

"I WON'T GIVE TO A HOSPITAL"

~~One class of philanthropy has been more criticised than the rest—namely, the Hospitals.~~ It is not the desire or purpose of the Chest organization to condone or gloss over the faults and failures of the hospitals, but we believe that many unfounded criticisms are made. This was shown by an investigation of 12 cases last year, all of which turned out to be unfounded in fact. We all need education on what the hospitals are doing, and the hospitals need our moral and financial backing, and our criticism, so that they may improve.

A Hospital is a Hotel—Plus—

When you live in a hotel you're well, eat your meals in the restaurant, make your own bath and generally help yourself. When you live in a hospital you're sick, have to be fed, bathed, nursed and provided with medicine by hospital employees. For all this care and service there must be as many or more employees as patients. The average cost of caring for a patient in a Rochester hospital is only \$3.25 per day.

Last Year's Record

There were in 3 Rochester hospitals last year 13,240 patients for an average stay of 12 1-2 days. There were 8,661 patients in their free clinics. Of the 21,851 patients, over 10,000 received free treatment from these hospitals. Some of the balance paid half what it cost the hospital, some three-quarters what it cost, and a small percentage in private rooms all it cost.

All the paying patients paid the 3 hospitals \$386,237.89. It cost \$483,399.46 to operate these same hospitals. The Chest made up the deficit—\$97,161.57 for these 3 hospitals. Now what would have happened without the additional \$97,000? **The free service would have been cut down or cut out. The poor and unfortunate would suffer first.** Perhaps the rates for those who pay less than actual cost to the hospital would have been raised. Then the whole thing would have become a business matter—service for him who can pay in full. Instead of less free service there should be more, and the hospitals need money to do it. Instead of poorer or cheaper service the hospitals should give better service, and we must provide money with which to do it.

Paying the Bill

Now about the collection end of the hospital. Would you approve of an expensive collection service for a hospital when you know that every dollar so spent means \$1.00 less for free service to the poor? Sometimes collections have been tactlessly made. The handling can and should be improved; but it must be understood that the hospital must collect its money promptly and without loss or great cost—if its free service is to be maintained and increased. If the hospitals had the money to pay for more tactful and diplomatic employees, fewer mistakes would have been made. But any considerable collection expense could not be justified, and this the public should fully understand and will fully approve.

Criticisms of Service

Patients and anxious relatives have criticised the hospitals for many things. A perfectly well man criticises hotel employees, service and food during a 12 1-2 day stay—sometimes justly—sometimes unjustly. During the past few months one Rochester hospital obtained the written criticisms of its patients, addressed to the Chairman of its Board of Directors. 544 spoke favorably of food, service and courtesy of employees. There were 10 minor criticisms.

Hospital Rates

The fact is the hospital rates cannot well be raised. Those so unfortunate as to need a hospital do not pay its operation costs. Those who can pay must be required to pay the full rate or such part of the rate as they are able, or they will prevent some poor and unfortunate people from getting any hospital service. Those who haven't used a hospital may need it at any moment. We must have hospitals or cease to be a civilized community—go without nurses and the advancement of medical science in Rochester. So all of us together must make up the deficit for more and better hospital service.

Without Hospitals

Who wants Rochester without hospitals? They are a great help and comfort in time of trouble. Sickness, accident, catastrophe may befall the biggest of us or the least of us at any moment. **The unknown man knocked down in the street**, rushed to a hospital in an ambulance, cared for by hospital nurses and doctors **has a better chance for his life** than the leading citizen taken to his home with all the delay in getting his own physician and nurse and the lack of facilities for proper medical care. If there is one philanthropy that should command the sympathetic support of the mass of the people it is the hospitals.

Will you persist in fixing your mind on the defects and failures of our Hospitals?

Have you never heard of the thousands whom they have pulled through serious illnesses?

Have you never heard of the thousands to whom their care and skill and devotion, have given back a father or a mother or child in full health and happiness?

Have you never heard of their work for thousands of the poor and "down and out" whom you would pass by on the other side?

The more you learn of the great human service of Rochester Hospitals, the more you will give to make that work greater and better.

Rochester Patriotic and Community Fund, Inc.

Community Chest Campaign

June 2 to 9, 1919