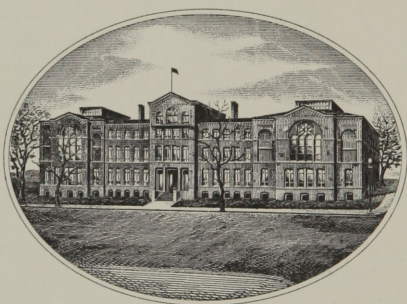


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CIVIL, RELIGIOUS, AND MASONIC

SERVICES,

AT THE LAYING OF

THE CORNER STONE

OF THE

MASSACHUSETTS GENERAL HOSPITAL,

IN BOSTON, JULY 4, 1818.

*address
by Josiah Quincy.*

FROM THE

NEW-ENGLAND GALAXY AND MASONIC MAGAZINE,

JULY 10, 1818.

At a Special Meeting of the Trustees of the Massachusetts General Hospital,
July 13, 1818 :—

VOTED, That the thanks of the Trustees be presented to the Most Worshipful Grand Master, the Officers and Members of the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts, for their prompt and affectionate accordance to the request made them by the Trustees, to assist in laying the corner stone of the General Hospital, and for the very able and ample form in which that assistance was afforded; and that the Grand Lodge be requested to transmit with their next quarterly communication with the several lodges under their jurisdiction, a copy of the Services at the laying of the corner stone, as published in the New-England Galaxy and Masonic Magazine of the 10th inst.—recommending at the same time, in such manner as their wisdom may suggest, the interests of the Hospital to the brethren of the craft.

H. CODMAN, Secretary.

CEREMONIES, &c.

On Saturday, the fourth of July, the corner stone of the Massachusetts General Hospital was laid in this town, with masonic rites and ceremonies, at the request of the president and trustees of the Institution, by the Most Worshipful FRANCIS JOHONNOT OLIVER, Esq. Grand Master of Masons in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, attended by the officers and members of the Grand Lodge, assisted by His Excellency the Governor, JOHN BROOKS, and His Honor the Lt. Governor, WILLIAM PHILLIPS, with the several humane and charitable associations, many distinguished clergymen, and numerous civil and military dignitaries.

The whole scene was truly solemn and interesting, for the populace, old and young, flocked to see this ceremony, and to hail with unfeigned joy the commencement of an edifice, which was to be dedicated to the purposes of humanity.

This ceremony is founded in antient usage and is cherished by moral and religious feeling. It shows a concentration of charitable thought and feeling, that has produced a design in the founders of the edifice which is about to be completed. It promises a portion of our basket and our store to carry the design into execution. It invokes a blessing from heaven on all that relates to the undertaking. It declares in the strongest language that public utility alone is the object, that no selfish views or feelings have entered into the calculations. It publishes unto the *East*, and unto the *West*, and the *South*, that the building is to be dedicated to charitable uses, to public taste, convenience, national glory, or to the worship of Almighty God.

This is an idle ceremony to him only who believes God requires no homage from the heart of man, and that man needs no sacred rites, no holy seasons to enliven and invigorate his sense of duty. But to him who has inhaled inspiration from holy seasons and felt the flame of piety kindle at the shrine of devotion, who has grown wiser and better in discharging the duties of humanity, and felt his patriotism burn with intenser fire as he contemplated the rising institutions of charity, and knowledge in his country; to him such a ceremony is a refreshing vision. We profess no sympathies with those who strike every thing to the dead level of philosophical apathy, and who deride the sweet influences of rites and ceremonies on faith, hope, and charity.

“ But, triumph not, ye peace enamoured few !
Fire, Nature, Genius, never dwelt with you !

For you no fancy consecrates the scene
 Where rapture utter'd vows, and wept between ;
 'Tis yours, unmov'd to sever and to meet ;
 No pledge is sacred, and no home is sweet !"

This Institution, with its twin sister the Hospital for the insane, was the offspring of reason, feeling and liberality ; and it will be nurtured by generosity, cultivated by active zeal, guarded by watchful prudence, and their whole destinies, we trust, will be guarded and governed by the prescient sagacity of high-minded philanthropy.

