

Exposition of the conduct and character of Dr. John Augustine Smith : president of the Coll. of Physicians and Surgeons in the City of New-York, and professor of physiology : as exhibited in the session of 1839-40 / by James R. Manley.

Contributors

Manley, James R., 1781-1851.
National Library of Medicine (U.S.)

Publication/Creation

New-York : [publisher not identified], 1841.

Persistent URL

<https://wellcomecollection.org/works/kjkb8q3x>

License and attribution

This material has been provided by This material has been provided by the National Library of Medicine (U.S.), through the Medical Heritage Library. The original may be consulted at the National Library of Medicine (U.S.) where the originals may be consulted.

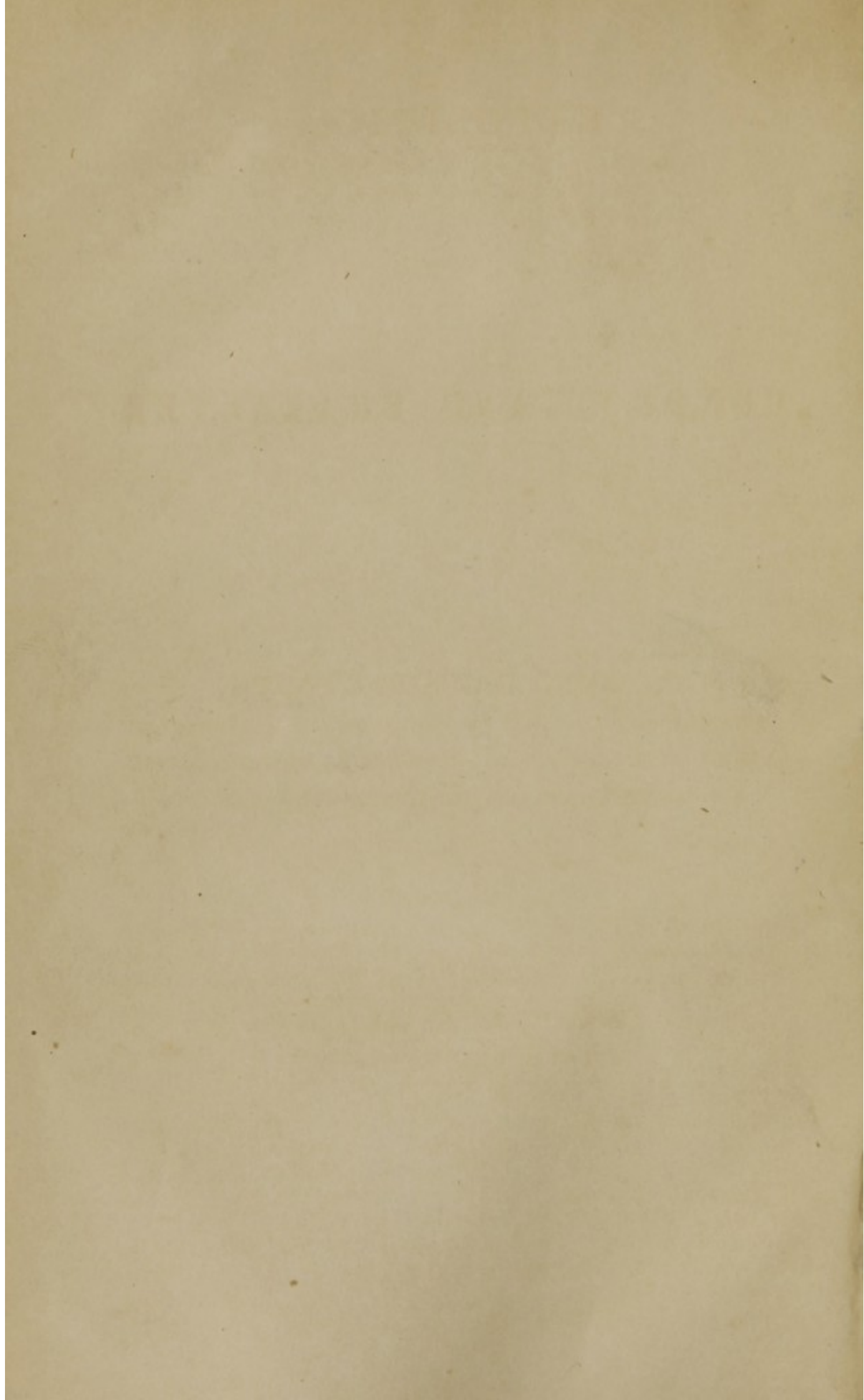
This work has been identified as being free of known restrictions under copyright law, including all related and neighbouring rights and is being made available under the Creative Commons, Public Domain Mark.

You can copy, modify, distribute and perform the work, even for commercial purposes, without asking permission.

**wellcome
collection**

Wellcome Collection
183 Euston Road
London NW1 2BE UK
T +44 (0)20 7611 8722
E library@wellcomecollection.org
<https://wellcomecollection.org>

WZ
100
S6523M
1841



634

750580

EXPOSITION

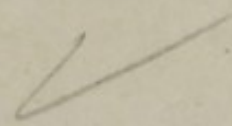
OF THE

CONDUCT AND CHARACTER

OF

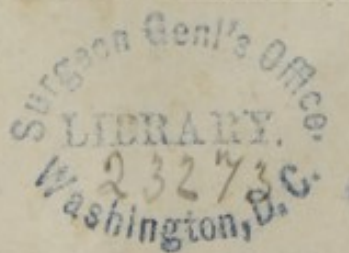
DR. JOHN AUGUSTINE SMITH,

PRESIDENT OF THE COLL. OF PHYSICIANS AND SURGEONS IN
THE CITY OF NEW-YORK, AND PROFESSOR OF PHYSIOLOGY;
AS EXHIBITED IN THE SESSION OF 1839—40.



BY JAMES R. MANLEY, M. D.

LATE LECTURER ON OBSTRETRICS.



NEW-YORK:

1841.

E. 77. 10 d.

EXHIBITION

CONDUCT AND CHARACTER

WZ

100

56523 M

1841

DR. JOHN ALGER, THE SMITH

MEMORIAL OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK
IN THE YEAR 1841

BY BARNES & BARNES, D. D.

NEW YORK: 1841.

NEW-YORK

1841

EXPOSITION, &c.

WHEN a person finds himself engaged in a controversy against his will, and is so peculiarly situated, that he can neither retire with credit, nor contend with any probability of success; he owes it to himself to explain his situation, in order to account for his discomfiture: and more especially is this his duty when the contest is with an unscrupulous adversary, whose besetting folly is the idolatry of self; whose rules of action are the mere rules of expediency; and who will persecute a foe, or discard a friend; simulate a truth or apologize for falsehood, with the same stoical indifference with which he would demonstrate a problem in mathematics; considering only the end to be attained, without taking into consideration the moral fitness of the measures by which it is to be accomplished. I regret the task which necessity has imposed upon me, because it must assume a personal

Regents of the University.

Hon. James King, Chancellor, (lately deceased,) Theo. Romeyn Beck, Secretary, the Governor and Lieutenant Governor, *ex officiis*, Elisha Jenkins, Esq., James Thompson, Esq., Peter Wendell, M. D., John Greig, Esq., Jesse Buel, Esq., Gulian C. Verplanck, L. L. D., Garrit Y. Lansing, Esq., Washington Irving, L. L. D., John K. Paige, Esq., John A. Dix, Esq., William Campbell, Esq., Erastus Corning, Esq., Gen. Prosper M. Wetmore, Esq., James M'Kown, Esq., John L. Graham, Esq., John M'Lean, Esq., A. J. Parker, Esq., Hon. John C. Spencer.

Trustees of the College of Physicians and Surgeons.

J. Augustine Smith, M. D., President, Thomas Cock, M. D., Vice-President, Nicoll H. Dering, M. D., Registrar, Fanning Tucker, Treasurer, Dr. Anthony L. Anderson, Samuel W. Moore, M. D., George W. Bruen, Esq., J. Kearney Rodgers, M. D., John C. Cheesman, M. D., Edward G. Ludlow, M. D., Joseph Delafield, Esq., George Griswold, Esq., George D. Strong, Esq., Henry Wyckoff, Esq., Reuben Withers, Esq., Benjamin L. Swan, Esq., Floyd Smith, Esq., James B. Murray, Esq., Wm. Beach Lawrence, Esq., Wm. K. Strong, Esq., R. M. Blatchford, Edward Delafield, M. D., John R. Rhineland, M. D., John C. Jay, M. D., R. B. Minturn, Esq., Murray Hoffman, Esq.

character; for the experience of thirty years has taught me, that the public judge in all such matters with so much allowance, as to leave it very doubtful whether or not they feel any interest in the result. I regret it also for another reason: I am certain that I shall convict Dr. Smith of conduct which his most partial friends can neither justify, approve or palliate; and in speaking of such conduct it is difficult to preserve that respect, which controversies with gentlemen seem always to demand. Things ought to be called by their proper names, and I am not sufficiently acquainted with my own language to preserve this rule, and speak of him in respectful terms. Some men are such adepts in the school of dissimulation, that the very turpitude of their conduct is calculated to work its own apology. They are well aware that the world does not willingly assign to wantonness what can be attributed to motive, because wantonness in mischief is the attribute of fiends; they are aware also, that it will much rather assign a bad motive than none, for conduct which it cannot explain; and they therefore tax their ingenuity to appear personally disinterested, that they may have credit on the score of duty for that which would otherwise appear an unpardonable offence: the above remark, however paradoxical it may seem, will receive ample illustration in the progress of this exposition.

