

Table U is given in a new form this year; although it cannot be regarded as accurate in every detail, it gives the fullest information available in respect to the character of the parents of children admitted during the year, and in regard also to the reasons for committal. As to the latter heading, it may be noted that apparently the practice in the various Magistrates' Courts is not quite uniform, cases that appear to be similar being regarded differently in different districts. Again, what is far more important, the clause under which a child is committed to an industrial school is by no means a reliable index of the child's moral character; for instance, in cases of petty theft it is often found that the wrongful act does not necessarily imply a vicious disposition, but is merely a symptom of want of control or of sheer neglect on the part of parents. In this connection there is a somewhat sad significance in the fact that two-thirds (43 out of 64) of the children committed to industrial schools as guilty of punishable offences were described as the children of good (or respectable) parents; in 30 cases both parents were described as "good"; in 13 other cases the surviving parent was so described.

In regard to religion, the inmates admitted during 1898 were described as follows: Church of England, 85; Roman Catholic, 83; Presbyterian, 28; Methodist, 9; Baptist, 4; Jewish, 1. Of the 210 admissions, 123 were from the four centres—Dunedin, 41; Auckland, 35; Wellington, 31; Christchurch, 16. The rest were from the smaller towns and country districts.

TABLE U.—ADMISSIONS, CLASSIFIED ACCORDING TO PARENTS' CIRCUMSTANCES AND CHARACTER, 1898.

		Precedent Condition of Children admitted in 1898.									Total.
		Destitute.	Begging.	Vagrant.	Living in Disreput- able Places.	Uncontrollable.	Guilty of Punishable Offences.	By Arrangement.	Under "The Infant Life Protection Act, 1896."		
Fathers, described as	Mothers, described as										
Dead	Dead	8	..	1	..	..	2	..	..	11	
"	Good	6	..	2	..	3	2	..	..	19	
"	Unknown	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	1	
"	Bad	..	..	..	10	..	..	..	..	10	
Sick, lunatic, &c. .. .	Dead	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3	
"	Good	..	..	..	..	1	2	..	..	3	
Good	Dead	8	..	1	3	..	5	..	..	17	
"	Sick, lunatic, &c. .. .	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3	
"	Good	..	..	1	..	1	30	1	..	33	
"	Unknown	4	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	4	
"	Bad	6	1	..	8	1	1	..	..	17	
Unknown	Dead	1	..	2	..	..	2	..	..	5	
"	Sick, lunatic, &c. .. .	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3	
"	Good	4	..	1	..	..	1	..	1	7	
"	Unknown	1	..	1	..	..	1	..	..	3	
"	Bad	8	..	2	4	..	..	..	..	14	
"	Deserter	2	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	3	
Bad	Dead	14	..	..	2	..	1	..	..	17	
"	Good	4	..	..	..	..	4	..	..	8	
"	Bad	3	..	2	9	..	5	..	..	19	
Deserter	Dead	3	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	4	
"	Good	5	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	5	
"	Bad	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	
Totals		87	1	14	36	6	64	1	1	210	

The balance in the Post-Office Savings-Bank on 31st December, 1898, on account of wages of inmates belonging to Government industrial schools was £10,676 2s. 4d.; and on account of inmates in private schools, £1,048 7s. 8d. The amount withdrawn during the year for inmates of Government schools was £1,241 2s. 9d.; and for inmates of private schools, £14.

The expenditure on the Government schools (including the cost of inmates boarded out), and the amounts recovered from charitable aid boards, from parents, from the sale of farm produce, &c., are shown in Table W.