

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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FORTY-NINTH LEGISLATURE.

HOUSE.

No. 7.

MAINE GENERAL HOSPITAL.

*To the Senate and House of Representatives
in the Legislature of Maine assembled :*

The undersigned, the Executive Committee of the Maine General Hospital, in pursuance of a vote of the Corporation, respectfully present this Petition for a grant to be made by the State, in aid of this important undertaking.

Your petitioners represent, that since the incorporation of the Hospital in 1868, such progress has been made towards an effective organization of the enterprise, and in ascertaining and collecting the public sentiment in its behalf, as to warrant the confident belief that, with suitable assistance from the State, very generous private benefactions will at once be made available to the same end, and that, upon such a basis of endowment, the Hospital may be established and brought into actual and useful operation at a very early day.

The value of a well conducted public Hospital, in promoting the advancement of medical science, and thereby improving the sanitary condition of the community, is fully illustrated by many honorable examples in the most cultivated and prosperous States and governments of modern times. They are examples, also, of the highest development of the sentiments of humanity and benevolence. Originally established, in most instances, within the period of Christian history, upon motives of Christian sympathy for the suffering, such Hospitals have become recognized as among the most useful and most honorable institutions of modern civilization. There are very few independent States or kingdoms in Christendom which have not, by some form of public bounty, secured the

establishment of public hospitals in their most populous cities and towns.

Your petitioners respectfully submit, that the State of Maine has now attained to such population, resource and enlightenment, that it may well imitate the honorable example of so many other independent States, in promoting the establishment of a General Hospital, both for the advancement of the science and the art of healing, and as an expression of the Christian principles and culture of our people.

General public hospitals must, ordinarily, be established in places of the greatest population, where they can be useful to the greatest number of patients, and where skillful and competent professional attendance can be most economically obtained. But the useful scientific influence of such a hospital, if well conducted, is immediately and widely diffused throughout the community. By its treatment of difficult and important cases, under the hands of its corps of attending and consulting physicians and surgeons, having the confidence of the community and of their professional associates, it becomes a school of instruction to every local physician and surgeon in the State, and a central source of learning, fidelity and skill, from which light and relief may be extended to the humblest patient in the remotest village.

Your petitioners refer, also, in evidence of the practical usefulness of such a hospital, beyond its own immediate locality, to the obvious fact, that very considerable numbers of cases and classes of cases requiring medical or surgical treatment, are of such nature that the patients are able to leave their homes and resort to a hospital at a distance, for relief. And this, as is well known, is often done in other States, under the advice of the most competent local practitioners, because the more perfect arrangements and apparatus of a well managed hospital are best suited, in many cases of novelty or difficulty, to secure the desired relief. And with the greatly enlarged and rapidly improving facilities for transportation throughout this State, the direct benefits of hospital treatment can thus be very generally and widely extended.

Your petitioners, therefore, earnestly pray the favorable consideration of the Legislature for this enterprise, as a measure of general public importance, worthy of the State, and material to the common welfare. They believe that a suitable public grant for this object will receive the hearty commendation of the liberal-minded

and intelligent people of the State, and that a public General Hospital, so aided by an enlightened government, will be recognized by ourselves and by strangers as one of the noblest fruits of our Christian civilization, and one of the most becoming ornaments of the State.

JOHN T. GILMAN.
ISRAEL WASHBURN, JR.
J. B. BROWN.
EBEN STEELE.
JAMES T. McCOBB.
HORATIO N. JOSE.
A. D. LOCKWOOD.
WM. D. SEWALL.
ANDREW SPRING.
GEO. STETSON.
WM. P. HAINES.
PHINEHAS BARNES.
WILLIAM McGILVERY.
WILLIAM DEERING.
JOSEPH H. WILLIAMS.

DECEMBER, 1869.

STATE OF MAINE.

IN HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, }
January 23, 1870. }

Laid on the table by Mr. TWITCHELL of Portland, and ordered
to be printed.

S. J. CHADBOURNE, *Clerk.*