DISTRICT HIGH SCHOOLS.—During the year Greymouth District High School was disestablished, being superseded by a Technical High School. The existing schools are all doing satisfactory work, and quite half of them compare very favourably with secondary schools more strongly staffed and better equipped.

SCHOOL FURNITURE.—Notwithstanding the many reports by medical officers and Inspectors on the subject of furniture and apparatus, little is being done to atone for the neglect of the past. Modern apparatus and furniture are just as important as hygienic rooms. Surely the time has arrived when desks and forms which have served half a century should be replaced by types which conform to present-day requirements.

SCHEMES OF WORK AND WORK-BOOKS.—In regard to these records, teachers are familiar with our views; for by oral discussion, confidential reports, and general circular we have endeavoured to make plain what we believe necessary. It is now exceptional to find a school in which the yearly scheme is not at least formally complete. Some very good schemes have been submitted. In the preparation of these the teachers have brought to bear on the syllabus the result of their own reading, of their experience, and of their study of the child-mind. A number of schemes, however, have to be recast before they can receive unqualified approval, as they contain exploded conceptions of the aims and methods of certain subjects of instruction. It is, after all, to the training college that we look to implant in young teachers a just appreciation of the aim in teaching the different subjects and a clear idea of approved modern methods.

In regard to the daily or weekly work-book there is considerable improvement. As a general rule it may safely be asserted that if the work-book is of little value to the teacher it cannot be of much value to the headmaster or to the Inspector. Judged by such a test there are still some work-books that are not satisfactory.

SUBJECTS OF INSTRUCTION.—*English.*—Though there is much to commend in the teaching of this group, we would stress the importance of always keeping in view a very high standard. The results obtained in some of our best schools, both large and small, convince us that in a considerable number of schools teachers and pupils are capable of better things. In a previous report we pointed out how improved results would follow from the wise co-ordination of reading, spelling, composition, and grammar. Unfortunately, old methods die hard. As fluent delivery rather than thought-getting appears to be the accepted desideratum, in reading comprehension is still diffidently attacked, the children's vocabulary still remains limited, common words met with in reading are misspelt in dictation and composition, and the latter subject itself lacks the flexibility and vigour of expression which comes from the careful study of good literary passages and the memorizing of useful words, phrases, and other turns of speech. Grammar, too, is frequently taught as an isolated subject. Recitation as handled in very many cases is open to grave criticism. Both this subject and spelling call for skilful treatment, but the testing of these subjects seems to suggest that the scholars have too often been permitted to create their own standard.

Arithmetic.—The fundamental desideratum in this subject—*i.e.*, accuracy in making calculations—is receiving the earnest attention of teachers, and we fully anticipate that their efforts will produce the desired results. There is no doubt that some teachers have in the past had a too ambitious conception of the aim of teaching arithmetic in the primary schools, which led to some dissipation of energy upon the solving of the many unpractical problems and exercises still retained in the text-books. Concentration on the comparatively simple demands of the 1919 syllabus will produce better and more enduring results at a less cost of time and effort. Moreover, in the reaction against a dogmatic treatment of the subject, and in a praiseworthy desire to make full use of concrete methods in building up a knowledge of arithmetical facts, teachers must not, at the proper stage, disdain to call in the aid of the child's memory. We have had to point out in a good many cases that the addition table must be as thoroughly memorized as the multiplication table. In the higher standards teachers sometimes err in following rigidly the rotation of exercises presented in the text-book, which generally exhausts one so-called rule before proceeding to the next, a plan that brings in much of the difficult work at too early a stage in the year. Excepting the old complaint about crowding the calculations of the "working column" into too small a space, there is not much fault to find with the setting-out of the pupils' arithmetical exercises.

Geography.—The modern conception of geography, which regards physical phenomena and the physical features of the earth as interesting chiefly in their relation to man and his activities, is receiving fairly general recognition, and in many of the schools the pupils have acquired a good knowledge of geographical facts by a more or less scientific method. The commercial aspects of geography have generally received due attention. More can be got, however, out of map-reading and the study of continental regions rather than political divisions. It may be doubted whether the explanation of the seasons by reference to the revolution of the earth round the sun and the inclination of the earth's axis should be included in the primary-school course. Its effect is generally to puzzle children, who, on the other hand, can readily see the connection between the varying position of the sun and the seasonal changes.

History.—By some teachers this subject is carefully and successfully taught, but by many the treatment is not illuminating, and often lessons are stodgy, uninteresting, and wearisome to a degree. In many instances the indifferent results obtained are due to—(*a*) Want of appreciation of the subject by the teacher; (*b*) an overloaded programme, with much unnecessary detail; (*c*) the slavish adherence to a text-book often beyond the intelligence of the children; (*d*) the inability of a teacher to "tell a tale" in a bright, graphic, and dramatic style. "History is the story of grown men and of the society in which they lived," and that this story has to be told to children of tender years makes it imperative that the teacher should present the facts in as vivid and attractive a style as possible. We cannot too strongly emphasize that with young pupils the appeal to the child's