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TALITHA CUMI MATERNITY HOME

SEVENTY-FOUR YEARS OF
SUCCESSFUL WORK

“ And he took the Damsel by the hand, and said unto her, ‘ Talitha cumi ’; which is, being interpreted, ‘ Damsel, I say unto thee arise. ’ ” — Mark v : 41

(Legal Title)

New England Moral Reform Society

FOUNDED 1836

INCORPORATED 1846

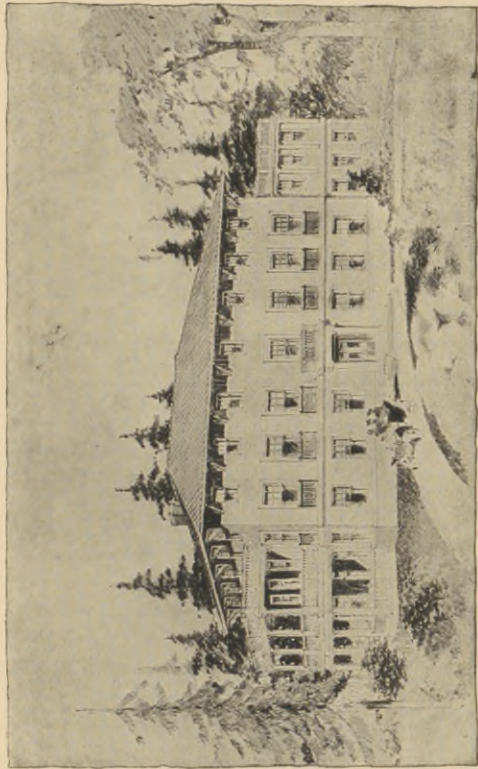
What is to become of a friendless young girl who, to her horror and bewilderment, finds herself about to become a mother?

The most merciful and satisfactory answer I know to this question is found in the work of the Talitha Cumi Home at 206 West Brookline Street, Boston. It is under the auspices of the New England Moral Reform Society, whose field is larger than its name. Here last year eighty-five unmarried mothers found shelter, care and sympathy in their most crucial experience, and went forth fortified with courage, wisdom and the aspiration for a better life.

The girls who seek its protection form far more promising material than is generally understood. They come from all parts of New England, and are of all creeds and nationalities. Usually they are young—three fourths of them between twelve and twenty! That is the horror and that is the hope. Broken, but not past mending, victims of ignorance, of heredity, of misplaced trust, not degraded girls in love with their degradation; the eldest of them, like the youngest, are first offenders, every one.

In Talitha Cumi Home the friendship of noble and refined women reawakens hope; high ideals of womanhood are implanted, and mother-love is aroused and fostered. The Home throws all its effort on the side of the struggle to persuade each girl (and her parents, if she has any) to stand by her poor, little, wronged baby. These young wage-earners are facing life at fifteen, sixteen, seventeen, with the intolerable burden, the care and support of a child. Health is their working capital. Therefore they need air and exercise through the critical period. The present building is utterly inadequate, both as to size and equipment. To secure the advantages of pure air and sunlight, three acres of land at Forest Hills, containing magnificent trees, have been purchased. Here it is proposed to erect a new building, with hospital wing and industrial department.

The young mothers are expected to support their children, which means that in the majority of cases they must seek housework where they will be permitted to keep the babies with them. But you cannot expect an untrained girl of thirteen, fourteen or fifteen to find in any house a welcome with her child. She does not so much as know how to take care of her baby. She rarely knows enough of housework to



Proposed New Maternity Building.

This building will include the offices for administration, the sleeping and living rooms of the girls and the attendants, the dining room and kitchen,—all to be arranged with absolute simplicity.

win her way. Morally too immature for the burden thrust upon them, such cannot be turned adrift without practical certainty of shipwreck.

The new Industrial Home will provide for fifteen of these pathetic little mothers, training them in domestic science and in the care of their infants, and at the same time trying to do for them morally and spiritually all that life has left undone.

May we state very briefly what are the claims of the work upon the generosity of the public?

