APPENDIX B. (Page 73.)

REPORT OF THE JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE OF THE MASSACHUSETTS LEGISLATURE OF 1861 ON THE MEMORIAL OF THE ASSOCIATED INSTITUTIONS OF SCIENCE AND ART.

(Prepared by William B. Rogers.)

Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, March 19, 1861.

The Joint Standing Committee on Education, to which was referred the Memorial of the Associated Institutions of Science and Art, asking for a charter for the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and petitioning for a grant of Back-Bay lands in a continuous space, for the uses respectively of said Institute, of the Boston Society of Natural History, and of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society, have considered the same, and respectfully report as follows:

. . . As regards the petition for a charter for the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, empowering it to carry into effect the plan of a Society of Arts, a Museum of Arts and a School of Industrial Science, your Committee believe the objects of the Institute to be of the highest moment to the material and educational progress of the State, and are moreover satisfied of the sincere purpose and ability of those concerned in the enterprise to carry it into successful operation. They therefore recommend that the charter prayed for be granted.

In relation to the assignment of Back-Bay land for which the memorialists pray, your Committee would state that the petitioners, referring to the plan of the territory adopted by the Commissioners in 1857, ask the State to set apart
and assign to the use of the Boston Society of Natural History and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology the first section of land lying west of Berkeley and between Newbury and Boylston streets, extending to Clarendon Street, the former Society to occupy about one third and the latter the remaining two thirds of this section. They further ask that the next section of land lying west of Clarendon Street in the same range be set apart for the use of the Horticultural Society, for ornamental planting and for the erection hereafter of structures suited to the wants of this Society and to the decoration of the grounds.

Referring first to the Boston Society of Natural History, it appears that this institution, now in existence more than thirty years, has been greatly instrumental in creating and extending a taste for scientific studies and researches throughout the community; that it has made valuable contribution to natural science, especially as regards the geology and natural history of the State; that it is yearly furnishing additions of acknowledged value to scientific literature by its published journal and proceedings; that it has accumulated a rich and varied collection of objects from the mineral and organic worlds, and a library of more than 5,000 volumes, embracing works of great value for scientific reference, and that its museum, freely opened to the public once a week, is largely visited by teachers and their schools, and is recognized as an important means of general instruction. Your Committee are further informed that in these efforts to advance the natural sciences and the cause of popular education, the Society, with the exception of a grant of $1,500 spread over five years, has never asked or received pecuniary aid from the State, but has been dependent wholly on the enthusiasm of its members and the occasional munificence of individuals.

The memorialists represent in behalf of this Society that the present building in Mason Street is quite too small for their rapidly increasing collections, besides being otherwise unfit for the purposes for which it is used, and they urge...
that by the erection of an ample structure especially adapted for their objects, they will be able to make their labors and instructions more extensively useful to the public, at the same time that they secure for themselves a more efficient equipment for those researches by which they may enlarge the boundaries of knowledge. It is moreover represented as a part of their plan, in the event of the success of their present petition, to carry out a system of lectures provided for in their constitution, so as to offer to teachers of the common schools, and others seeking such knowledge, stated instruction in subjects connected with natural history.

In reference to the Institute of Technology, your Committee have been furnished with full information through the oral statements of the memorialists and the printed documents already alluded to, in which are set forth the Objects and Plan of the Institute and the history of the steps thus far taken in its organization.

As regards the public benefits to be anticipated from it, the memorialists represent that such an institution, in its threefold character of a Society of Arts, a Museum of Arts, and a School of Industrial Science, would be largely conducive to the progress of the industrial arts and sciences throughout the Commonwealth, and, while thus adding to the material wealth of the State, would form a supplement to our educational system of great importance in its influence upon the intelligence and morality of the community, and especially of the industrial classes.

They urge that in the existing competitions of manufacturing, commercial and agricultural pursuits, such a special training in practical science has become indispensable if we would hope to maintain a prosperous career amid the busy enterprises and inventions of the leading European nations.

They cite in favor of the plan the example of England, France and other States eminent for their progress in industry and applied science, and argue, from the general spread of elementary knowledge among ourselves and from the peculiarly practical genius of our people, that we are
most favorably placed for reaping the advantages of such
an institution, and for drawing the richest profits from its
teachings as applied in the fields of commerce and the arts.

Looking to the educational bearings of their plan, the
memorialists urge the great value to the public of each of
the three departments of the Institute. They represent that
the Society of Arts will be the means of evolving and stim-
ulating the already skilled and cultivated practical talent of
the State; that the Museum of Arts will offer a large treas-
ure of knowledge for the instruction of the general public
and for the guidance of all who are devoted to practical
science and industrial pursuits, and that the School of In-
dustrial Science, while providing a systematic training in the
applied sciences and arts of design for its regular students,
will open the instructions of ample lecture-rooms to the large
class of artisans, merchants and others seeking for such
teachings in practical science as they can acquire in the in-
tervals of labor and without methodical study.

In this connection they dwell particularly on the fact,
that the Institute will fill an important gap in the present
educational plans of the Commonwealth, by supplying the
industrial classes with the knowledge and training of which
they are specially in need, and which could not be effec-
tually provided in any of the existing institutions of the
State.

They also urge that the facilities for the acquisition of
practical science thus provided by the Institute, being of a
nature to attract large numbers of teachers to the museums
and lecture-rooms, will conduce to more thorough practical
teaching in the common schools; and they add that it is
proposed to have a certain number of lectures every year
specially arranged for the benefit of persons of this class.

In evidence of its connection with the industrial and edu-
cational progress of the State at large, the memorialists
further represent that the Institute, as thus far organized,
embraces in its list of more than two hundred members,
persons from different sections of the Commonwealth, and
belonging to almost all the active and professional pursuits; and they state that it is contemplated in the plan of the Institute to encourage the formation of local societies of arts in the different towns of the Commonwealth, whose correspondence and interchange with the central institution in Boston may carry the working activities of the latter into every part of the State, at the same time that they help to enrich its museums and add to the practical efficiency of all its departments.

In regard to that portion of the petition of the memorialists which relates to the application of the Horticultural Society for the adjoining westerly square, the Committee unanimously came to the conclusion that there was no immediate urgency in their case; and as there is a doubt existing in some minds as to the propriety of making the grant, it was deemed advisable to dismiss this branch of the petition, and leave it to future developments for legislative action, should it be desired.

Your Committee have made careful inquiry in relation to the ability and readiness of the several societies to occupy and improve the proposed grant of land, and otherwise to carry into effect the purposes professed by them. They learn that the Boston Society of Natural History has lately received an important addition to its resources, which, with its previous means, will place it in a condition to erect a commodious and handsome edifice for its accommodation on the grounds in question, and that the Society will be in readiness to begin building as soon as it shall be authorized to occupy the land.

In regard to the Institute of Technology, the memorialists represent that it is proposed by this Society, as a guarantee to the State, to agree to raise a sum of $100,000 for their appropriate purposes before entering on the granted land. They further state that they have already received earnest intimations, conditional on this grant, of a munificent endowment to be devoted to the School of Industrial Science, and of a liberal appropriation from a different quarter for
building purposes; and they express the fullest confidence in their ability to secure adequate means for entering effectively on the educational and other plans of the Institute.

After a full consideration of what is above briefly reported as to the character and prospective influence of the several institutions represented in the memorial and as to their ability to carry out the purposes professed by them, your Committee have been satisfied of the substantial basis of their plans and of the great benefits to be conferred by them on the industry and education of the Commonwealth. . . .