The dignity and usefulness of official station depend very much on the character of the incumbent; the disgrace of the one by necessity involves the degradation of the other, and as the public have an interest in maintaining the respectability of both, I am presented with an additional motive for my appeal to the profession. Great men may with impunity commit petty offences, since small faults cannot well be visited with the severity of censure, when there is great countervailing merit to redeem them; but it is far otherwise with men who, by accident, are clothed with distinction and authority and who borrow their character from the stations they occupy;

“Their little boats should keep near shore,
Though larger ones may venture more;”

They have no right to presume that the panoply of office will be a sufficient protection for conduct which would disgrace them as private citizens: in judging such men, the public usually strip them of their official consequence, and with as little ceremony as if it were a stolen vestment; and they must stand their trials, in their naked personal characters, divested of their official trappings.

If Dr. John Augustine Smith can claim immunity on the ground of duty, for his utter disregard of my professional reputation and pri-

vate feelings, let him make the attempt; but it shall be my business to sift the evidence on which such a plea is founded: and I purpose to show from the minutes of the board of trustees over which he presides, that it is a shallow pretext to escape the odium which his conduct justly merits. If in the sequel of this paper I shall state facts which are discreditable to him; conduct marked by vanity, deceit and hypocrisy, in such proportions as to render it difficult to decide which predominates: if I shall show petty intrigue so intent on its purposes, as to have left its footprints uncovered; and all but falsehood in terms, (I need scarcely make this qualification,) as apparent as the most natural induction can make it: I shall presume that the public will be furnished with sufficient data upon which to form their opinion of his moral and intellectual fitness for the station he occupies. If I show him to have published as truth, what he could not know: if I show him with a measure of hypocrisy which would disgrace a jesuit, pleading his duty for the perpetration of an outrage: if I show him attempting to deceive his class into the belief of that which he *knew* to be false: if I show him intriguing with his fellow professors; calling them without their knowledge of the business for which they were convened, and endeavoring to press them to a vote to serve his own purposes, which if passed would have assumed the nature of a conspiracy: if I afterward show him quailing under a rebuke which his livid countenance endorsed as just, and his matchless éffrontery could not withstand, in the presence of his fellow professors: if I show him attempting to pack a board of trustees, by his individual nomination to the Hon. Regents, after having declared to his own board, that their nominations would be treated with contempt by regents, and therefore they need not make them. If I show him in his character of President electioneering with the trustees of his nomination, after their appointment, and show *them* voting exactly as he directed, at one time *for*, and at another time *against* the same candidate, (Dr. Gilman,) and that candidate his own selection: what more can a discerning public require to form a just estimate of his character? And if—but here pity supplants both indignation and contempt—if I show him, at a time when all his plans to injure my medical reputation had proved successful, and nothing more was necessary to complete his triumph; gloating over my defeat, and descending to the nethermost depth of personal degradation, by taking advantage of his official station to slander me, in a public introductory lecture to a mixed assembly at the opening of the college. when if every sentence had been a falsehood, none without a breach of courtesy to the audience could have contradicted that which was said;

what more can be required to stamp his character?—only one thing; his apology for the tirade: and in order that it may not be lost, as its preservation may be of use to others in like cases tempted to offend, I will state it. *He had just recovered from a serious illness; had suffered much family affliction, and from his own account had had a near prospect of death.* This was the reason, publicly stated, why he could not prepare a proper lecture suited to the occasion, and why he presented what would have otherwise been only the peroration of the discourse!!! Such circumstances are calculated to humble the spirit and humanize the feelings, although in his case they appear to have had an opposite influence.

The task imposed upon me is unpleasant, because the contempt which I feel for the author of my difficulties, may conflict with the duty which I owe to the public; there is danger that indignation will outstrip discretion, and that I may offend by my manner of treating the subject, not making due allowance for the calm and apathetic temper in which some persons consider all professional controversies. There are those who affect a wondrous degree of prudence on the subject of differences of a personal nature: if their understandings are convinced, they take good care that their opinions shall not be quoted; and if obliged to speak, they deliver themselves in such soft, silky and equivocal terms, as to be with difficulty understood. These people belong to a class very numerous in all professions, but especially in ours; the calculation of interest is the basis of all their social morals, and they are silly enough to believe that others will give a credit to their kindly feelings of benevolence for that conduct which is alone chargeable to cupidity; they are prone, however, to take their stations between the lines of the contending parties, and while they refuse to recognize the rights of either, they take good care to make merchandize of both. To such *I do not* address this exposition: my appeal is made to men, who to their intelligence, add a sound moral, and to both, the honest confidence which scorns to suppress opinions, when truth and justice demand them.

In forming a judgment of the actions of men, two conditions are necessary, to wit, the motives which prompt them and the character of the results. If the consequences are injurious or disastrous, be the motives never so pure; the judgment is in fault, and the result libels the good sense of the agent; he may be very honest, but he is *not* wise. If the motive be wicked, and the action nevertheless harmless or even beneficial, it gives evidence of a want of integrity in the agent, which no benefit to result will atone for, or excuse. But if the motive be base, and its consequences productive of no possible good,

but much real mischief; the conclusion is irresistible, that both receive only their just desert when they are treated with marked reprobation. There is some conduct of such a character as to make it difficult for the most expansive charity to assign to it an honest origin, and of this description is that of which I am about to speak, and without further preface I proceed with the narrative; I regret the necessity, but am not disposed to shrink from its responsibility. In the situation in which I am placed, duty demands more than inclination prompts: and although the defence of reputation is as much a duty and a right, as the defence of the person from actual violence, duty to the public comes in aid of all personal motives and would leave me without apology if I neglected to publish. Dr. Smith, is the President of a medical school whose varied fortunes, notwithstanding its public patronage, have invariably disappointed public expectation; and it is time to inquire seriously whether the causes of its stunted growth and its deficient character are justly chargeable to mismanagement in its government or want of capacity in its teachers. If its management is in fault, and will explain its condition, the medical profession need look no farther; but if paucity of talent seeks to conceal its known insufficiency by an affectation of zeal for the interests of science; or if both combine to deceive the public into the belief that its want of success is rather apparent than real: the public must be benefited by the publication of facts which may serve to direct their judgment. I have no disposition to enter into a controversy with a corporate school, nor with undue severity to criticise their public acts, but it is the extreme of cowardice to permit the public confidence to be abused through fear of personal consequences; and when, as now, I find the authority of the trustees of the College of Physicians and Surgeons used, (it is but charitable to presume against their better judgment,) to deceive the public into the belief that such management as I will now unmask, is the nearest approximation to the appointment of Professors by *Concours* as done in Paris; I am furnished with an additional inducement to make this publication.*

* The first clause of the college circular, just issued, is in the following terms.

“The Trustees of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of the University of the State of New-York have the satisfaction of assuring the friends of the institution, that the arrangements made to encourage a zealous and successful prosecution of medical studies are most ample. The courses of instruction embrace every department of medical science, upon each of which the Trustees believe that FULL AND ACCURATE INSTRUCTION is afforded. The system which has been adopted for a few years past, of filling vacancies in the faculty by the appointment of Lecturers on probation, has been productive of the happiest results: and the Trustees confi-

If the gentlemen who drew up this paper have no respect for the public, they ought to be presumed to have some for themselves. If with a general knowledge of the facts of which they could not be ignorant, they are willing to tell the public that "this system of filling chairs is the ONLY approach that has been made in this country towards the *concours*, and was first adopted by the college of Physicians and Surgeons," it is time to inquire what this *concours* is, and if any similarity exists between them, to take good care that the points of resemblance be not multiplied. Before I have finished I will state some facts which cannot fail of effect in convincing the public that it is alike an insult to common sense and common honesty. It is too late to claim "that full and accurate instruction is afforded upon each department of medical science; the charge of incompetency in one department at least (the department of Physiology) has been too long and too often iterated by every professor in the college, as well as some lately resigned, to allow the record to be blotted out by a clause like this; and if any thing can add to the surprise which the announcement occasions, it is the fact that it is *made by professors*, and presented to trustees for approval with a view to publication.* If in the sequel of this paper the names of some of Dr. Smith's associates should be introduced, it will be always in connection with facts, and if they can derive character from their connection or agency in such partnership, I can only say, that as the article is easily acquired it must be estimated accordingly.

In the early part of May, 1839, I was invited by Dr. J. C. Cheeseman, a trustee of the College, to become a candidate for the obstetric chair in the College of Physicians and Surgeons, which had been made vacant by the resignation of Dr. Delafield; I stated my objections; one of which was, that perhaps I could not get it, if I asked for it; another that I did neither want or need it; and a third, that if I had it, it would oblige me to do task work; I should be obliged to write out a full course of lectures, as I could not trust myself to speak from short notes; and moreover that the time had gone past, when I could be flattered by such appointment: nevertheless I would think of it, if he thought I ought to take it, but that in no circumstances would I make a formal application for it, and that he must un-

dently believe that the chairs are now filled by COMPETENT AND EFFICIENT MEN. THE SYSTEM OF FILLING THE CHAIRS IS THE ONLY APPROACH THAT HAS BEEN MADE IN THIS COUNTRY TOWARDS THE CONCOURS AND WAS FIRST ADOPTED BY THE COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS AND SURGEONS."