It has been a subject of deep regret that in a State so wealthy and enlightened as ours that there should have been no place for the accommodation of the insane, but a few private Mad-Houses, which, however well managed, can never have the advantages of a public Institution for this purpose.

Tender hearted people would not suffer their relations, "diseased in mind," to be led to a private Mad-House, and therefore kept them at home, which distressed whole families and probably disturbed whole neighborhoods.— This method of keeping the insane was expensive, troublesome and agonizing in the extreme, and after a short time the chances of recovery were nothing. Nature sometimes, but seldom, triumphed over disease, for she was not aided by intelligence, authority, conveniences, or comforts. She struggled a while and then sunk in despair. Two of the finest geniuses we ever knew, lofty, attenuated and susceptible, whose ethereal spirits required the most delicate attentions in moments of nervous irritability, are lost forever, from the injudicious treatment of friends when in private confinement. They might have been saved ; but are now sunk into idiocy, that immedicable disease of the mind, which nothing but the fiat of God can cure. These Institutions will flourish, for those who know and feel that men are but stewards and must render an account to the Giver of every good for all they have and all they do, will feel it a duty to support them. An enlightened Legislature will, as they have done, foster these institutions. Could every citizen in this Commonwealth be made to see and understand the necessity of supporting them liberally, there is not a palace nor a cabin but would yield of its abundance or its scantiness to assist in rearing, furnishing, and maintaining these institutions, so auspiciously commenced. But this theme grows under our hands and we must close our remarks to give what has been said and performed on this occasion to our readers.

On the arrival of the procession (which proceeded from the West church, in the order given in our last) at the site of the Hospital, the Rev. Mr. LOWELL addressed the throne of grace, imploring the divine aid and a blessing upon the present undertaking. JAMES PERKINS, Esq. the vice president, in behalf of the Trustees, then repeated their request, to the M. W. Grand Master, that he would proceed to lay the corner stone of this interesting-charitable edifice. The Grand Master answered, that,

“Invited by the Trustees of the Massachusetts General Hospital to lay the corner stone of a building which is to be devoted to the exercise of virtues especially cherished and inculcated by Free Masons, the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts, acceding to the request, are about to perform the grateful service.”

The presence and assistance of the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, and other state officers, and of several incorporated societies in the town having also been requested by the Trustees, the Grand Master thus proceeded,—

“May it please your Excellency,—Right Worshipful Brother,—Honoured in being associated on this occasion with the Chief Magistrate of the Commonwealth, a distinguished ornament of the Craft, and with the second officer in the State, who, though not enrolled in our fraternity, is eminent for the practice of that virtue which may be considered the corner stone of the Masonic Temple, the Grand Lodge respectfully request your joint aid, and the assistance of the Officers and members of the several associations now assembled, in the work before them.”

The Grand Master then directed the R. W. Junior Grand Warden to examine the stone prepared by the Master Builder, and report if it was perfect, and correctly squared; which being done, the *square* was presented to the Governor, who was requested to prove the work; he complied, and returned the tool to the Grand Master, who also proving the regularity of the stone pronounced it to be “well formed, true and trusty,” and fit for the builder’s use. The stone was then raised and suspended over the spot on which it was to be laid, and the R. W. Grand Treasurer was directed to deposite under it, various coins collected for the purpose, and a silver plate on which was inscribed:—

THE CORNER STONE OF THIS EDIFICE,

Designed as a GENERAL HOSPITAL, founded by the Munificence of the COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS, and of many of its liberal citizens, was laid at the request of The Trustees of the Massachusetts General Hospital, by the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts,

FRANCIS J. OLIVER, Esq. Grand Master.

His Excellency JOHN BROOKS, *Governor*.

His Hon. WILLIAM PHILLIPS, *Lt. Governor*,

President of said Corporation, and a most munificent donor,

The Municipal and Military Officers of BOSTON, Assisting at the Ceremonies;

This fourth day of July, A. D. MDCCCXVIII. and of the Independence of the United States, XLIII. Anno Lucis, 5818.

