

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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# FORTY-NINTH LEGISLATURE.

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HOUSE.

No. 137.

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The Joint Special Committee to which was referred the petition of the Maine General Hospital, have had the same under consideration, and ask leave to report, that there were also referred to them thirty-three petitions in aid of the main petition, from twenty-eight cities and towns in the State, bearing the names of 2,177 prominent citizens in their localities. The Committee gave a full hearing to the petitioners, who at their request have furnished the following statement of facts as to the history, purposes and character of their Institution, which, with the accompanying resolves, we submit herewith.

CHARLES BUFFUM, *Chairman.*

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## STATEMENT OF FACTS.

The Hospital was chartered in 1868, and established at Portland. The reports of the State Medical Association, and the testimony of several physicians from different parts of the State who appeared before the Committee, all concur in the expression that that is the most suitable place for the institution. Pecuniary assistance from the State was contemplated by the petitioners for the charter, but was not pressed at that time. In the view, however, that such cooperation would eventually be afforded by the State, the organic act distinctly provided for an effective share, by the public authority, in the oversight and direction of the institution. The governor and the presiding officers of the two branches of the Legislature were made a Board of Visitors, with full power to inspect all its affairs and operations. These Visitors were also authorized to appoint three of the nine directors of the Hospital.

The ultimate organization of the institution is expected, therefore, to be that of a private corporation, for objects of pure benevo-

lence and science, and consequently of the highest public importance, without any emolument whatever to its members, founded and sustained chiefly by private liberality, assisted by the State in the outset, and placed at all times under responsible public oversight.

During the two years since the charter was granted, the corporate members and other friends of the enterprise have been actively engaged in correspondence and other efforts to ascertain and develop an intelligent public sentiment in behalf of the Hospital throughout the State. These efforts have disclosed, as the petitioners assure us, a most friendly interest in the undertaking, and have encouraged the corporation, acting through its Executive Committee as a preliminary organization, to ask at this time for a grant from the State as a help in starting the enterprise, and as a nucleus to which, as the petitioners believe, many private benefactions will be attracted.

Numerous petitions in aid have also been presented, and referred to the Committee, coming from many of our principal cities and towns, and signed by large numbers of well-known and responsible citizens of those localities. These petitions leave no doubt, as the friends of the Hospital believe, of the general unanimity with which the influential property holders and tax payers of the State consent that this preliminary assistance shall be granted out of the public resources, and they give equal assurance that the same class of our people will cheerfully furnish the additional private benefactions necessary for the complete endowment of the Hospital. In fact, it is alleged to be the result of experience, in all enlightened States and communities, that a good general hospital, receiving assistance and obtaining confidence at its outset, by suitable public grant, is sure to command, afterwards and continuously, liberal donations and bequests from private individuals.

What the present petitioners therefore ask from the State is, assistance in the beginning of the enterprise to overcome the first difficulties and lay the primary foundations. After that, they fully believe, as they represent, that individual bounty, representing the enlightened and Christian sentiments of our people, will adequately sustain the undertaking.

Arrangements for such private contributions had already been entered upon when the petitioners appeared before the committee, and they expressed the hope that effective actual progress in these

subscriptions would be made before the final action of the Legislature upon the subject.

The contemplated subscriptions proceed upon the plan that the sum of eighty thousand dollars is the lowest amount upon which it would be practicable to initiate the enterprise, and no payments are to be called for unless that sum is obtained by reliable subscriptions and public grant within the present year. The petitioners agree that whatever bounty is granted by the State may be upon the express condition that such definite sum, within the eighty thousand dollars, as the Legislature may direct, shall be obtained within that time by private subscriptions.

The petitioners have called the attention of the committee to the fact that the State is the owner of a lot of land in the city of Portland, heretofore used for Arsenal purposes. Many competent judges are of the opinion that this lot would be a most useful and desirable site for the hospital—although the actual selection of a site must necessarily be determined, at the proper time, by the responsible directors of the institution. The petitioners express the hope that the Legislature will deem it suitable to grant this parcel of land to the hospital corporation. They urge that it is not now important to be retained by the State for Arsenal purposes, since recent experience has shown them that the State does not require to keep in its own account any considerable stock of arms or military equipments, but that these will be supplied hereafter if necessary, as heretofore, by the general government, to arm the soldiers who may be recruited or drafted within the State.