* The circulars of the college are usually drawn up by the professors, although this duty is sometimes done by the president himself who is also a professor; in this instance it was the work of a majority of the professors.

derstand that I held myself at liberty to refuse it in the event of my appointment. It was not long afterwards, when meeting at the same place where the first conversation was held, the same subject came up, and he informed me that he had conversed with several medical members of their board who would be pleased if I would take it, and that there was little doubt of my success if I would allow myself to be a candidate. At this conversation I repeated my former arguments, and went into a history of the college professorships as settled in 1826, when the very chair now vacant was, by management, in a manner wrested from me, and when, at a protracted meeting of the regents of the university in Albany, many ballotings were had without a choice, and at the last, it being late, Lieut. Gov. Taylor gave in and changed his vote, by which I was defeated. If under all these circumstances he thought proper to propose me with the condition I had annexed, he might do so. Not long after this Dr. C. met with Dr. John Augustine Smith and told him what were the wishes of himself and friends as respected me, and he was surprised to find him very much opposed, stating as his reasons that I was too old—had never lectured and *would not do*; winding off as usual with a significant laugh and his usual remark, that *gentlemen will differ!* He was told, however, that the attempt would be made, and it was hoped with success. I was then fairly before the public early in May, as a candidate for the vacant chair. My intimate friends, among whom I numbered Dr. Gilman, were fully apprised of it, and all the circumstances connected with it; Dr. G. therefore thought himself obliged to make me acquainted with the intentions of Dr. Smith, which he did in a letter of which the following is a copy:

New-York, May 18, 1839.

MY DEAR SIR,

I called at your house this evening to talk over a matter in which we are both interested, and I now write because I feel that it is due to the sentiments of respect I have always cherished for you, and to the kind feelings you have ever expressed for me, that there should be no delay in communicating to you a determination of mine, by which you may possibly be affected. Last evening, while you and I were at the Lecture, John Augustine Smith called on me, and left a note, requesting me to see him this morning. I called accordingly, and he then informed me that he had determined to make me an offer of his interest in obtaining the vacant chair of midwifery in the College, and that if I consented to apply he had little doubt of my success. I alluded to your being a candidate: he

told me, and *authorized me to tell you*, that he did not believe you could in any event obtain the place, and that, of course, it would be idle for me to stand aside, out of regard to you, when it would only be to make room for another person. Combining this with what you had told me was your own opinion as to your prospect of success, I was led to entertain the subject. It is, I trust, unnecessary to say that till this time I had not thought of the matter; the idea of being a candidate had never once presented itself to my mind. I have thought much on the subject, and consulted two friends; to me, as you are aware, the sanction which such an appointment gives to a young man's professional character is of almost infinite value; under these circumstances, I confidently trust that you will not think I do wrong in applying for the place. I should very deeply regret that this or any other circumstance should in any way affect our personal relations. Be assured that no such influence as this affair is likely to exert, will in the slightest degree diminish the respect and esteem with which I remain, now as ever,

Your sincere friend,

C. R. GILMAN.

Upon the receipt of this letter, I returned just such an answer as one friend would to another, which I had reason to believe would be satisfactory, and therefore kept no copy; but I confess I was surprised that Dr. Smith should have directed such a message to be communicated. I had known him long, and at one time intimately; and nothing that I was aware of had happened to mar our intercourse, more than occurs every day between friends whose necessary interests imperceptibly operate to change their associations. I knew moreover, that he could not be ignorant that he was mainly indebted to me for the chair of anatomy in the college in the year 1826, when the institution was remodeled, and when my assent alone would have been sufficient to have left him at William and Mary college to conduct his controversy as well as he might with his Virginian friends, although he had expressed his willingness to be transferred. I knew that he was fully apprised through his friend Dr. Jaques that serious opposition was made to him, after he was invited to take the chair of anatomy and had accepted the invitation, and that but for my agency he would have been defeated; and these facts were but little calculated to diminish my surprise. In the year 1826 I was influenced only by the principle of fair and candid dealing: he had been invited—had gladly accepted—and wrong or right, those who had invited him, (and I was one,) were bound to keep their promise. I did so at the sacrifice of some kindly

feeling of my then associates; certainly not anticipating my controversy with him as one of its fruits.

My determination to try the question of his supremacy in the college was now taken, for I could not make myself believe that the *weakest member belonging to the institution* had sufficient influence to control the action, or to defeat the intentions of the trustees.

In a few days a requisition for a meeting of the board was made out in proper form and transmitted to him; when he received it, although the day of meeting was named, he remarked that he would not call it till he had returned from Albany, where the Regents were still in session: and of course it was not called. When he returned, it was found that Dr. Delafield, the former professor of Obstetrics, had been appointed a trustee, who was known by Dr. S. to be opposed to my election as lecturer, but for what reason has not yet appeared. The meeting, however, was finally convened, and here Dr. S's character begins to evolve itself. The special meeting was held June 11th, and there were present John Augustine Smith, president, Dr. Cheesman, Drs. J. R. B. Rodgers, Anderson, Ludlow, Moore, Dering, Delafield—Messrs. Tucker, Swan, Wyckoff, Delafield, Blatchford, Strong, Bruen, F. Smith, Griswold—in all seventeen, and a larger number of trustees than had been convened for many years, or perhaps at any time, for any purpose.* At this meeting a letter was read from Dr. Bayard, of Nova Scotia, in answer to one which Dr. Cock, the vice-president, had written to him after consultation with some of his associates; in which he expressed his willingness to remove to New-York and take the vacant chair, if elected; and Dr. Smith took occasion to make some very flattering remarks on Dr. B.'s character, and his fitness for the station, which contrasted very strongly with those with which he honored me; but the result proved that the speech was intended only to detract from the support which he apprehended would be given to me: for Dr. Bayard did not receive a single vote. Dr. Gilman was Dr. Smith's candidate, and received all the votes which were cast in opposition, except one given to Dr. Bulkley. As a specimen of candid dealing with Dr. Bayard on the one part, and the majority of the board of trustees on the other, this first exhibition certainly has its merit!

* Extract from minutes of the board of trustees of the College of Physicians and Surgeons, June 11, 1839:

“Letter from Dr. Bayard in answer to one from Dr. Cock was read.

Dr. Rodgers nominated Dr. Bulkley as a candidate for the lectureship of Obstetrics and the diseases of women and children.

Dr. Rodgers moved that the election of lecturer be postponed one week—motion

Being elected to the chair, notwithstanding his violent and causeless opposition, I presumed that it would now cease, and that I would be permitted to conduct my course of instruction in peace ; and in the fullest confidence that he would not be guilty of any conduct towards me that would disgrace himself, (for this was my only security,) I commenced my duties, and was proceeding to the entire satisfaction of my class, when I received information that he had denounced me as an incompetent lecturer, and my course of instruction as a failure, to the board of trustees, on the evening of the thirteenth day of January, the term being but little more than half spent ; of course the only security upon which I had relied had failed : *he had disgraced* himself, and it became my duty, in self-defence to show that no confidence could be placed in his declaration. The manner which he contrived to introduce the subject at the meeting of the trustees was unique, and calculated to teach a lesson to any modern Machiavel. He is reported to have said, "that it was the proper time to make the annual report to the regents of the university, and that he had prepared one." It was read, and immediately after the reading he observed "that it was usual in such papers to speak of the character of the several courses of instruction, which he had purposely omitted because he could not do so without including the course of obstetrics ; and as that was a decided failure, he had preferred to pass them all without remark." This announcement was received with surprise by the majority of the members, and with apparent indifference by the rest ; but before time had been given to ask any explanation, he observed that there was no more business before them, and adjourned the meeting ; sufficient conversation, however, passed between him and some of the trustees before they left the room, to satisfy him that there were those present who believed from their own knowledge, that the statement was untrue.

When I received the above information, I confess that I was confounded ; I knew not what course to adopt : but after a little consideration I determined to submit the subject to my class, and to be governed by their decision ; and in order that I might have the ability to correct any misrepresentation of what I might say ; I wrote out and read the following paper to them, after they had assembled in the lecture room :

negatived ; and it was resolved that the board now go into a ballot for lecturer. The ballots being prepared, Drs. Rodgers and Deering were appointed tellers, who, on counting the ballots, announced that James R. Manley was chosen lecturer on obstetrics, &c., &c., in the College of Physicians and Surgeons. Adjourned.

