

to their children's maintenance at the school, and many others can pay only a part of the regulation fee, which is £40 a year. The recoveries from parents amounted to £344 7s. 6d. in the year. There are probably few who would grudge the expenditure of public money upon this specially interesting form of benevolence.

The number of blind children in the colony is happily too small to render it necessary or feasible as yet to establish a school for them. When necessity arises, arrangements are made with the Government of Victoria for the admission of New Zealand youths to the Asylum for the Blind at Melbourne.

INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS AND ORPHANAGES.

Under "The Industrial Schools Act, 1882," 340 children (199 boys and 141 girls) were committed in 1885. Of these, 220 were destitute children, 13 vagrant, 30 were living in disreputable places, 48 were committed as uncontrollable, and 29 as guilty of punishable offences. Two of them had been to high schools, 3 to private schools, 39 to Roman Catholic schools, 159 to Board schools, 129 to no school (many being too young), and information is wanting as to the 8 remaining. As to the faith in which they are to be brought up, 154 belong to the Church of England, 113 are Roman Catholics, 55 Presbyterians, 10 Baptists, 6 Wesleyans, and one is described as a Methodist, and another as Protestant. The information supplied as to the parents of these children shows that in 35 cases the condition of the children is traceable to misconduct on the part of the father and mother, in 89 other cases to that of the father, and in 65 others to that of the mother; in 118 cases death, sickness, or other trouble appears to be the sole cause of destitution; in 14 cases such misfortune was at least in part the cause of destitution; and in 19 cases there is not sufficient information to justify any conclusion. The following table will bear out this statement:—

TABLE U.—COMMITTED CHILDREN CLASSIFIED ACCORDING TO PARENTS' CIRCUMSTANCES AND CHARACTER.

Children of	Mothers described as						Total.
	Dead.	Sick, Lunatic, Disabled, &c.	Of Good Character (or poor).	Not known or not stated.	Of Bad Character.	Deserters.	
Fathers described as—							
Dead	36	1	16	7	16	1	77
Sick, lunatic, disabled, &c.	1	8	1	1	2	3	16
Of good character (or poor)	22	16	17	13	20	..	88
Not known or not described	5	1	1	5	20	3	35
Of bad character	20	7	2	16	17	3	65
Deserters	16	6	13	9	11	4	59
Total	100	39	50	51	86	14	340

By section 17 of the Industrial Schools Act a parent having a child whom he is unable to control may obtain from a magistrate an order for the child's committal, on giving sufficient evidence and security for payment for the maintenance of the child. Of the 48 children committed under this clause last year 30 were committed by one magistrate, and 9 by another; in some cases, 3, 4, or 5 children of one family were so committed, and no security was taken for maintenance, or the payment was fixed at a very low rate. The view of the Department is that such cases do not properly come under section 17, and the attention of the Minister of Justice has been called to the practice that has sprung up.

While 340 children were committed, 220 names were removed from the roll, 208 being discharged by warrant under the hand of the Governor (the majority being returned to their friends), 4 having reached the age (21) at which the control of the school ceases, and 8 having died. Considering that more than 1,500 children belong to the schools, and that many of them are affected with hereditary disease and weakness, the number of deaths must be considered very