

1883

1st Annual Report of the Temporary Home for Women and Children

Temporary Home for Women and Children

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*Maine Reports
from Mrs. George Merrill
Da
Mrs. Fred S. Davenport
214 French St.*



FIRST ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE
TEMPORARY HOME
FOR
WOMEN AND CHILDREN,
PORTLAND, ME.

13



Wm. M. Marks,  Printer.

FIRST ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

◀ TEMPORARY HOME ▶

FOR

WOMEN AND CHILDREN,

PORTLAND, MAINE.



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1883.

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ANNUAL REPORT.

In reviewing the work done by us, in this, the first year of our organization, it seems desirable to give a brief sketch of the causes which led to the establishment of the Home. Early last spring a few ladies met to incorporate a new charitable society, having as its object, "to provide shelter for the women and children of the State, who might be found in the streets, or in bad homes, in police stations, or in public institutions, or discharged from imprisonment, or who are reduced to dependence on public charity and who are not elsewhere provided with a beneficent home influence."

It had been for years the aim of the station committee of the Women's Christian Temperance Union, to provide for women discharged from imprisonment, homes in some neighborhood, where the surroundings should be such as to encourage them to make a fresh start in life. But places are not found without searching, where a woman of wrong tendencies and a dark record in the past will be received, and the need was deeply felt of a temporary place of shelter, where a good influence could be exerted and the first impulses given towards a better life, while efforts were making towards procuring a more permanent home.

There was a desire to help another class of women also, whose weak moral natures had led them to yield to temptation, and who had been made to feel in consequence that they were outside the reach of sympathy, and that any effort to lead a virtuous life was hopeless. Many of these were in homes where all the influences were bad, and the only hope lay in removing them entirely from their former associations. In addition to those of openly immoral lives, there were others who needed to be shielded from temptation, especially children, who from unfortunate surroundings were almost sure to grow up into vicious and dangerous members of the community, should they have no restraining and ennobling influences thrown around them,

A consideration of all these facts, led to the meeting which has been referred to, for the incorporation of this society. This was held on April 6th, 1882. Later, the number of ladies was increased and constituted a board of managers, an advisory board of gentlemen and an auxiliary state committee were chosen, and the organization completed.

On May 11th, the house we now occupy was taken possession of by the society, and has been used since that time for the purposes of the Home. It has not however been found satisfactory in all respects and the need of a different house for the institution is felt by all. As we are now situated, it is impossible to give the inmates regular training in industrial pursuits, although the wandering lives which many of them have led have rendered them incapable of supporting themselves respectably, except as they can be taught how to perform some useful work. The need of suitable work-rooms is a most pressing one, but for the enlarged quarters which these would render necessary, more money would be required than we have at present at our disposal. It has been the policy of the society to practice careful economy, and to enlarge the work no faster than could be done without incurring debts, but seeing the importance of teaching those under our care how to earn their own living, we can not forbear to appeal for funds to those who are interested in enabling these helpless ones to become self-respecting, helpful members of the community. Are there not those, who will give, out of their abundance, what is needed to establish this useful department of our work? It must not be forgotten that the Home is a state institution, and as such has a claim upon the charitably disposed throughout our whole commonwealth. During the year the attention of the principal county officers has been called to it, by means of circulars setting forth its aims, and jailers and sheriffs in particular have been urged to send to us those women who showed, while under their care, any desire for reformation. Various parts of the state have been represented by our inmates, and, it may be added, by our contributions also, valuable aid having been rendered by some members of our auxiliary committee, but it is hoped that as the work of the Home becomes more widely known, the interest in it will increase,

and will show itself in more liberal contributions to its support.

We may now ask what has been done in this first year of our existence, and a glance at the statistics may help us to an answer. Since our organization we have had as inmates twenty-three women and twenty-one children. Among the women there have been nearly all types: married women who have fled from brutal husbands and sought a refuge while looking for respectable work, women of drinking habits, who have welcomed a place where they could be kept for a while from temptation, vagrants, strangers in the city, not knowing where to turn and sent to us to be cared for until a permanent place could be found for them, ignorant young mothers turned out of their homes on account of their wrong-doing, young girls rescued from improper surroundings, and women who have served more than one sentence in jail and houses of correction.

