

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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Sixty-Seventh Legislature.

HOUSE.

No. 21.

STATE OF MAINE.

RESOLVE in favor of the Women's Christian Temperance Union of Maine, Department for Securing Homes for Homeless Children.

Resolved, That the sum of one thousand dollars be and 2 hereby is appropriated for the use of the Woman's Christian 3 Temperance Union of Maine, to be used by the "depart- 4 ment for securing homes for homeless children," of which 5 five hundred dollars shall be paid during the year eighteen 6 hundred and ninety-five, and five hundred dollars during 7 the year eighteen hundred and ninety-six.

STATEMENT OF FACTS.

In September, 1891, the department (Maine Woman's Christian Temperance Union) of securing homes for homeless children introduced into Maine the "family plan" of caring for dependent children.

The family plan means the placing of homeless children in private homes as members of the family instead of in institutions, although we co-operate with all the child-saving institutions of the State, by using them as temporary homes, and by assisting them in finding permanent private homes for their inmates.

During the three years of its existence this department has placed more than one hundred children in permanent private homes, most of them by adoption, and we doubt if any institution in the State has cared for a larger number of different children in the same period.

During the year ending September 25, 1894, twenty-six children had been placed in permanent private homes while twelve had been cared for temporarily in private homes. Eighteen children had been placed in institutions and successful hospital treatment secured for three others.

Fully one-third of the children placed in private homes have been taken from alms-houses, institutions admirably adapted to develop chronic paupers and criminals for the State to support in the future.

The "family plan" is the accepted method of caring for dependent children in Europe. It is the plan followed by the New York Children's Aid Society which has, in forty-one years, placed out one hundred thousand children in private homes, ninety-seven per cent of whom have become good citizens. Massachusetts and other progressive states have adopted this method in caring for state wards, and it is followed by many societies in the North and West.

The advantage of the "family plan" over other methods is first that it is the natural plan and dependent children cannot

be divorced from the natural and affectionate relations of family life without loss any more than can those born under more favorable conditions. Family life develops all the natural forces with which a child is endowed while any artificial life long continued dwarfs the faculties. The child brought up in this way is consequently self-supporting at an earlier age and the plan is more economical.

STATE OF MAINE.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, }
January 23, 1895. }

Reported by Mr. SPEAR of Rockland, from Committee on Financial
Affairs, and ordered printed under joint rules.

W. S. COTTON, *Clerk.*