GENTLEMEN—I appear before you this evening under peculiar circumstances—circumstances which I never could have anticipated, and which to me are peculiarly embarrassing. I did not lecture on Wednesday, and I sent you a note, stating, that professional engagements would prevent my meeting you; besides these I have had, and still have, alarming sickness in my family; but these were not all the reasons; I suppressed one which I will now *express*. It is known to you that I was, in June last, appointed lecturer on Midwifery and the Diseases of Women and Children in this College, in place of Dr. Delafield, resigned; but of the manner of my appointment you are ignorant, and I regret the occasion which makes it proper that you should know it. I now say to you that I was solicited to take the place; that I twice declined to be a candidate, and was prevailed upon to allow myself to become a candidate; that I never asked for it, nor even asked a vote of a trustee in my favor. I accepted the place in the full determination to do my duty to the best of my ability, and I have hitherto the assurance of my own heart that I have done it; judge of my surprise, then, when on Tuesday evening last I heard from a trustee, that the President of this College, at a meeting of the trustees, had the evening before represented my course of instruction as a *perfect failure*. Without assigning reasons, or even acknowledging that he had ever heard me, unless it was the introductory. Such a declaration, if true, at such a time, (the course half advanced) is unprecedented, undignified, uncourteous, and an outrageous breach of public duty as well as private decorum. It is calculated to destroy my usefulness and repress all zeal in the cause in which I am embarked. But the same opinion he expressed before my appointment, and at the time that the election was held, so that his knowledge of my qualifications is perfectly gratuitous.

Under these circumstances, gentlemen, you cannot be surprised at the course I am now adopting.

If the declaration made by Dr. Smith is true, the sooner I know it the better; if not true, the sooner it is publicly rebuked the more proper; and I now very respectfully submit this question to you. If the declaration of Dr. Smith to the trustees, without warrant meets your approbation, you will say so, and I will submit to your decision, for you are the best judges. I am not acquainted with but very few of you, but questions of this kind do not require that I should be. If you think that the attempt to forestall opinion, as Dr. Smith has done, deserves censure, I am just as well assured you will not hesitate to express it.

I wait your decision.

I immediately left the room; they resolved themselves into a meeting to take the above into consideration, and on the next evening I was presented with a copy of their proceedings in the words following:

“At a meeting of the students of the college, held on the 18th of January, 1840, a committee was appointed, and the following preamble and resolutions were submitted to the consideration of the class, and adopted:

Whereas, it has been stated to the class by Dr. Manley that his appointment to the chair which he now occupies in this institution has been pronounced before the trustees by the president of the college, ‘a failure;’ and whereas Dr. Manley accompanied the above statement with the declaration of his purpose to resign at

once his situation as lecturer, should it appear that the sense of the class is such as to warrant the above assertion of the president—therefore resolved :

1st. That the class have heard with deep regret, that anything should have transpired, implying a want of respect and confidence between any of the members of the faculty of this institution.

2d. That while we regard all questions relating to the qualifications of professors as properly belonging to the trustees, and to be approached, if at all by the students, with the utmost reluctance, the class will go so far as to declare that they cannot assent to the justice of the declaration made by the president before the trustees.

3d. That the class would regard the resignation of Dr. Manley with the deepest regret and that were such to take place at this stage of the session, it would involve serious disadvantages and loss to the class.

4th. That for his standing in the profession, his honorable character, amiable disposition, the uniform urbanity of his manners, as well as for his age, this class entertain for Dr. Manley no other sentiments than those of unfeigned respect.

5th. That it is the unanimous desire of the class that Dr. Manley continue his services as instructor in this institution.

NATH'L. L. LIGHTHOUSE, }
NICHOLAS VAN VRAUKEN, } *Committee.*
JAS. STUART COOPER, }

JAMES R. GREACEN, *Chairman.*

THOMAS M. MARKOE, *Secretary.*

The manner in which this outrage was committed, was as void of apology as the announcement was of truth; for on examining the minutes of the college for the last ten years, during all which time the greater number of the college reports to the regents were prepared and volunteered by Dr. Smith, no mention is made of the characters of the various courses of instruction, perhaps for the simple reason that Dr. Smith himself held the chair of physiology: and its truth is seriously impugned by every professor associated with him, as they all declared that they preferred me as professor of obstetrics to any other person who had not heretofore publicly lectured; and, by the way, this declaration was made by them at the very time when he had convened them for no other purpose than to induce them to indorse his charge of incompetency!

On receiving the above expression of opinion from my class, I resumed my lectures, merely premising in the following terms my opinion of their conduct:

GENTLEMEN—The calm, temperate, discreet and dignified manner in which you have responded to the appeal which I made to you on Friday evening last, must commend itself to the approval of every candid and unprejudiced man, whether in or out of our profession: and to me it has come in the character of a seasonable relief. It is an expression of opinion, summary and unanimous, and therefore satisfactory. I can only say I sincerely thank you. To the old fashioned medical

maxim, que inter medendum conveniat silere, sine gravi causa non vulgaturum, although unfortunately more honored in the breach than in the observance, I most implicitly subscribe, and I do not think that my conduct, on the present occasion, presents an exception, since the *gravis causa* is obvious. It would be desirable that all recollection of what has happened should be forgotten, but however desirable, it is confessedly difficult, for the memory acknowledges no master; our recollections are independent of our will, and cannot be controlled by it. I would forget it, like a summer day storm, which however furious and appalling in the onset, has passed by, and its fertilizing influences more than compensated for the disaster it occasioned. I have one thing more, however, to ask of you, gentlemen, and it is, that you will not permit, so far as you are concerned, any, the least dissention, to arise in this College on my account. I shall proceed in my course as if nothing had occurred, and conduct it, I trust, to a satisfactory termination.

It seems, however, that my appeal to my class offended Dr. Smith's sense of propriety, since he charged it as an offence against all good order, and endeavored to show from this fact, that I was an improper man for a professor, since, if I had cause of complaint, the application for redress ought to have been made to the trustees, and not to the class. There would have been some weight in this remark, but for the contempt which he manifested for his own argument, by publicly repeating to the students what he had said to the trustees, with the wicked addition that they, the trustees *agreed with him in opinion*.*

The next material fact relating to his agency occurred on the evening of Friday, the last day of February, and the last day of the course, when he convened the professors in order, as he said, to take their opinions of my qualifications. At this meeting, which was as unauthorized as it was unprecedented, (and so stated by one of their number as soon as he was made acquainted with the business,) all present except himself concurred in the belief that I was the best qualified candidate for the chair of obstetrics whom they knew, who had not been heretofore a public lecturer; but at the same time Dr. Watts, the professor of anatomy, proposed his friend Dr. Bartlett for the place of lecturer, and spoke of him as every way qualified, having been long accustomed to public teaching, and formerly associated with him in one of our provincial medical schools. This announcement

* As soon as Dr. S. found that his conduct had produced some excitement among the students, he took occasion to say to them, that in the college he stood in two relations: that he was the president of the college, as well as the professor of physiology, and that it was in the capacity of president that he had considered it to be his duty to state his opinion of my course of instruction to the trustees, and that they agreed with him in opinion; but whether as to his duty, or the fact he announced, is doubtful, and at best immaterial, as in neither sense was it true, as the sequel will show.

from such a source was little calculated to flatter Dr. Smith, and he was not long in determining upon the only course left for him to pursue, if he wished to defeat me: which was to abandon his own nominee, Dr. Gilman, and connect his forces with those of Drs. Watts and Parker, the personal friends of Dr. Bartlett. This determination was no sooner taken than acted upon, and he called upon Dr. Gilman and formally made him acquainted with it, telling him in so many words, that the professors were all in favor of me, as against any person who had not heretofore been accustomed to lecture, and that he would now be obliged to vote for Dr. Bartlett!!

As soon as I heard that the professors had been convened for the purpose of passing upon my merits, I thought it my duty to bring up the subject of the propriety of such a meeting on the first occasion which presented, and as the examination of candidates for the medical degree had commenced, I found an early opportunity. As soon as the board of professors met on Monday, March 2d, I observed that I had some business with them which, in my view, was as important as the examination of candidates, and as it could not detain them long, I suggested that the call of candidates be deferred a few minutes. I then, addressing myself to the professors, stated that I had been surprised to hear that they had a meeting on Friday evening last, and that the business before them was the canvass of my qualifications as lecturer on obstetrics—without stopping to remark on the extraordinary character of such a meeting, I would only say that if what I heard was true, viz. that each man present was allowed by common consent to quote the opinions of the others, as well as to present his own to the trustees, I had a just cause of complaint; and I inquired if it was so, for— Here Dr. John Augustine Smith interrupted me by asking me to address the chair, to which I replied that I had nothing to say to the chair, and when I should have occasion to address him personally, I would do it in such a manner as that the public should know, as well as himself, all that I had to say. I proceeded to address the professors, and required of them, as a matter of simple justice, that they should re-consider their informal agreement, and put their decisions or opinions on paper, to be used officially, if required, or at all events, to prevent their use *in the discretion of the president*, who, as I understood the matter, might quote as much or as little of their opinions as he pleased, and to whom he pleased—that I was not disposed calmly to submit to this, and I begged them to take care and not permit their opinions to be misquoted, or themselves to be circumvented. At this remark the president became very much excited, and said that he would not sit and listen to such abuse; to which I answered, that

was as he should choose, he might leave the room if he pleased, but if he staid he must hear it whether he would or not. He left the room, and returned after about a minute. I continued on, and observed that it was known that Dr. Smith held two offices in the college, professor and president of the board of trustees; that holding these offices he became the channel of communication between both boards, and when he met with either he was presumed to convey their opinions to the other; it was necessary, therefore, that nothing should be left to his discretion, and as they had a meeting, I wished the proceedings of that meeting on paper, that officiality might attach to it, and not merely to the man who conveyed the information, since by this kind of officiality, as practised, he might officially destroy any reputation. After a few more remarks, a little too severe to be palatable to Dr. Smith, I left them to deliberate on what had been communicated. They continued together an hour discussing the subject, and decided at last, that nothing of the proceedings of the meeting on Friday should be permitted to be used; and they interdicted Dr. Smith, who confessed that he had understood the whole object of that meeting far otherwise. The only incident worth recording is, that Dr. Torrey, the professor of Chemistry, seemed to be very much surprised that any persons other than themselves had been made acquainted with it;—it had been held, as he thought, between *four walls*, and how Dr. Manley became acquainted with the meeting or its proceedings was to him inexplicable. Dr. John Augustine Smith expressed the same measure of surprise; when to the astonishment of all concerned, it appeared in evidence before they separated, that the person from whom I received my information, had received all the material facts from Dr. Gilman, who had them from Dr. Smith himself!* Dr. Smith, by the way, had made the same remark in relation to his denouncement of my course of lectures: *it had been made between four walls to trustees, and he had a right to think that it should have been kept as confidential*; which means in plain English, that Dr. Manley's reputation was to be assailed, and peradventure de-