One friendless woman on her discharge from jail having expressed a desire to lead a different life, was taken to the Home by the Station Committee. Soon after, a place was found for her, but the work proving too hard, she came back to us, as one would go to her own home, and remained until another place could be found, giving all her earnings in charge to the matron, instead of spending them, as in former similar occasions, in drink.

No one has been received by us who has not manifested some desire, however slight, for reformation, and in many cases, under the kind treatment of the matron, this desire has seemed to steadily increase. Prominent among the influences for good should be mentioned the visits of the ladies of the Executive Committee, who have had frequent opportunities to speak kind and encouraging words to the inmates of the Home. They have also been visited each Sunday afternoon since December by one of the managers, and have listened with apparent interest to reading and to words of advice and sympathy.

Of the children, the greater number have been brought by their mothers, although there have been several cases where children have been rescued from bad homes, and kept by us, until they could be placed in suitable institutions or in homes where the influences would be good. A few cases may be referred to here,

as showing the sort of work we are trying to do. Some months ago, a woman was arrested for vagrancy and sent to the house of correction. Her little boy, of three years, was left in a place of which complaint was made to the town in which he was born. The town authorities removed him and sent him to the Home, paying us a moderate price for his board. A blind child of about thirteen years, who was improperly cared for by a drunken father was taken by us, sent to school for some weeks in Deering, and finally placed in a suitable asylum. Another of about the same age, who was left by her father in a disreputable house, was cared for by us for a time and at length taken by a kind woman in the country, who will keep her until her majority, and teach her all kinds of useful work. Neither of these girls could have been sent to the Portland Orphan Asylum, as it was not possible for some time to obtain from their fathers the necessary papers, even had they been eligible in other respects.

Poor mothers are allowed to board their children at the Home, at a price which leaves them at least \$1.00 a week of their wages for clothing themselves and their child. We receive free of charge those who have no home and no claim upon any one.

As fast as is practicable the inmates are sent to situations in the country or elsewhere, a committee of two ladies making it their special care to find suitable places. Thirteen of the twenty-two women who have been with us have been provided for in this way, and as a rule have done well, under the care of those who have taken them. The children are sent with their mothers whenever it is possible, as the constant presence and care of a child will often do for its mother what all else fails to do. In sending those away who have been under our charge, we do not by any means lose sight of them. They are still considered to have a claim upon us, and should they grow restless, or for any reason wish to leave the place provided, help is extended to them in securing another, and in case of failure for a time, the Home again receives them to its shelter.

One woman who was sent into the country with her child writes: "I shall always be thankful for the kindness shown to me in the Home. I was always contented there. I hope those who are

there appreciate what it is to have such a home and those interested to find them such a good place as I now have."

As to what has been done in the way of reformation by the year's work, it is impossible to speak with certainty. Effort to reclaim the vicious and criminal is not, as a rule, followed by as speedy a result as some other kinds of labor, and in seeking to elevate women of a class confessedly more difficult to deal with than any other, we can not perhaps expect uniform success. However earnest our efforts may be to lead these wandering ones to a new life, and however decided may be their promise of change we know only too well that the chains of habit are not easily broken, that what may seem like success at first may prove to be but superficial, and that the radical change of character, which alone can give hope of permanent reformation, may be as far off as ever. But notwithstanding this there is no cause for despair. It is ours to stretch out the helping hand, to speak the encouraging and hopeful word, to try to awaken in these sluggish moral natures some desire for goodness, to do what we can to place them where temptation shall press less heavily upon them, and then, leaving the result to God to wait, with what patience and hope we may.

In behalf of the Managers,

MARIA D. GOULD,

Secretary.

TREASURER'S REPORT.

DR. M. T. HERSEY, TREASURER, *in account with* TEMPORARY HOME FOR WOMEN AND CHILDREN. CR.

