
FORTY-SEVENTH LEGISLATURE.

HOUSE.

No. 12.

MEMORIAL.

*To the Hon. Senate and House of Representatives
of the State of Maine, in Legislature assembled:*

The undersigned, a Committee appointed by the Maine Medical Association to memorialize the Legislature for an act of incorporation, to establish in the city of Portland a State General Hospital, and for a pecuniary appropriation in furtherance of that object, respectfully submit, that the time has fully come when such an institution should be established in our State.

A wise policy, no less than the dictates of humanity, demand it. Indeed, it is a matter of surprise, in view of the urgent necessities which have long existed, that initial measures have not hitherto been taken to secure to our fellow citizens the benefit of such a charity.

We need an asylum for all those in the various walks of life, who, stricken down suddenly by injury or disease, require the intelligent care and treatment which neither their homes nor means can furnish, and which can be adequately supplied only by a well regulated hospital.

We need one for the reception of those afflicted with painful chronic diseases, where, under the most favorable hygienic conditions, they would receive the kind, skillful and persistent attention, both medical and surgical, so indispensable to their restoration or relief.

We need one for those engaged in the industrial pursuits of life, who, with limited means, and without permanent homes, could receive its manifold benefits, at a comparatively small cost, and without any sacrifice of their independence or self-respect.

HOUSE—No. 12.

We need one to which the affluent might have access, for we must not conceal the mortifying fact, that too many of our fellow-citizens are now compelled to go out of the State to avail themselves of the superior advantages, especially in the higher departments of operative surgery, which such institutions, directly or indirectly, afford.

But there is another consideration to which we invite your attention, the value of which cannot be overestimated in its bearing upon the interests of society. While we recognize the fact that hospitals are founded, mainly for the benefit of the sick, and for the alleviation of human suffering in its various forms, we must not overlook the very important office they perform as schools of observation and instruction, furnishing, as they do, the best means for proficiency and skill in the different departments of medicine and surgery. We desire to emphasize this point, inasmuch as the want of such an institution, in its relation to the highest professional culture and attainments, has been long and deeply felt in the State.

Our sister Commonwealth, more than half a century ago, and with especial reference to these twofold objects, laid the foundation of that noble institution, the Massachusetts General Hospital. The Legislature made a generous endowment. Rich contributions from individual sources followed, and have continued to flow into its treasury, in no stinted measure, down to the present day, till its aggregate funds approximate to the princely sum of two millions of dollars. And, in this connection, we may refer to the interesting fact that the city of Boston, to meet new necessities ever arising from an increasing and varied population, has recently completed an additional Hospital, which, in magnificent proportions, in architectural beauty, and in ingenious appliances for the convenience and comfort of its numerous inmates, is not surpassed if it is equalled by any similar establishment on this continent.

We recognize with pleasure and gratitude the liberal benefactions of our own State, and of some of its honored citizens, for the advancement of the common weal. Our industrial and educational interests have received, from time to time, the generous aid and fostering care which their importance required. We can point with proud satisfaction to the Asylum for the Insane which adorns our capital, and to numerous special charities, the offspring of private munificence, which cluster in our cities and towns, and will ever keep pace with an enlightened public sentiment, and an

advancing Christian civilization. But the period has arrived, we believe, when the dignity, the honor, and the interests of the State, call emphatically for another institution, the beneficent influences of which would pervade all classes and conditions of our social organization.

In pursuance of this truly philanthropic object,—and its importance in its reciprocal relation to the profession and to the public, will be acknowledged by every friend of humanity and of progress,—we respectfully ask for an act of incorporation for a State General Hospital, to be located in the city of Portland, and for a pecuniary appropriation, in such form as the wisdom of the Legislature may determine, sufficient to secure its foundation.

Earnest men, with experience and skill in the various branches of medical science, are ready to consecrate their best energies to the work; and with a generous response to our petition from your honorable body, and the sympathy and assistance we confidently promise ourselves from interested and wealthy fellow-citizens, we have no misgivings as to the ultimate result,—feeling assured that at no distant day we shall have a Hospital which, in its administration and appointments, will compare favorably with kindred institutions of its class, and be an ornament, an honor, and a blessing to the State.

JOHN T. GILMAN, M. D.,
ISRAEL T. DANA, M. D.,
H. H. HILL, M. D.,
N. P. MONROE, M. D.,
J. C. WESTON, M. D.,
WILLIAM SWASEY, M. D.,
H. L. K. WIGGIN, M. D.,
A. J. FULLER, M. D.,
T. G. STOCKBRIDGE, M. D.

STATE OF MAINE.

IN HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, }
January 17, 1868. }

Presented by Mr. FOSTER of Portland, and on his motion laid
on the table and ordered to be printed.

S. J. CHADBOURNE, *Clerk.*