In addition to the grant of this land, the petitioners have requested the committee to recommend an appropriation by the State of a sum of money in aid of the hospital, to be paid in successive instalments extending over the period of time within which the first hospital buildings may be erected, and upon the condition as before stated, that no payments are to be made by the State unless a definite additional sum is raised by satisfactory private subscriptions.

The substance of the following statements respecting the practical operations of such a hospital has been furnished to the committee on the authority of Dr. Dana of Portland, for several years a Professor in the Medical School of this State, and personally familiar with the management of hospitals in this country and in Europe.

## PRACTICAL WORKINGS OF A STATE GENERAL HOSPITAL.

## I.—GENERAL CONTROL OF IT.

This would naturally be, as in this case provided by charter, in the hands of a board of directors, a majority (6) chosen by the corporation, the others (3) by the "board of visitors." The directors thus chosen would be sure to be eminent citizens enjoying the confidence of the entire community. All the other officers of the institution would be chosen by them.

## II.—MEDICAL AND SURGICAL ATTENDANCE.

A sufficient number of consulting and attending physicians would be chosen from among the most distinguished practitioners of the State, whose valuable services, here as in other States, would be given to the institution without pecuniary return. The attending physicians and surgeons would be necessarily residents in the vicinity of the hospital. The consulting board might be in part made up of distinguished practitioners in other parts of the State.

## III.—CLASSES OF PATIENTS ADMITTED.

1. The poor, affected with medical or surgical diseases, who have no resources at home, and who can pay nothing at the hospital.

2. Persons in limited circumstances, who have no homes, or whose homes are too distant to be reached by them, or who cannot command at their homes the care, comforts and attendance which they need, but who can pay, or whose friends can pay for them, a moderate sum per week at the hospital.

3. Wealthy individuals who, living in hotels and boarding-houses, avail themselves of private apartments at the hospital for greater comfort and safety in sickness, and who there pay liberally for the accommodations and services received.

4. Wealthy individuals from distant towns affected with obscure and difficult chronic diseases, or needing critical surgical operations, who leave their homes and place themselves in the hospital on account of the greater advantages there afforded.

NOTE.—It is *not* customary to receive into general hospitals those affected with highly contagious acute diseases, or chronic incurable diseases, or the insane—other special provisions should be made for all these.

## IV.—ADMISSION OF PATIENTS.

Suitable subjects are admitted on application by letter or otherwise to the admitting physician, who gives a written permit, but in all cases of sudden accidental injury of a serious character immediate entrance is given without this formality. A broken limb or a severe wound is its own permit.

## V.—MEANS OF SUPPORT.

The income of a general hospital is derived in part from the patients, many of whom pay such specified sums per week as defray wholly or partially the expense of their keeping. But the glory of a hospital as a Christian charity is its "*free beds*," where the poor and the stranger are received without money and without price. These free beds can only be established by means of subscriptions, donations, bequests and grants to the institution. But hospitals once established and well managed always live and grow, and their funds rapidly accumulate. The Massachusetts General Hospital, established by charter of the Legislature, and a grant of one hundred thousand dollars on condition of the raising of a like sum by private contributions, received notice of its first bequest (over twenty-four thousand dollars) the day before its corner-stone was laid, July 4, 1818, and so fully has it commanded the confidence and support of the citizens of our sister commonwealth that money has poured in upon it till its aggregate funds have already nearly or fully reached the magnificent sum of two millions of dollars.

## VI.—GENERAL ADVANTAGES TO THE CITIZENS OF THE STATE.

A State General Hospital must of necessity be located in some city or town, but in a true and large sense it is useful to all.

(1.) In cases of accidents on railroads, or along the line of railroads, patients can be readily transported to the hospital, whose doors, as above stated, are always open to them.

