

Provision for Uncertificated Teachers.

The regulations made at the end of 1921 governing the establishment by Education Boards of central classes for the instruction of pupil-teachers, probationers, and uncertificated teachers in science and in drawing and handwork, and also of short-period schools of instruction for teachers, are being carefully administered, with, it is thought, more satisfactory results than were previously obtained. The classes are free, the Department paying the cost of maintenance, and, wherever possible, classified technical or manual-training teachers are being employed as instructors. Teachers attending the classes regularly and making good progress may be exempted from sitting for the examinations in science and in drawing and handwork for the Class D certificate.

Inspectors of Schools report that the instructions issued setting out definitely the duties of head teachers of schools with regard to the training of pupil-teachers and probationers are for the most part being faithfully carried out, and that there has been a general improvement in this phase of the work. Head teachers are expected to instruct pupil-teachers and probationers in all the subjects for their teachers' examinations, excepting science, drawing and handwork, first aid, and singing, and also to see that they have sufficient daily practice in teaching, and that a specified portion of the day is devoted to systematic study. The improvement that has taken place in the educational and general qualifications of young people taking up pupil-teacherships and probationerships should do much to lighten the burden of head teachers in this respect.

Supplementary Model Country Schools.

Regulations are now in force providing for the establishment of supplementary model country schools for the purpose of giving training in the management of a country school (a) to young persons who intend to become teachers but are ineligible to enter a training college, (b) to teachers requiring further training. Only teachers who have shown special skill in managing a country school are placed in charge of a model school of this type, and they receive special remuneration. Teachers being trained in the school receive their full salary and other young persons receive an allowance. Some Education Boards now have such schools in operation, and report on the success of the experiment and on the benefit the schools are proving to their country teachers.

GRADING OF PRIMARY-SCHOOL TEACHERS.

The annual list of primary-school graded teachers was issued as usual early in April. As is to be expected from the length of time during which the grading scheme has been in operation, the system is now running with greater smoothness, and there is evidence of a better understanding of its provisions on the part of the teachers concerned than was formerly the case. The number of appeals received, which is less than 3 per cent. of the teachers graded, has probably now fallen to a fairly constant level, and is of interest as indicating in the main the acceptance of the list by teachers as an approximately accurate and impartial estimate of their efficiency.

Although it is now hoped that any anomalies that formerly existed have been discovered and rectified, it could scarcely be expected that the list would be invariably accurate to within one or two marks, and so it is not unreasonable to allow to Inspectors, when recommending applicants for appointment, some amount of discretion corresponding to the degree of error considered possible. Special care has been taken to ensure that all soldier-teachers' claims for consideration receive attention.

Since the decision of the certificated teachers was given to accept the grading-list as the basis for appointment to positions in the teaching service, this system has remained in force and is generally accepted as a considerable improvement on the procedure which it superseded. Advantage is taken to a considerable extent of the opportunities thus afforded to teachers of appointment outside their own districts. The gain is most apparent to the teachers in small education districts whose chances of advancement in the past have been very limited owing to the small number of higher-grade positions open to them under the older conditions.