

SPECIAL ALLOWANCES TO TEACHERS.

254. Certain special allowances are paid to teachers and assistants for the performance, in some cases, of special duties. The allowances are as follows :—

- (1) Allowance of £27 additional to salary of second female assistants in large schools : Annual amount involved, £2,600.
- (2) Special allowances to Grade 2 female assistants of secondary departments of district high schools : Annual amount involved, £1,200.
- (3) Special allowances to heads of departments and certain female assistants in secondary and technical schools : Annual amount involved, £2,000.

255. While the teachers to whom the above allowances are paid have in some cases special duties to perform, we are of the opinion that those who are appointed to the higher positions at the higher salaries should be prepared to undertake without special emolument such additional responsibilities as are attached to those positions.

Estimated saving, £5,800.

SALARIES OF FEMALES TEACHERS IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS.

256. It has been established in the Dominion, in so far as secondary and technical school teachers are concerned, that the ratio between the salary of a female teacher and that of a male is approximately 4 : 5. This ratio has been adopted in most countries where there is a differentiation between the salaries of female and male teachers. The ratio has, in fact, been used in England under what is commonly known as the “ Burnham ” scale for teachers’ salaries, and, for the most part, it is used in the scales adopted by the Australian States. It seems an anomaly that the differentiation should exist in the case of secondary and technical school teachers and not in the case of primary-school teachers, and we see no reason why the salaries of primary-school teachers should not be brought into line, and we recommend accordingly.

Estimated saving, £75,000.

MINIMUM AGE OF ADMISSION TO PRIMARY SCHOOLS.

257. We have carefully considered the general question of whether there should be any alteration in the age of admission to primary schools, more particularly in the light of the possibility of effecting a reduction in education costs as a result of an alteration.

258. The expenditure, particularly on salaries, is directly affected by the number of pupils, and this in turn is affected by the age at which children are admitted to the primary schools. We are satisfied that children would not be adversely affected were the age raised from five to six.

259. We would here drawn attention to the fact that the same question was considered by the Committee on National Expenditure set up by the British Government in 1922. That Committee reported that the evidence showed that children who had not commenced their school training until six years of age did not show any appreciable difference in their attainments or knowledge on reaching the school-leaving age from those who commenced at an earlier age.

260. A reduction in the numbers of pupils attending the primary schools would be one effective means of reducing the size of classes and also the cost of education, and we recommend the raising of the age of entrance to six years, as was recommended by the Committee on National Expenditure in Great Britain in 1922.

261. The savings that would be effected during next financial year would be as follow :—

	£
Capitation to Boards	2,000
Incidental expenses to School Committees	9,000
	£11,000

There would eventually be further savings due to the reduced number of trainees required.

PROFICIENCY EXAMINATION.

262. We are of the opinion that a fee should be charged for the Proficiency Examination. A fee of 5s. per candidate is at present charged whenever a special examination is held. We recommend that a fee of 2s. 6d. per pupil be charged as a Proficiency Examination fee. Revenue from this source would reduce the cost of this service by approximately £3,000.

OTHER EXAMINATION FEES.

263. We have also considered the general question of fees for other examinations and are of opinion that a further reduction of cost should be obtained by charging fees as follow :—

	Estimated Revenue.
	£
(1) A fee of 5s. for intermediate or senior free-place certificates	1,000
(2) A fee of 10s. for higher-leaving certificates	100
(3) Increase of fees for teachers’ certificates from £1 to £1 11s. 6d.	250
(4) Fee for certificates issued to teachers from abroad, £3 3s.	50
	£1,400

We recommend accordingly.