Hospital proper	615
South Department	264
Relief Station	20
Convalescent Home	36
Total for the Hospital Department	935

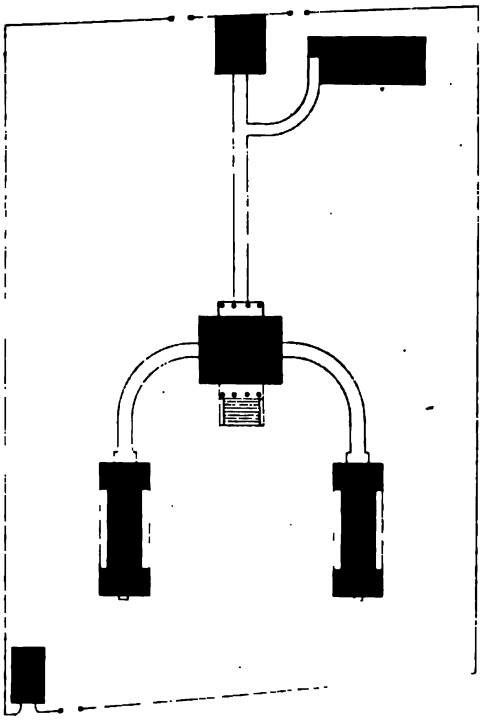
The distribution of beds in the main Hospital at the close of 1905 was as follows:

	Ward.		Private.		Total.
	Male.	Female.	Male.	Female.	
Surgical	180	112	23	15	330
Medical	116	84	9	6	215
Gynæcological	.....	52	.....	4	56
Ophthalmic and Aural	6	8	.....	.....	14
	302	256	32	25	615

SITE.

The Hospital site had previously been used for the so-called Agricultural Fair Grounds at the South End of Boston. At high tides the land was flooded. The site is what is known as "made land," and gravel used in bringing the grounds to proper level was brought from Braintree. The average grade of the surface is 7 feet above the original level, and the ground grade of the buildings is fully 17 feet above mean low water. At that time this was considered sufficiently solid for a foundation for the buildings, piles being driven to the usual depth. The floors of the basement were 3½ feet below the ground level. The buildings, as originally constructed, had about forty patients in the basements. It was found after some years, however, that because the basement floors were 3½ feet below the average grade there was a great deal of dampness, and the method of construction did not provide for the exclusion of dampness. Extensive bacteriological experiments were made of

the air by cultures taken in the basement, which were found to have innumerable colonies of moulds. Again, the amount of carbonic acid gas in country pastures, or in the woods, is only a small fraction of 1 per cent.; in cities and towns, 2 to 3 per cent. The amount of carbonic acid gas, found not from borings upon the ground, but from various places



I.—Block Plan, 1864-69.

throughout the basement, showed that there was 5 to 6 per cent. of carbonic acid gas. These conditions caused great deterioration in the Hospital buildings, but they would not have been recognized except for actual scientific tests. Practically the same may be said of two other hospitals in Boston, a good portion of whose buildings are located upon

reclaimed land. Expediency is not always the best policy, and although a large and notable collection of buildings has been constructed and safely maintained, the Hospital cannot attribute any of its success to an advantageous site, if seen from a scientific point of view.

The Hospital was unfortunate in the arrangement of its buildings, from the fact that the original buildings extended northwest to southeast, and could not readily be arranged parallel with the surrounding streets so as to get the great benefit of a southern exposure. As was originally intended, some of the pavilions were located upon the northwest and southeast axis, which was equally unfortunate. Thus the true hospital axiom of a southern exposure, now generally accepted, was violated in order to avoid the cost of purchasing a proper site. It was proposed, as there were no buildings between Albany street and tide-water, and it was not foreseen that this would be wanted for commercial purposes, to establish a park between the Hospital grounds and tide-water, and plant a promenade of shade trees. Not even the malodorous breezes from the putrid South bay disconcerted the City Fathers at that time. In spite of various other unwise and impracticable reasons, it was decided to locate the Hospital on its present site.

Another objection at that time was its "great distance from the centre of the population." But the unforeseen and extensive growth of the South End of the city, and the taking of Roxbury and other towns on the south into the municipality, now makes the Hospital conveniently central and has proved perhaps the only reasonable justification for its location.

ORIGINAL BUILDINGS.

In the preliminary study for the plans for the Hospital buildings, the literature upon the subject, if not condensed, would make a considerable volume by itself. The most notable writing upon this subject was that offered in a report of the "Committee on a Free Hospital," in 1861; "City Hospitals," by John Green, M. D., a member of the Massachusetts Medical Society, and "Outlines of a Plan for a Free