To Receipts during the year,		
Annual Subscriptions,.....	\$915 13	
Donations,.....	173 16	
Life Memberships,.....	100 00	
Rent of Merrill House,.....	44 02	
Interest of money in Savings Bank,.....	17 54	
Board of Women,.....	148 00	
" Children,.....	197 01	
Charity Balls,.....	164 78	
Second Parish Fair,.....	40 00	
Class in Physiology,.....	30 00	
Sale of Fancy Articles,.....	22 60	
French Book Club,.....	7 00	
Bijou Club,.....	4 50	
	<hr/>	\$1,863 73
By payments during the year,		
Rent,.....		\$150 00
Sebago Water Tax,.....		11 67
Printing, Advertising, Stamps,.....		20 59
Salaries and wages,.....		347 60
Fuel,.....		120 19
Medical Supplies,.....		27 81
Clothing,.....		20 98
Provisions and Groceries,.....		542 32
Repairs,.....		3 66
All other expenses,.....		41 78
Balance new account,.....		577 73
		<hr/>
		\$1,863 73

PORTLAND, MAY 9th, 1883.

Audited and found correct,

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A donation from Mr. J. B. Libby, of shawls, flannels, etc., should also be acknowledged.

LIFE MEMBERS.

Mrs. J. B. Brown, Portland,	\$25 00
Mr. P. H. Brown, "	25 00
Mr. H. St. J. Smith, "	25 00
Mrs. Samuel Blake, Bangor,	25 00

DONORS.

From May 3d, 1882, to May 9th, 1883.

Mrs. W. W. Thomas,	Portland,	\$100 00
Mr. F. W. Bailey,	"	1 00
"Bijou" Club,	"	4 50
Cash,	"	2 00
Cash,	"	2 00
Mrs. D. F. Emery,	"	10 00
French Book Club,	"	7 00
Mr. W. F. Lunt,	"	5 00
Hon. Lot M. Morrill,	"	10 00
Mrs. G. W. Pierce,	"	1 00
Miss Elmira Quimby,	"	5 00
Messrs. E. and W. Phinney,	"	10 00

The following firms should also be mentioned as having allowed us a discount on all purchases made of them:—

Lang & Sargent,
C. J. Pennell & Co.,
Chas. O'Brien,
Wm. Wilson,
Shaw, Hammond & Carney,
J. M. Dyer & Co.,
John Cooper,

O. M. & D. W. Nash,
Wm. Milliken & Co.,
Wm. W. Best,
Geo. C. Shaw & Co.,
Yorke Bros.,
S. W. Thaxter & Co.,
Frank Colby & Co.

In addition to these gifts, there are undoubtedly others which have failed to be recorded.

DONATIONS.

- Miss Andrews, Gray, clothing.
 W. D. Ames & Co., iron front and mica for stove, bread pan.
 From Associated Charities work room, new under-clothing, calico wrappers.
 Mrs. C. W. Bray, crib.
 Mrs. Levi Brown, hand lamp,
 Mrs. D. P. B. Marietta, O., clothing.
 Mr. Philip G. Brown, coal.
 Mrs. P. H. Brown, fruit, vegetables, corned beef, steak, turkey, stove, crib, shawls, chairs, clothing and groceries.
 M. W. Best, soup-bones, vegetables and roast of beef.
 Miss Beckett, clothing.
 Bee Minor, new clothing for infants and women.
 Mrs. R. Carpenter, mattress and chairs and vegetables.
 Eliza Coombs, underclothing.
 Frank Colby, wash-boards and vegetables.
 Mrs. S. J. Clough, clothing.
 Mr. F. H. Clay, trucking.
 Mrs. Cram, three children's chairs.
 Mr. G. H. Cloyes, soup-bones.
 D. W. Clark, ice, all summer.
 Cleveland & Marston, lamp.
 Mrs. W. G. Davis, tea, sugar, rice.
 Dr. Devoll, eggs, meat, dried apples and pies.
 Dorcas Society, Gorham, infants' clothing.
 Mrs. Eaton, clothing.
 A Friend, milk, fruit, vegetables, crackers, meat, pies, pudding and clothing.
 Mrs. Fry, chickens, cranberries, tea, coffee, apples, crackers, canned pears, tomatoes and corn.
 Fortnightly Club, pillow slips, towels, bibs and aprons.
 Mrs. Frederic Fox, clothing.
 Mrs. Farmer, clothing.
 Mr. Geo. C. Frye, medicine.
 Mrs. C. W. Goddard, sugar, coffee, pork and clothing.
 Mrs. F. H. Gerrish, vegetables, clothing, book and slate.
 Hooper & Foss, children's mugs.
 Mrs. Celia Hobson, Saco, several packages clothing.
 Mrs. G. S. Hunt, thanksgiving pudding.
 Mr. E. C. Hersey, coffee and spices.
 Mr. Hobson, kindling wood.
 Hayes & Douglass, teapot.
 Mr. Geo. S. Hunt, repairs on house.
 Mr. A. S. Hinds, medicines.
 Mrs. W. S. Jordan, saw, axe, scissors and 15 pairs stockings.
 Mr. C. E. Jose, crockery.
 Mr. H. N. Jose, $\frac{1}{2}$ barrel kerosene.
 Mr. F. S. Jordan, New York, large lot woolen samples.
 R. Kent & Son, keep the Home supplied with crackers.
 Mrs. A. W. Longfellow, fruit, vegetables, toilet soap, clothing and thermometers.
 Mr. A. Little, calico.
 Ladies in Gorham, towels, bedding and handkerchiefs
 "Little Neighbors," Gorham, [by Mrs. Caroline Smith,] crib quilts.
 Lang & Sargent, oysters.
 Mrs. C. A. Miller, packing chest, furniture, carpets.
 Mrs. McKenney, clothing.
 Mr. McKenney, meat and soup-bones.

