

schools should be less exacting than that for large schools ; and that all suggestions in connection with the treatment of subjects, and all regulations dealing with the inspection and examination of schools, be printed in separate pamphlets.

The number of term examinations in primary schools should be reduced from three to two per annum.

THE KINDERGARTEN.

There is a consensus of opinion that the training afforded by the kindergarten is not only the best form of infant education, but is the basis of true technical education. Several of the witnesses who are public-school teachers have cordially indorsed the claim of the Managers of the free kindergartens in the large centres of the Dominion that the child who passes from the kindergarten into the infant classes of the State school is better prepared for the standard work than the child who has not had the advantage of preliminary kindergarten instruction. Furthermore, the boy who has gone through a proper kindergarten course is better equipped for the elementary manual training-classes of the primary school than the boy who has not attended a kindergarten, inasmuch as he possesses not only a prepared mind but prepared hands as well, and his powers of observation have been greatly quickened. The establishment of properly equipped kindergarten departments in the four training colleges and the proposal to give in these institutions portions of a systematized course of training for the students of the State-assisted free kindergartens indicate that the time is approaching when the kindergarten should constitute the initial step of the education ladder of the Dominion. Whenever Education Boards deem it advisable to establish kindergartens in connection with the primary schools in the large centres all infants should be taught therein until at least six years of age. Capitation should be paid at the same rate as to the kindergarten associations. In the meantime, the State may well continue its assistance to the several free kindergarten associations in the Dominion.

EDUCATION OF GIRLS.

There is evidence to show that the present primary and secondary education system presses with undue severity on girls between the ages of twelve and seventeen years. It is suggested that this evil might be reduced by a judicious extension of the system of accrediting, by differentiating in the school-work required of girls and boys, by greater prominence being given to the domestic-science course, and by limiting the amount of homework set in the secondary schools.

SEX PHYSIOLOGY.

Evidence has been given upon the question of teaching sexual physiology to the older boys and girls in our primary and secondary schools. The general opinion appears to be that something of the kind should be undertaken, but there is much diversity of view as to when and by whom this instruction should be given.

The Commission agrees that advice should be imparted to all boys and girls at some time before they finally leave school—preferably by parents, but in view of the fact that such necessary instruction is too often neglected by parents, the Commission recommends that teachers should be enjoined to adopt a form of lecture such as has been suggested by Dr. Home (M.D., Ch.M., Edinburgh, and D.Ph., London), whose evidence appears in the Appendix to this report ; but, better still, every head teacher should, where practicable, deal personally and sympathetically with each individual pupil. And we would direct special attention to the evidence on this point given by the Principal of the Girls' College at Wanganui, where Miss Cruickshank has arranged for a series of excellent lecturettes by a medical lady of experience and sound judgment.

SCHOLARSHIPS AND FREE PLACES.

The present system of awarding Junior National Scholarships and Education Board Scholarships, and the present Certificates of Proficiency and Certificates of Competency examinations should be abolished. One examination at least equal to the present Free Place examination should be held in December in each year ; free places to high schools, to technical day schools, or to district high schools should be