* Dr Smith told Dr. Gilman, on 25th or 26th of February, that he would have the professors together soon, to take their opinion of Dr. Manley, and accordingly he called them on Friday evening, the 29th, and invited Dr. Parker also, who attended! and on Saturday morning he communicated to him its result; among other things, that although he—Gilman—was his candidate, he would be obliged to vote for Bartlett, a new man, that he stood alone as to recommending any other than a *tried* man, as all the others preferred MANLEY to any man who had not lectured. (The above is from a conversation had with Dr. Gilman, at his own house shortly after the meeting had taken place.)

stroyed, but he ought not to know who was the assailant! This is a sample of the morals of the president!

During the examination of the candidates nothing occurred which could offend the most fastidious sense of propriety, if we except perhaps the writing of a letter in the presence of the examiners by Dr. Watts to Dr. Bartlett, and the perusal of it by Dr. Parker. The breach it was now presumed, was wide enough to introduce Dr. Bartlett; he without doubt, was particularly advised of all that had occurred, and accordingly became Dr. Smith's candidate to the exclusion of Dr. Gilman.*

About the time, I presume, that this letter was dispatched, Dr. Watts took some pains to inform me that I was mistaken in relation

* In the full belief that Drs. Watts and Parker had an ultimate object in recommending a *tried man*, and that Dr. Bartlett's appointment was at this early period, the object of *their* solicitude; I determined to satisfy myself and accordingly made the inquiry of Dr. Bartlett himself, and received his answer.

DEAR SIR—You will confer a favor by permitting me to know the date of a fact, in which I feel some interest. It is known to you that I was lecturer on Midwifery, &c. in the College of Physicians and Surgeons, New-York, during the last winter, and that the chair was made vacant; that you and Dr. Gilman became candidates for it, and that Dr. Gilman was the successful one. The object of this writing is to ascertain from you the precise period at which you received information of the probable vacancy which induced you to become a competitor for that chair. By a reference to your letter files of January, February or March, you will no doubt be enabled to give me the information I seek, and you will add to the obligation by an early answer.

Yours, very respectfully,

July 20th, 1840,

J. R. MANLEY.

To Dr. Bartlett.

Lowell, July 25th, 1840.

DEAR SIR—Your letter of the 23d was received yesterday. As near as I can ascertain, I first received such intelligence of the probable vacation of your chair, as induced me to present myself to my friends as a candidate for the place, *early in March last*. I had then determined to remove to your city for practice, and had been for some time making my arrangements to that end. The unexpected occurrence of the contest for your chair led me to visit New-York; during which visit various considerations conspired to shake my determination as to a removal to your city, and they subsequently led to an entire abandonment of the design. I only regret that I have been in any way mixed up with the rival interests of the New-York profession. If the above information will be of any use to you, it is very cheerfully placed at your disposal.

Very respectfully

Your friend,

ELISHA BARTLETT.

To Dr. Manley, New York.

to his preference of me as a professor, for that he and Dr. Parker had a candidate of *their own*, Dr. Bartlett of Massachusetts. The information however created no other surprise than would naturally arise from the avowal of so extraordinary a fact, as that he a professor himself just one year, and but five years before invested with a Doctor's degree in this college, and his associate, who was *at this very time on probation* as a lecturer, should have the assurance to attempt to control the action of the board of trustees for the purpose of appointing their friend to a chair in the college, to the exclusion of all the physicians of this city.

The next meeting of the board of trustees was held on the 19th of March, and as it was called as an extra session, it was convened to suit the convenience of Dr. Smith, who in the meantime was particularly *active in procuring the attendance of those whose votes he always controlled*, and some of whom never attend unless on very special business by his invitation. Dr. Watts had left the city after having done all he could to second the election of his friend Bartlett.

By the agency of Dr. Watts, Dr. John Augustine Smith may succeed in dividing the odium which properly attaches to his own conduct; but meanness and malignity, like the virtues of generosity or benevolence loose nothing by distribution; his own responsibility remains the same; and whilst he may please himself with the idea that he has associated some support, he has only parted with some part of his personal agency, and taken a dupe's cowl in exchange. He was used, his vanity was flattered, while he was made a tool—"a pipe to play upon."

In my endeavor to accord to each individual the full amount of credit to which he is entitled in this unhallowed crusade to gratify malignity on the one hand, and interest or friendship on the other; it is perhaps necessary to state my conviction, that from this time onward Dr. Smith acted a subordinate part, although his associate had sufficient address to allow him all the honor! He knew his weak point, (for no man thrown in his company for a single hour could be ignorant of it.) and he at once determined to gratify his vanity and self conceit, while he turned both to account to serve his friend.

That the reader may fully understand the force of the above remark, it is proper to present a little of the history of the chair of anatomy, which Dr. Watts held, and still, holds. It will be recollected that Dr. John Augustine Smith was invited in 1826, upon the reorganization of the college, to accept this chair; he had formerly been associated with Dr. Post in the same department, but had retired and become the president of William and Mary college in Virginia; and

about this time his situation there, was any thing but pleasant, and he was glad to be transferred. The College of Physicians and Surgeons found, after he had accepted, that they had in him, much less than they had anticipated, or thought that they had bargained for, since the professors who were associated with him were taxed some thing like five hundred dollars per annum to pay the interest of the value of an anatomical museum to illustrate his course, which another person (Dr. Rhineland) owned, and all his courses of instruction were considered failures notwithstanding. He was moreover strongly suspected to be infidel in his views of revelation, and a materialist in his philosophy. They submitted however to their own tax and his teaching for four or five years, when their patience being exhausted, he was removed from the chair and Dr. Rhineland was appointed in his place; this last gentleman held three or four years, and relinquished it for the chair of professor of pathological anatomy, which had been held by Dr. Mott who was then in Europe. The place of anatomy being thus made vacant, Dr. Brigham of Hartford was by the trustees appointed lecturer, and conducted the course one session only, when, in consequence of an intimation either from Dr. J. A. Smith or Dr. Delafield, or both, he resigned. Dr. Alexander H. Stevens, who had been ever since the year 1826 the professor of surgery, had resigned all active duty, and taken the title of *Emeritus* professor of the same branch; this event also created a necessity for the introduction of a new man to fill his place, and Dr. Alban G. Smith was, by appointment of the regents of the university, selected for that purpose. He conducted the course two sessions, when he received a similar intimation from the same men, and *he* also resigned. It is a little remarkable, that the minutes of the board of trustees make no mention of any circumstances which could have operated as causes for these resignations; they however occurred, and rendered other appointments indispensable. In this embarrassed condition of the college, with dissention within and distrust from without, Dr. Rhineland was willing and desirous to retire, if he could dispose of his museum; and now we must introduce Dr. Watts, who was made lecturer on general anatomy on the resignation of Dr. Brigham, and who it appears was willing to become the purchaser, if the chair of the anatomical professor was included in the bargain. Dr. Rhineland *did* resign,—Dr. Watts *did* receive the appointment of professor of anatomy, and *did* purchase the museum; while the place of professor of pathological anatomy which Dr. R. resigned was abolished, either because it is unnecessary, or because it can be conveniently merged in the general course. There was yet to be another resignation and

another change ! Dr. Delafield retired from his chair at the termination of the next session, and his resignation and the resignation of Dr. Alban G. Smith, occurring at the same time rendered the appointment of two lecturers necessary. The successor of Dr. Smith was soon found ; and on the credit of Dr. Watts, Dr. Parker was presented to the trustees, and appointed lecturer on surgery without opposition, and *became joint proprietor of the museum !* The history of the chair which Dr. Delafield resigned, presents, as by this time the reader is aware, a very different character.

It has already been made to appear probable that the anatomical museum was an important instrument in the negotiations for resignations as well as for appointments ; the sale of it only made *one chair vacant, but it furnished incumbents for two !*

Dr. Delafield also had, and I believe still has a museum, in the purchase of which, Dr. Watts had the right of preemption, but whether for his own account, or for the joint account of himself and Dr. Bartlett in case he had been elected to the obstetric chair in place of Dr. Gilman, must now remain a matter of curious uncertainty ; his preference of a *tried man* however renders the latter opinion highly probable.

