

A still more important and persistent cause, however, of the increased number and proportion of uncertificated teachers lies in the character of the certificate itself. For some years past the old Class E certificate, which once formed the ordinary qualification of a large proportion of teachers, has been dropped. Examinations are no longer held for certificates of this class, and fresh certificates of the kind are not issued, except in certain very exceptional circumstances. The result is that a large body of persons who under the older *régime* would have been returned as certificated, having just managed to secure a Class E qualification, now fall short of the requirements, and either obtain no recognised status at all, or at least receive only a license to teach. Some indication of this fact may readily be found in the very large increase during the last two or three years of the licenses issued, though the notable increase in this respect is subject also to other explanations which need not here be given. The importance of the factor to which attention is directed will probably best be judged by taking the records of the actual certificate issues in one or two typical years. Ten years ago, in 1897, out of 187 new certificates issued (exclusive of licenses), 109, or 58·28 per cent. of the number, were certificates of Class E; in 1903, out of 164 issued, 92, or 56·09 per cent. of the number, were of the same class; in 1907, out of 218 new issues, those of Class E numbered only 8, forming the practically negligible proportion of 3·67 per cent. of the total. Again, from a somewhat different point of view, of the 2,631 certificated teachers who were returned as in active service in various classes of schools in 1898, 972, or 36·9 per cent., were holders of certificates of Class E; from the latest returns in 1908, out of 2,815 certificated teachers so employed, 595, or only 21·1 per cent. of the number, held E certificates.

In the same connection attention may also be drawn to one or two other matters which have a bearing on the point in question. It should not be forgotten that the superannuation scheme, brought into being by the Act of 1905, has now the effect of withdrawing from active service at an earlier age a number of holders of certificates. The scheme came into operation on the 1st January, 1906, and under it up to the close of 1907 certificate-holders to the number of eighty-four have received retiring-allowances, relieving them of the necessity of struggling on in their declining years, as in the absence of any such provision they would probably in most cases have been obliged to do.

Further, it has also to be noted that the training colleges themselves, to which the country now looks for an adequate supply of fully qualified teachers, temporarily accentuated the shortage by retaining under their improved organization a very large proportion of their students for a two-years course of study.

On the whole, seen in the light of the explanations given, the figures under review bear a very different meaning from that suggested without critical inquiry. Through recent changes more teachers have been required, and, to a great extent, teachers of better attainment; and, if the facts observable are not yet all they should be, the outlook is in reality very far from unpromising. Never before have so many teachers been found making earnest efforts to improve their status. During the past two years the holders of Class C certificates in active service have more than doubled in number, and a largely increased proportion of those who have already obtained their "C" are looking towards a still higher class.

The following table, showing the class of certificate held by duly qualified teachers employed in all forms of public instruction from the year 1903, is given for further information, the estimate being made in each case as at the 30th June, the date of the annual *Gazette* notice:—

TABLE E4.—COMPARATIVE TABLE OF CERTIFICATES HELD BY TEACHERS EMPLOYED IN PUBLIC INSTRUCTION.

| Class. | Number of Teachers in each Year. | | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| | 1908. | 1907. | 1906. | 1905. | 1904. | 1903. |
| A | 94 | 87 | 86 | 83 | 75 | 71 |
| B | 232 | 208 | 201 | 198 | 190 | 177 |
| C | 415 | 294 | 197 | 172 | 151 | 160 |
| D | 1,479 | 1,593 | 1,650 | 1,499 | 1,251 | 1,412 |
| E | 595 | 642 | 721 | 794 | 907 | 909 |
| Totals— | | | | | | |
| Classes A, B, C, and D | 2,220 | 2,182 | 2,134 | 1,952 | 1,667 | 1,820 |
| Classes A, B, C, D, and E | 2,815 | 2,824 | 2,855 | 2,746 | 2,574 | 2,729 |