After this was done the stone was placed in its proper situation, and the Senior Grand Warden was directed to try it by the *level* and *plumb*. It was then proved by the Grand Master, and an appropriate prayer was made by the Grand Chaplain. Vases of corn, wine and oil, were then presented to the Grand Master, who, pouring them upon the stone, invoked the All bounteous author of nature to bless the inhabitants of the metropolis, to

aid in the erecting and completing of the building, to guard the workmen from every accident, and to grant to all the *corn* of nourishment, the *wine* of refreshment and the *oil* of joy. The stone was then declared by the Grand Master to be laid in ample form. The Masonic ceremonies were concluded by the Grand Master delivering the implements of Architecture to the Master builder, and giving him charge of the work in the following address.

“In your hands I now place these tools of your profession and commit to your care the superintendance in erecting this edifice, whose foundation is now laid in the land of our fathers in presence of Sages and Philanthropists, with their fervent prayers for a blessing on the work. Be cautious in selecting your materials, and use all your skill in putting them together, that your workmanship may endure like that of faithfulness and truth, for this building is not to be a temporary pavilion for the display of opulence, splendor and pride, but a temple dedicated to humanity, a Lazar-house built by enlightened Compassion, where CHARITY and PHILOSOPHY are to walk a perpetual round to alleviate misery, and to combat with and destroy disease and pain.

To secure your constant attention and highest exertions in this undertaking, you must keep in mind the noble purposes to which it is to be appropriated. It will be a testimonial of the liberality of this Commonwealth and the munificence of opulent individuals, a sort of mile-stone on the journey of civilization, to show how far the christian spirit had advanced in this age, in ameliorating the condition of man.

The golden age, when men were happy, and free from crime, lives only in fable, but a religious and humane age, amidst crime and wretchedness, shall be matter of sober history.

If he who gives a cup of cold water to the thirsty, with a charitable disposition, has already the promises of the gospel, how great will be the reward of those generous souls who create a perennial flow of all the healing balms and cordials that touch the lips or bathe the limbs of decrepitude and sickness.

As this Institution will long exist a proof of the liberality of feeling and purity of sentiment of the people of this day, and an example for future times, go on, sir, and erect this building with taste, science and fidelity, that it may be a model for the Architects of a distant period; so that future master-builders may come and admire your work for its strength, beauty and durability.

If you commence your work in hope and perform it with assiduity, prosperity will attend, and self satisfaction with the applauses of the wise and good, will crown your toils. Yours is no small or trifling trust; do your duty in this and in all your hands find to do, in such a manner that the Great Architect of time and eternity will number you among his master workmen who have happily toiled for the bread of life.”

To which the Master builder replied.

MOST WORSHIPFUL SIR,

I accept these tools of my profession with diffidence but pleasure; and I promise to use my best endeavours to follow your advice and remember your instructions. The recollection of the importance of this Institution and the desire I feel to obtain the approbation of its patrons will, I trust, stimulate me in the discharge of my duties. Whatever science or skill I possess shall be sedulously devoted to this work. As the cornerstone of the edifice is now laid in the full faith of the great advantages which are to flow from this Institution, and with all holy and proper rites, it shall now be my earnest de-

sire and constant exertion, that industry, harmony and good fellowship shall prevail among the craftsmen, that the work shall proceed with despatch, and be finished in good time for the reception of such as it is intended to accommodate.

The belief that the good feelings and wishes of the pious and benevolent are with me in this undertaking, will strengthen my hands and encourage my heart, *for the prayer of the righteous availeth much.*

The following address was then made to His Excellency the Governor, the Grand Lodge, and the citizens, by the Hon. JOSIAH QUINCY, in the name of the Trustees.

May it please your Excellency ;—

Gentlemen of the Masonic ;

Gentlemen of the Mechanic, Associations ;—

Fellow Citizens ;—

I am requested, by the Trustees of the Massachusetts General Hospital, to express to you, Sir,—to the officers and members of these respectable fraternities,—and to our fellow citizens, in general, their congratulations, on this interesting occasion. You, and they, will be pleased to accept the thanks of the Trustees, for the countenance and aid, you have given this institution, by thus condescending to assist, in laying its foundations, according to the rules of art, and with those solemn and mysterious forms and ceremonies, which ancient wisdom has prescribed.