After the above information, the reader will be prepared to form a tolerably accurate judgment of the kind of opposition which I had to encounter. All the professors except one (Dr. John B. Beck, the professor of materia medica,) were, through the agency of Dr. John Augustine Smith, made either active agents or passive instruments in the work of defeating me ; Dr. Beck alone, at all times, and on all proper occasions disapproved the conduct of his associates, and I feel a pleasure in bearing this emphatic testimony to his disinterested and ingenuous deportment throughout the whole of this controversy.

But to resume my narrative. At the meeting of the trustees of March 19, 1840, I caused the following letter to be presented :—

To the Trustees of the College of Physicians and Surgeons.

GENTLEMEN—Having been appointed by you lecturer on Obstetrics and diseases of women and children, in the place of Dr. Delafield, who had resigned ; it becomes proper to inform you, that I have discharged the duty assigned to me. I have delivered a full and complete course, and I have the satisfaction to say, that I have lectured to an attentive, respectful and intelligent class of matriculated students. In the discharge of my duty, however, it is incumbent on me to state, that I have contended with embarrassments of a most extraordinary character. Previous to my appointment, and when, of course, no opportunity had been allowed, to judge of my qualifications as a lecturer, the President of the College pronounced me incompetent, and took unusual pains to promulgate his opinions throughout the city. I was appointed, however, notwithstanding his unscrupulous opposition, and

commenced my course by the delivery of a public introductory, a copy of which the students requested for publication; and it was published. If any estimate may be formed of the character of such compliments, from their scarcity, it is no small one, when it is recollected that during the last fifteen years, and ever since the reorganization of the College, a similar request has not been made, so far as I am informed, of any President or Professor of this College, except Dr. J. B. Beck and Dr. Delafield. I quietly, and, as I supposed, satisfactorily continued my lectures until about the middle of the term, when I was informed that the President of the College had again assailed me, and denounced my course of instruction to the board of trustees as a failure, without having ever heard a lecture except the published one; so gross an outrage—such an unworthy attempt to break me down I could not permit to pass unnoticed, and I felt it to be due both to myself and my class, to address them on the subject. I told them what Dr. Smith had done—that he had pronounced my course a failure; and begged them, if they concurred in opinion with him, frankly to say so; and I plainly intimated that I was ready to resign, as I could not hold the situation under such circumstances. The class responded to my appeal by passing the following resolutions *unanimously*. *Vide* page 13.

Upon the receipt of this expression from the class, I met them at the next stated lecture, and after a few remarks to them, proceeded on in my course; and although abundant opportunity was afforded to speak of Dr. Smith's conduct, his name never afterwards escaped my lips to the class: he, after this period, however, attempted to justify his treatment of me to his class, by stating that he acted in two capacities in the College, as Professor and President, and that in the latter character he acted from a sense of duty, and that the trustees thought as he did. Gentlemen, when I accepted the place of lecturer, I did not intend to commit my reputation to the keeping of any individual. I expected to be judged by my merits, and so I doubt not did you; but without my knowledge, for at least one half of the term, I have been made the theme of Dr. Smith's obloquy; and when I become informed, and make my appeal to the class, he attempted to justify. I have conducted this course under such a pressure of embarrassment, as no other professor or lecturer in this College would have sustained, and I have been supported by the conviction that when the facts were known, the Board of Trustees would do me justice. If conduct such as I have related of Dr. Smith can pass without rebuke, the precedent must be ruinous to the interest of the school: who will be the next victim it is impossible to say; but we may be assured, that there will be no security for any lecturer or professor belonging to it.

I have deemed it to be a duty, as well to you as to myself, to make this exposition, that you may not *ignorantly* become a party to a plan to destroy my reputation, under a pretext to serve the interests of medical education.

Your's respectfully,

J. R. MANLEY.

This meeting of the 19th of March was called as an *extra*, and it was such in more senses than one. It was *extra* inasmuch as the call at the time, outraged all propriety, the meeting being convened to recommend lecturers and professors, before the session was terminated, and nearly two months before the usual period. It was *extra*, as it brought together by management more members than *had at any time, or on any occasion met before*. It was *extra* in its mode of doing its busi-

ness, for the above letter was read and *replied to verbally by Dr. Smith*, and by an extraordinary stretch of courtesy it was allowed to be placed on file! one part of the business for which it was convened was done by resolution, and another by ballot; and it will prove, if I mistake not, extraordinary in its results. It was *extra* inasmuch as it shows conclusively that the most efficient members of the board of trustees of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of the University of the State of New York were two merchants;* that these two were not only the heart and soul, but the body corporate, of the thing which the college circulars represent as the fac-simile of a PARIS CONCOURS. It will be seen, by a reference to the foot note, that twenty-two persons were present; that immediately after the reading of my letter, perhaps allowing a little time for the replication of the President, (Smith,) a motion was made to recommend me to the regents for the professor of obstetrics, &c. and it was decided in the negative. Although the minute makes no account of the state of the vote, the reader is informed that it stood, ayes 9, noes 11, one silent, and the president not voting, as usual on such occasions, unless in the event of a tie. I was now disposed of. A communication from Dr. Gilman is presented offering himself for the situation of lecturer, and some friend of Dr. Bartlett puts him in nomination for the same place, when a ballot is taken which results in the election of Dr. Gilman he having 12 votes, and Dr. Bartlett 10.†

* Mr. Geo. Griswold and Mr. Henry Wyckoff.

† *Minutes of the Meeting of the Trustees of the College of Physicians and Surgeons, of March, 1840.*

PRESENT.—Drs. *John Augustine Smith, Delafield, Jay, Ludlow, Rodgers, Cock, Moore, Willet, Cheeseman, Anderson, Deering, Messrs. Tucker, Swan, F. Smith, Withers, Blatchford, Griswold, Strong, J. Delafield, Lawrence, Bruen, Wyckoff.*

The minutes of the last meeting were read and approved.

On motion, Resolved that Willard Parker, lecturer on the principles and practice of surgery, be recommended to the Hon. the Regents of the University for the professor of the same branches: passed unanimously.

A communication from Dr. James R. Manley, lecturer on obstetrics, containing matters of complaint against the president of the college, was received and read, and replied to verbally by the president; and the said letter ordered on file.

A motion was made that James R. Manley, M. D. lecturer on obstetrics and diseases of women and children be recommended to the Hon. the Regents for the professorship of the same department; which motion having been put it was decided in the negative. A communication from Chandler R. Gilman, M. D. offering himself as a candidate for lecturer on obstetrics and the diseases of women and children; and Dr. Bartlett of Lowell, Massachusetts, having also been put in nomination for the same office, and presented recommendations therefor; the ballot

To account for this result, it is only necessary to state that those two persons had been influenced by Dr. Smith to vote for Dr. Gilman, when he was his candidate for the situation of lecturer, the previous year; and as no reason was assigned for abandoning him now, they only acted consistently by voting for him, while Dr. Smith and all those who at his instance had then supported him, cast their ballots for Dr. Bartlett, the candidate of Dr. Watts and Parker. These two votes with the silent one on the resolution immediately preceding, and the nine who had supported me, as against both, for professor of the same branch, gave Dr. Gilman the majority. Thus the event proved that he was indebted for his election, mainly to those whose sole design was to defeat him; the simple explanation being that my friends were so disgusted with the management of Smith & Co. that they determined, one and all to reject their choice. How far they were influenced by the qualifications of the men, it may be difficult to determine, and fortunately the face of the record renders such an inquiry unnecessary: it furnishes however rather an extraordinary illustration of the benefits to be derived from the rivalry by *concours*, as practised in the French schools of medicine, which the College of Physicians and Surgeons claim to imitate.

The *concours* had now done its work, and although Dr. John Augustine Smith had succeeded in his *real* object, he had been defeated in his ostensible one; he had abandoned his friend, who succeeded notwithstanding, but he had compassed the end for which he had long labored; he had *rid himself of me*, and his disappointment received an emollient, which assuaged all the irritation which it had caused. It is true he had sacrificed friendship, honor, truth, and consistency, but he had been amply repaid, as he had been relieved from the fear of having another independent man associated with him, which of all things he most dreaded. But even this solace was doomed to be drugged with some bitterness, for, at a meeting of the Regents of the University in Albany a few days afterwards, (March 31st) two resolutions were passed which gave him much uneasiness. One was "that they would proceed to appoint professors in the college on the first Tuesday in May next;" and the other asking of the trustees to inform them whether the interests of the college would not be promoted by a consolidation of some of the

was had which resulted in the choice of Dr. C. R. Gilman, as lecturer on obstetrics and the diseases of women and children for the ensuing session.*

App'd J. AUGUSTINE SMITH.

College adjourned.