- Mrs. Moses, watermelon.
 Mrs. McDuffey, crib.
 Miss Merrill, clothing.
 A. Millett & Co., sugar cakes, dates, figs, popping corn.
 Mrs. Margaret Merrill, fruit.
 F. and C. B. Nash, tin pan and dipper.
 O. M. and D. W. Nash, tin pan.
 A. N. Noyes & Son, match-safes, child's tray, bread pan, cover-lifter.
 Mr. O'Brien, ton of coal.
 C. J. Pennell and Co., vegetables, soup bones, corned beef.
 Mr. J. W. Perkins, medicine.
 Portland Transcript, advertisement.
 Portland Press, advertisement.
 Portland Argus, advertisement.
 Mrs. Thomas Quinby, blanket, calico, linen collars, coffee, lard, 1 quart milk daily for some months.
 Mrs. H. I. Robinson, cribs, pies.
 Mrs. Fred'k Robie, Gorham, quilts, sheets, blankets, aprons.
 Mrs. Samuel Rolfe, clothing, pieces of calico.
 Mrs. Thomas Shaw, flannel, soap, fruit, clothes wringer, infants clothing, prunes, carpeting, aprons, kerchiefs, christmas cards.
 Miss Swan, clothing.
 Mrs. Sawyer, clothing.
 Mrs. M. Smith, towels.
 Mrs. L. D. M. Sweat, kindling-wood.
 Mrs. F. C. Sawyer, knife board, clothes pins.
 Mrs. Stevens, material for furnishing house and labor.
 Geo. C. Shaw & Co., candy, oranges, and fancy crackers.
 Mrs. L. M. N. Stevens, wood, vegetables, fruit, pork and liver, chickens, smelts, canned corn, box salt, tea urn and kettle, tacks, padlocks.
 Mrs. Samuel Spring, piece of crash.
 Miss Smith, clothing.
 Mrs. Thurston, Gorham, infant's clothing.
 Mr. Thurlow, vegetables.
 Mrs. G. F. Talbot, bedstead.
 Mrs. Geo. Walker, several packages clothing.
 Mrs. Chas. Walker, shoes for women and children.
 Woodman & True, bundle of samples, 2 dozen handkerchiefs.
 Mr. L. A. Wade, web of cloth.
 W. C. T. U., food.
 Westbrook Manufacturing Co., forty yards of gingham.

Donations to the Home may be left at the institution itself, 1139 Congress St., or at the house of the President, 94 Park St., or, if word is sent to the Secretary, 148 Pearl St., they will be called for.