(2.) Tumors and other chronic affections often occur, which require critical surgical operations, and consequently such surgical skill as is in general only acquired in larger communities, and in hospital experience, and also such resources of mechanical appliance, and that constant care of trained attendants such as only hospitals afford. These cases are as liable to occur in the smallest town as in the largest city of the State, and can usually be removed with entire safety any necessary distance.

(3.) Obscure and difficult cases are continually occurring in which there would be great advantage in such thorough and constant observation and investigation as can be made in a hospital, and also in the consultation together of such men as comprise the medical and surgical staffs of general hospitals. Such cases can often be removed with entire safety. Multitudes of such cases as classes 2 and 3 are continually leaving their own State to find needed relief at the Massachusetts General Hospital. It should be a matter of just pride with us that Maine should provide for the needs of her own citizens in these respects.

(4.) Medical science gains by the establishment of hospitals, and thus the whole people of the commonwealth gain.

It is a fact of universal admission, that such institutions where obscure and difficult cases are habitually presented, and the most critical operations of surgery are frequently called for, where all needed appliances and facilities are provided and able and experienced men are intimately associated, aiding and stimulating each other in efforts to relieve the suffering, favor the development of professional knowledge and skill, and promote the attainment of excellence.

Again, a complete medical education cannot be obtained within the limits of our State without a hospital such as this. Its doors would always be open, under proper regulations, to students and practitioners from all parts of the State, and its value in this way in elevating the standard of professional education can hardly be overestimated.

## STATE OF MAINE.

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RESOLVE in favor of the Maine General Hospital.

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*Resolved*, That all the right, title and interest of this  
2 state in and to the lot of land, not including the build-  
3 ings thereon, situated on Bramhall's hill in the city of  
4 Portland and county of Cumberland, being the present  
5 site of the state arsenal, is hereby granted to the  
6 Maine General Hospital, a corporation established by  
7 act of the legislature, passed February twenty-fourth,  
8 one thousand eight hundred and sixty-eight, to have  
9 and to hold to said corporation for the purpose of  
10 erecting and maintaining thereon, its hospital build-  
11 ings; and when such land ceases to be so used, it shall  
12 revert to the state. But this grant shall not take  
13 effect until it is shown to the satisfaction of the gov-  
14 ernor that said corporation has raised by responsible  
15 private subscriptions or donations the sum of twenty  
16 thousand dollars; nor until the governor has certified  
17 on a copy of this resolve certified by the secretary of  
18 state, that the above named condition precedent has  
19 been complied with; but when that is done, the grant  
20 shall take effect; and the recording of such certified  
21 copy, with the governor's certificate thereon, in the



22 registry of deeds in the county of Cumberland, shall  
23 be sufficient record evidence thereof.

*Resolved*, That when said corporation has raised, re-  
2 ceived into its treasury and actually expended towards  
3 the construction of its hospital buildings on said lot,  
4 the sum of thirty thousand dollars, and this fact is  
5 shown to the satisfaction of the governor, he may draw  
6 his warrant on the treasurer of state for the sum of  
7 ten thousand dollars in favor of said corporation and  
8 payable to its treasurer; and when said corporation  
9 has so raised, received into its treasury and expended  
10 in the construction of its hospital buildings the sum of  
11 ten thousand dollars more, or fifty thousand dollars in  
12 all, including the ten thousand from the state, and this  
13 fact is shown to the satisfaction of the governor, he  
14 shall draw his warrant on the treasurer of state for  
15 the sum of ten thousand dollars more in favor of said  
16 corporation and payable to its treasurer; and the sum  
17 of twenty thousand dollars is hereby appropriated to  
18 carry into effect the purposes of this resolve, to be  
19 paid from any money in the treasury not otherwise  
20 appropriated.

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## STATE OF MAINE.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, March 12, 1870.

Reported by Mr. BUFFUM in the Senate, from the Joint Special Committee on Maine General Hospital, read once in the House, and 750 copies ordered printed on motion of Mr. BAKER.

S. J. CHADBOURNE, Clerk.