* The names in italic voted for the successful candidate.

professorships! The ghost of Banquo had less terrors for the Thane of Cawdor, than had the last resolution for the doctor. It had been long due, and long anticipated; an informal committee of the trustees had long since waited upon him to remonstrate with him on the character of his course of instruction; he had lectured "*de omnibus rebus cæterisque aliis*," so long, twice a week, and received his fourteen dollar ticket fee, that he thought and could not help it, that this resolution was meant for him, and he was troubled. He knew that there was no course of instruction which could with propriety be merged in any other, except the one he was appointed to teach, and every student knows that even that was a matter of necessity, rather than of choice; for *Physiology* is second to none in importance, and certainly better calculated than any other "to display all the varied stores of a well furnished mind." It was the manner in which it was taught which seemed to render consolidation necessary: instruction in the science was more essential, than mere amusement, and therefore it was proper that the business of teaching it should be committed to some person in the college who would make a business of it. Dr Smith was not ignorant of the opinions of the profession respecting himself, and he seemed to fear, that the time had now arrived when the evidence of his incapacity to conduct the course of physiology would assume a shape too palpable and manifest to be mistaken; and hence arose his perturbation. It had not been taught as it should have been, and would have been by any other intelligent man, who was less intent on making a display of himself than of his subject.*

The document came in due course of mail, but was long on hand be-

* With the exception of three or four lectures on abstract and abstruse subjects, of little importance whether understood or not, the whole course is a meagre syllabus of exploded doctrines, which have been so long known as to have been forgotten. The four important subjects of Respiration, Circulation, Digestion and Secretion, are disposed of as if they were of infinitely less account than the anecdotes to which they give occasion; and the time occupied in serious discussion of physiological truths is as nothing compared with that which is spent in relating pleasant stories. How much truth, for example, would be required to neutralize facts like these? "That whales are fat, because they live in cold latitudes"—"that nature's laws of compensation, in the absence of fat, provide abundance of hair, and that, therefore, the Russians starve their hogs that they may bear good crops of bristles"—"that certain animals possess the love of sentiment as well as the instinct of the sexes"—"that in some, the hog for example, the male has its seasons, but the female has not"—all which interesting truths, aside from their importance, are as well settled, as that the most meagre sheep always has the best fleece!

fore he called a meeting of trustees to consider it, and when they did meet, and the paper was laid before them, instead of a reference to a committee, to which it was entitled, from the source whence it emanated; he presented a paper of his own drafting to be passed and sent to the Regents as the answer; but in place of passing it, as was their wont, the trustees laid it on the table, some member alledging as an answer to one part of it at least, that the appointment of professors was a business with which they as trustees had nothing to do. The paper although laid on the table was never found, he having (it is presumed) thrown it into the fire; a matter of regret by the way, as it must of necessity have embodied the views of the professor of physiology on his own course of instruction. A friend was at hand (Dr. Delafield) who immediately drafted a resolution, which had nothing about appointments in it, but served the president in his extremity, most effectually, by simply stating that "it was inexpedient to consolidate any of the courses of instruction." If any member of the board, who was not a physician had offered this resolution, it would have created no surprise, but coming as it did from Dr. Delafield who knew Dr. Smith well, and had fully and freely expressed his opinion of the course of physiology to his associates heretofore, it did not pass without a silent note of admiration.

Things now were again *partially* settled, but there was still a lurking distrust of the Regents of the University, who had determined to appoint professors on the 5th of May. Dr. Smith was disturbed; he expressed his fears; said "that something was wrong in Albany, and that he would go up and correct it," since the Regents might peradventure appoint me to the chair of midwifery, the trustees' election of a lecturer notwithstanding. The Regents did hold their meeting on the 5th as by previous resolution they had resolved; and it was the largest meeting since that board was organized, now nearly fifty years.

Having heard that it was probable that there would be a full attendance of its members, and that one individual at least, who never was there before, had been requested to repair to Albany and take his seat, I took the liberty of writing to him and received his answer; and although it arrived to late to be of use, it furnishes evidence of the zeal which Dr. Smith displayed in his opposition to me; as the man who *now* received his support was the same, whom he and all his friends had but one month before repudiated. It assists to give a character to the so much vaunted *concours*; and as it is creditable

to the writer's feelings its publication can do no injury.* It may be remarked however, that it appears he was ignorant of the errand on

* *New York, May 2, 1840.*

DEAR SIR,

I have heard from Albany, that Mr. Verplanck had said that he would send for you to be present at a meeting of the board of Regents on the 5th inst. The object of this letter which is prompted as much by my respect for you as by duty to myself, is to inform you that there is a controversy between Dr. John Augustine Smith and me: on his part conducted with what I conceive inexcusable pertinacity and wantonness; and if you are requested to go to Albany, it is that your vote may be used against me and my interests. I have nothing to ask, but that if you go, you will fully inform yourself of the merits of the question at issue before you commit yourself to a vote. I understand that although you have been elected a Regent a long time, you have never been present at a meeting of the board. If under these circumstances you for the first time present yourself, and that by special request of one of those known to be in the decided interest of Dr. Smith and against me, I have a right to expect that the information upon which you may act, shall be as full as the time allowed for examination of merits will allow. You I hope will understand me. I have the highest opinion of your integrity and discretion, and only wish you may not be circumvented by *ex parte* statements.

With sincere respect, I am

Your obedient servant,

J. R. MANLEY.

To Washington Irving, Esq. Tarrytown.

New York, May 7, 1840.

DEAR SIR,

Your letter of the 2d inst. did not reach my residence in the country until after my departure for Albany and only came to hand this morning, on my return. In going to Albany I had no view to take a part in the controversy between you and Dr. Smith, of which I was utterly ignorant, but merely to take my seat at the board of Regents, in compliance with the general regulations of the establishment, and in consequence of what I understood to be the wishes of my fellow Regents.

I had incidentally been told some days since that Dr. Gilman was a candidate for a medical professorship,* and that the matter would come before the board: understanding that he was a man fully competent to the office, and that he had married a daughter of my old friend Mr. Martin Hoffman, I at once *unsolicited* declared that he should have my vote. This I did from feelings of early and cherished attachment to the Hoffman family, with the various members of which I was brought up almost in habits of relationship. My intentions being thus frankly and uniformly expressed, no attempts were made to influence me; and when I took my seat at the board, I was not aware how much agitation had existed in the matter.

Very respectfully,

Your friend and servant,

WASHINGTON IRVING.

To Dr. Manley.

* Dr. Gilman was not a candidate for a professorship, but he and his friends sent petitions or memorials to be allowed to lecture under the trustees' appointment.

which Mr. Verplanck sent him; and had never taken his seat in the board of Regents before, although he had been a Regent several years, nor I may add since, as he resigned last winter. I wrote also to the Chancellor of the University, the Hon. James King, which letter with the answer will be found in the note below.*

* *New-York, May 3d, 1840.*

DEAR SIR—From your situation as Chancellor of the University, and your known character as a man of candor and integrity, you are entitled to be made acquainted with the incidents which have occurred respecting the chair of Midwifery, previous to the action upon it, to be had on Tuesday next. I will do it short as possible, for I do not wish to be tedious. 1. I was invited to become the Lecturer, and never asked a vote. 2. I was before the public one month before appointment, and although Dr. Smith was opposed, and sent me word that I could not be appointed; I *was* appointed. 3. I accepted and conducted the course with satisfaction; he determined to ruin me, and in the middle of the course denounced me as incompetent without a single fact, and *he had never heard me*. 4. He begged Professors, collectively and individually, for an opinion against me, and all refused it. 5. I appealed to my class, and they all (fifty-eight) supported me. 6. He called a meeting of the Trustees before the course was ended, and had every one there, twenty-one besides himself, and defeated my recommendation by one vote; then went into a ballot for Lecturer, (one month before the last examination,) to supply the place; the Regents being (though constantly meeting,) kept ignorant of the necessity of such a measure. 7. When the Regents determined to make Professors on the 5th May, he called another meeting, and asked them to defer this appointment of Midwifery; but here he was in a minority, for they said it was the regents' right, and they ought not to interfere, and would not. 8. He is now in Albany to prevent their action on this subject, and what arguments he will use I do not anticipate.

Your's respectfully,

J. R. MANLEY.

To the Hon. James King.

Albany, May 6th, 1840.

Dr. James R. Manley,

DEAR SIR—I received your favor of the 4th instant, the morning after its date.

There was no necessity of an apology for addressing me on the subject to which your letter relates; for I am always happy to receive communications to aid in guiding me in my public duties, embracing the good sense and frank exposition of facts set forth in your letter.

The subject of the appointment of a Professor of Midwifery in the College of Physicians and Surgeons in the city of New-York, came before the Regents last evening on a resolution to postpone the appointment indefinitely. There were more members attending than at any previous meeting of the Regents since I was elected. In the discussions on that resolution, you were named as a suitable person to fill the chair of that Professorship; and you certainly would not have wanted an advocate for that proposition who could have acquitted himself more entirely to your personal satisfaction than Dr. Wendell of this city. But there was official evidence before the Board that Dr. Gilman had been appointed, by the Trustees,

Those two resolutions of the Regents had an effect, materially to change the character of the opposition with which I had to contend. At the commencement, Dr. Smith was alone; in the progress of it, Drs. Parker and Watts become associated, Dr. Smith purchasing their co-operation by the abandonment of his friend Dr. Gilman, and the promise of his support for their friend Dr. Bartlett;* and the action of the Regents seemed now to foreshadow the defeat of both. In this emergency it became necessary to double their diligence; make a new treaty; forget all past discrepancies of action, interest or opinion, and unite as one man to control the action of the board of Regents, although the trustees of the college, had emphatically put their veto on the proposition. Accordingly a meeting is had at the house of Dr. Delafield, and a paper drawn up to be presented to the Regents, deprecating any appointment of Professor of Midwifery at their ensuing meeting. This paper is signed by Dr. Smith, President, Dr. Torrey and Dr. Joseph M. Smith, avowing at the same time, that they had the proxies of Drs. Watts and Parker, who were absent from the city; Dr. Beck had no invitation, for the reason (then assigned) that his opinions were known, and it was unnecessary. Two papers in the form of petitions or memorials were also circulated among the profession, praying that the Regents would defer action on the subject and thereby permit Dr. Gilman to lecture, not doubting that he would do credit to the station. Dr. Smith himself repairs to Albany in company with Washington Irving; Dr. Delafield writes to his friend Luther Bradish; others write to their friends in the board; the Governor himself is enlisted, and more persons are convened to do *apparently* nothing, as the record shows, but in *reality* to

a Lecturer in that department for the ensuing collegiate year; also, that five of the existing Professors would consider an appointment of Professor of Midwifery, &c. an injudicious measure on the part of the Regents at this time. Under these circumstances, the Board adopted the resolution to which I deferred.

