	VIB. (451-500) .. ..	14	7,209
II. (21-35) .. ..	524	13,356	VIIA. (501-550) .. ..	11	5,225
IIIA. (36-80) .. ..	572	28,693	VIIb. (551-600) .. ..	12	6,839
IIIB. (81-120) .. ..	109	10,299	VIIc. (601-650) .. ..	18	11,633
IVA. (121-160) .. ..	59	8,074	VIIId. (651-700) .. ..	14	9,477
IVB. (161-200) .. ..	47	8,095	VIIe. (701-750) .. ..	7	5,018
IVc. (201-240) .. ..	27	6,150	VIIF. (751-800) .. ..	6	4,645
VA. (241-280) .. ..	28	7,748	VIIg. (801-850) .. ..	1	801
VB. (281-320) .. ..	21	6,997	VIIh. (851-900) .. ..	2	1,719
Vc. (321-360) .. ..	22	7,351	VIIi. (901-950) .. ..	1	906
VD. (361-400) .. ..	17	6,138			
Total, 1918 .. ..	..	..	..	2,365 schools.	
„ 1917 .. ..	..	..	..	2,368 „	
Decrease .. ..	..	..	..	3 „	

For the number of schools in each education district classified according to grade, reference should be made to Table A1.

It will be observed that of 2,365 schools, 1,768 were in Grades I-IIIa, having average attendances ranging from 9 to 80, and of these 672 had averages ranging from 9 to 20.

Of 171,000 children, nearly 24,000 are in sole-teacher schools with averages ranging from 1 to 35, and nearly 79,000 children are in schools with an average number of pupils of more than 280.

### PUBLIC SCHOOL BUILDINGS.

During the year ending 31st March, 1919, applications were received by the Department from Education Boards for grants for new public-school buildings, additions, residences, sites, &c., to a total amount of £238,817. This is apart from schools established in buildings for which no grant is made except by way of rent. The departmental expenditure for the year was £80,780, and at the end of the financial year the commitments totalled £98,000. Thirty-five new schools of varying sizes were erected, and fifty-six were enlarged. A considerable number of works for which grants had been authorized were delayed owing to the difficulty in procuring the necessary labour and, in some cases, the necessary materials.

During the war the Educations Boards restricted the applications for grants to cases that were regarded as of pressing urgency. The result was that in growing centres the school accommodation became overtaxed to a degree that could be justified only by the necessity for exercising the strictest economy in the expenditure of public funds. Where, under normal conditions, additional rooms would have been provided, the best use was made of the existing accommodation, or temporary provision for the increase in the attendance was made by renting such halls as were available, and where new schools were required every possible expedient was adopted to avoid the erection of buildings. These temporary arrange-