Indeed, Sir, and Gentlemen, the foundations of a noble charity have this day been laid. A charity—destined to confer lasting blessings on future times, as it has already conferred immortal honor on the present. A charity—of which it well becomes a citizen of Massachusetts to speak in the language of pride and exultation. For of what can the patriot be more justly proud, than of witnessing in a community, virtuous principles, emanating in generous efforts ; and generous efforts, crowned with resplendent success ? when can exultation be more natural, or suitable, than on beholding the seed, which the common labour of the community has scattered, upspringing from the soil, bearing on its trunk and on its branches the pregnant promise of fruit and shade ?

In reference to this institution, it has been the happiness of the Trustees to witness among their fellow-citizens, a zeal cooperating with its design and patronizing its establishment, as laudable, as it has been exemplary ; and not less encouraging than it has been honourable. They have seen individuals, distinguished at once, for wealth and liberality, surpassing all former records of benevolence, in this country ; and subscribing, to their funds, sums, which, in point of amount, have seldom been equalled, by individual subscription, in any country on any occasion. They have seen all classes of their citizens, combining and concentrating their efforts, and the irresistible force of public opinion applied, not, as has happened in other countries, to destroy, but to found and erect institutions, destined to be the refuge of the afflicted ; and to provide relief and extend protection to those, who labour under the most awful and humiliating misfortunes to which man is subject.

These are efforts of which he, who loves his country, may justly be proud. These are objects, which the eye of the philanthropist delights to contemplate. These are scenes, amid which virtue and piety rejoice to dwell. These are honors, which eloquence and history will not cease to celebrate, long after every other memorial of the present generation shall have passed away.

But, may it please your Excellency, it ought not to be concealed, on the present occasion, that notwithstanding the donations, on which this charity

has been founded, are great, yet that the necessities of the unfortunate and of this institution are still greater. It belongs to the occasion to state, that the funds already placed at the disposal of the Trustees will scarcely more than suffice to enable them to complete the Asylum for the insane; and also two principal parts of the building, destined for the General Hospital; leaving it to the sympathy of the legislature and of the community to provide for the completion of the remaining third part of the building and for the annual support of the establishment.

Encouraged by the liberality and favour already displayed by their fellow citizens and by the legislature of the Commonwealth, and anxious, on their part, to fulfil the duties imposed on them, in the spirit, which the munificence of the public seemed to justify and to demand, the Trustees have deemed themselves compelled to commence their institution upon a scale and on a system, coinciding less with the immediate state of the funds than with the anticipated exigencies of society; assured that the liberality of the State and of individuals will not fail to complete an undertaking, commenced under such honorable and happy auspices; relying, that every want, which shall occur, will be supplied, as well from the interesting and commanding nature of all the charities, concentrated in their institution, as from the just and deep sympathies for its success, which prevail in the community.

To that sympathy, to the same noble and elevated sentiment, to which we are indebted, for its conception, and, thus far, for its establishment, we confidently rely for its future support.

To you, Sir, as the head and representative of this great Commonwealth;—to our fellow citizens, at large;—to all the wise, the liberal, the virtuous, and pious men of our country, we cheerfully commit its destinies. Asking only of them and of the legislature of the Commonwealth, that the same munificent spirit, which founded, may still preside over it;—that it may thus be enabled to develop all its usefulness; and continue to be,—what it now is,—a monument of the wisdom, the liberality and humanity of the rulers and citizens of Massachusetts.

The services were concluded and the audience informed of the completion of the ceremonies, by a Benediction from the Treasurer, JAMES PRINCE, Esq. as follows.

FELLOW CITIZENS,

The purposes for which we have assembled being accomplished, the moment of our separation from this now interesting spot has arrived. Let us, however, under those impressions which the occasion so forcibly inspires, in retiring, turn our thoughts from earth to heaven, and again implore the God and Father of all, graciously to permit the top stone of this intended edifice to be laid in Love, in Order, and without accident, as at this beginning; and to bestow the choicest of his blessings upon all those who have been, or who hereafter may be, donors to this humane establishment, not only in this world, but in that which is to come. AMEN.

The spectators, amounting to several thousands, retired with solemn but cheerful countenances, to participate in the pleasures and festivities of the AUSPICIOUS DAY.

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