In the first place Talitha Cumi is half a dozen institutions in one. It is a shelter for young girls upon whom the whole black weight of society's anathema has fallen with crushing force. Many of them are unprotected little wage-earners, cash girls in the department stores, waitresses in restaurants, girls in domestic service, typewriters, high school girls, art students, motherless girls, and even girls from homes of Christian mothers. Sometimes they have been betrayed by middle-aged men, from whom they should have had protection,—an employer, a teacher, a family friend; sometimes they have been the objects of violence; sometimes led astray by boys their own age, and often allured through their affections.

In sober fact, not tragic exaggeration, Talitha Cumi forestalls not a few suicides and saves not a few tottering reasons. For it must be remembered that many of these young girls have lavished their whole affection upon some one who has deserted them, and are suffering in addition the pain of disillusion. Pure mercy then is one function of Talitha Cumi, the binding up of the broken-hearted.

It is a hospital with rather more than ordinary claims upon public sympathy. Maternity hospitals as a rule do not receive patients till they are actually in need of treatment in the wards, and who will say that young girls without friends do not need medical help during the period of waiting? Talitha Cumi nurses the girls, body and mind.

And Talitha Cumi is a school, a school of morals, of womanhood, of motherhood, a school of life. It is not so much reformation that is needed, for the immature creatures have never been formed; it is character-building. On the wreckage of the young life must be laid some sort of foundation on which may be reared a superstructure of self-respect, of courage, of purpose. Dr. Plummer, the superintendent, believes with her whole soul that the hope for



Proposed New Industrial Home.

* The Industrial Home will provide for fifteen girls, with their babies, and will include living and sleeping rooms, nursery, sewing and work room and kitchen.

the girls and for their luckless infants lies in the waking of normal mother-love and mother-responsibility. She would have these mothers cling to their babies, lifting their motherhood as high as love can carry it. It is not an easy doctrine she preaches, but her charges rise to it. Out of seventy-nine children who lived, the young mothers last year kept with them, or at least supported, sixty-seven.

No girl goes out from Dr. Plummer's care denying all responsibility for her wrong. In her time of crisis, in the maturing and mellowing of her motherhood, she gets an impress upon character not easily effaced. The girls are carefully visited after leaving the Home, nearly all the time of one trained assistant being given to this purpose. A large proportion of the girls do actually make brave and upright, if not light-hearted women.

Talitha Cumi is a school of religion. It is by the power "not ourselves" that the girls are taught to hope for uplift.

As an economic factor it cannot be ignored. An institution which secures mother-care for infants otherwise likely to become a charge on the state, and which arrests young girls at the first downward step, keeping a grip on them which holds the ma-

jority of them stanch and prevents their becoming a menace to society—such an institution must appeal to the instincts even of the most unsentimental.

The Society has no mortgage and no debt. It is supported by voluntary contributions.

Will you not help?

Not only large gifts are needed, but a large number of smaller sums are urgently desired for current expenses and may be sent to

LYDIA L. CUMMINGS, *Treas.*,
206 West Brookline Street, Boston.

Checks or pledges for the building fund may be sent to

ARTHUR PERRY,
60 State Street, Boston.

For further information address

DR. JULIA MORTON PLUMMER,
206 West Brookline Street, Boston.

FORM OF BEQUEST

I give and bequeath the sum of dollars to the New England Moral Reform Society, incorporated under the laws of Massachusetts, to be used for the benevolent purposes of said Society.

OFFICERS.

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Dr. Caroline E. Hastings

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Auditor

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Arthur Perry, 60 State Street, Boston

Contributions to the Building Fund may be made payable to

ARTHUR PERRY, Treasurer of Building Fund

60 STATE STREET, BOSTON

Contributions towards Current Expenses may be made payable to

LYDIA L. CUMMINGS, Treasurer

206 WEST BROOKLINE STREET, BOSTON

I hereby ^{*subscribe*} *pledge annually* } *the sum of*

Dollars

Towards the Building Fund of Talitha Cumi Home

Towards the current expenses of this work

Address