Very respectfully,

Your's, &c. &c.,

JAMES KING.

* There is one peculiarly amiable feature in the character of Dr. Watts which will go far to palliate or excuse his zeal; he loves his friends, and in this his conduct contrasts very favorably with that of Dr. John Augustine Smith. The Drs. Parker and Bartlett were the friends of Dr. Watts and formerly close associates; they had, it is said, been colleagues in the same medical schools, and he volunteered to serve them without making any preliminary professions, and did serve them to the utmost of his ability; not so Dr. Smith, he perhaps loves his friend too, "but he hates his enemy," and having permitted hate to predominate, he abandoned him without ceremony and quoted Dr. Paley in justification of his conduct!

relieve Dr. John Augustine Smith of his own fears, than had ever come together before on any occasion. Dr. Smith either requested or was invited through his friend Mr. Verplanck to give his views on the subject, for which they had met, and was permitted to indulge in a strain of vituperative eloquence, too offensive to pass without remark, as it called for, and received a castigation from a member of the board, which to any other person would have been a severe rebuke. So offensive was this exhibition to the whole board of Regents, although but one member answered him, that the late chancellor of the University, the Hon. James King, declared, when they adjourned, that Dr. Smith, should never, with his consent, *have the opportunity of speaking again before the regents while he held the station of its presiding officer.**

** Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Regents of the University, Albany, May 5th, 1840.*

Present. Governor W. H. Seward, Lieut. Governor Luther Bradish, *ex officio*; Chancellor of the University, James King; Vice Chancellor, E. Jenkins; Messrs. Paige, Lansing, Corning, Wendell, McKown, Verplanck, Spencer, Russel, Thompson, Campbell and Irving.

This being the day appointed by the Regents at their meeting held 31st March last, to fill the vacant professorships of the principles and practice of Surgery and Midwifery in the college of Physicians and Surgeons in the City of New York; the Regents in pursuance of such appointment took into consideration the propriety of filling said vacancies at the present meeting, and after receiving a communication from Dr. James R. Manley, presenting himself for the professorship of Obstetrics and the Diseases of Women and Children; and a communication from Dr. Gilman lecturer in said College on the subject of Obstetrics, &c. requesting the Regents to postpone the filling of said professorship for the present year; and after receiving various communications from professors of said college and others, in relation to the filling of said professorships; and after hearing the president of said college who appeared in person before the Regents and presented his views on the same subject; the following resolution submitted by Mr. Verplanck was unanimously adopted, "Whereas the trustees of the College of Physicians and Surgeons in the city of New York, have appointed Chandler R. Gilman, M. D. Lecturer on Obstetrics and Diseases of Women and Children for the present academic year in that institution; therefore, Resolved, that the consideration of the resolution of this board, to proceed this day to the appointment of a professor of the said branches of instruction in the said college is hereby postponed to the first annual meeting in May, 1841."

At the request of Dr. Smith, the name of the professorship of the principles and practice of Surgery was altered so as to include Surgical Anatomy, and Dr. Parker was appointed.

Mr. Spencer, in reference to the communication from the Trustees of the College of Physicians and Surgeons on the subject of consolidation of professorships in said college offered the following resolution; "That it is inexpedient to consolidate any of the professorships in said college." The ayes and noes called by Mr. Spencer on

The business of the board is usually done in conversational debate and very pleasantly, because personal or party interests have never been permitted to control their opinions of public duty ; it is therefore as much a matter of surprise that he should have been allowed to address the board at all, as it is that he should have continued his tirade till their sense of propriety was insulted. I have no disposition to cast a censure on the board of Regents, but without offence, I trust I may be permitted to say that the result at which they arrived, was not so much chargeable to their knowledge of the conduct of the parties concerned in the question, as to their entire ignorance. They were not informed of the facts as developed in these pages ; the trustees of the college whose business it was to examine and report upon the charge of Dr. Smith, were so much under his influence that they avoided all inquiry ; the Regents therefore were kept in ignorance by design ; for it is not possible to believe, that they could have impliedly *endorsed* his conduct, if they had been apprized of the turpitude which marked every step of its progress.

I had nothing to oppose to all this machinery to influence the action of the Regents, if I had been aware that it would have been resorted to ; I was held in thrall by circumstances which respect for myself would not permit me to control ; I could neither petition nor remonstrate, to countervail such means as Dr. Smith and his new associates adopted. I had done all that decency required or propriety prompted, when I had made my simple application that I wished to be considered a candidate, and there I left the question. The result is before the public, and the motives which operated to produce it will be found in the transcript of the Regents' minutes.

It was fair to presume that Dr. John Augustine Smith's work was now done ; all his plans had succeeded, and however much uneasiness the process had given him, all was now forgotten, because compensated in my defeat. He had by violence thrust me from the college ; "the winter of his discontent had been made glorious summer ;" his friends had relieved him of all anxieties about himself, by passing the resolution that "it was inexpedient to consolidate any of the courses of instruction," and if he had been wise, he would have borne his triumph with modesty if not with meekness ; but it was far otherwise. Six months after this time, (Nov. 2,) on the occasion of opening the college, as it is called, he took occasion to make this infa-

the question of adopting said resolution having been taken ; it was carried in the affirmative by votes of all the Regents present except Messrs. Wendell and McKown, who voted in the negative.

mous history the subject of his discourse, lauding himself, abusing me, and even charging the existence of a conspiracy to destroy his professorship, plainly intimating that some of the Regents were parties. This exhibition was a little too highly wrought to please his friends, for it was seriously asked, at the close of the oration, whether he had not grown prematurely old? whether he was not in his dotage? and if not, was he in his senses? and the reason given in the first part of this paper, was well calculated to provoke the inquiry, "he had just recovered from a serious sickness, had suffered much family affliction and had not time to prepare a lecture appropriate to the occasion." When I heard of this,—and I did hear it before dinner of the same day,—I confess that, although I thought I was prepared to hear any thing, I was astonished; it seemed as if malignity had run mad, and vanity had destroyed the equilibrium of intellect. I did not easily credit it, but I was obliged to submit to the multiplied evidence furnished by those who were present and heard him. Hitherto ingenuity had been fatigued in searching out the motives of his conduct; but now it was evident that further inquiry was useless; and pity for the man supplanted every feeling of indignation. With such a man I could no longer entertain a controversy; and aside from the influence which the success of his management might unfortunately exert on other colleges similarly situated, I had no motive to proceed against him even in self defence; but believing that the college interests, as well as those of the public required that such an outrage should be promptly rebuked, I addressed the following letter to the trustees.

To the Trustees of the College of Physicians and Surgeons.

GENTLEMEN—I have heard, with surprise, that Dr. John Augustine Smith opened the course of lectures at the College on the 2d instant by an introductory address to a large audience, specially invited in the newspapers, and by circulars to attend; and that the exclusive subjects with which he entertained them were, *holding me up to public contempt*, and lauding himself for the success of his agency in defeating my appointment as Professor of Midwifery in May last. His conduct in making this virulent attack on my reputation would not admit apology under the most aggravated provocation; but under the circumstances of the case, it displays such an utter destitution of honorable feeling and correct moral principle, combined moreover with such cherished malignity, as makes it difficult to speak of the exhibition in respectful terms. I had supposed that as I had been violently driven from the College before the session was ended, by *his* management eight months since, and had taken no measures to keep alive or to awaken any recollection of it; that it might, at least in some degree, have been set at rest, as common decency and propriety would have counselled any man situated as is Dr. Smith: but in this I have been disappointed. He not only revived the subject with additions of much which is false in fact, but attempted to impress his hearers with the belief that a majority of the *Professors*, the *Trustees*, and the *Regents* of the University were

of his opinions, and approved his conduct. Of the Regents he particularly instanced the Governor and Lieutenant Governor of the State, the Hon. J. C. Spencer; the Chancellor of the University, the Hon. James King, and the Hon. G. C. Verplanck, a senator from this district, making an array of names, it must be conceded, well calculated to give currency to his slanders. Whether this be true of the trustees, *you* can best judge; whether true of professors, *they* can individually answer; and whether true of the Hon. the *Regents*, future enquiry may determine.

He premised his remarks by stating, that this was the first opportunity which had presented, to address them as *President of the College*, on the subject which he had chosen; and that it was in that character he appeared before them, and *not as a Professor*. The object of this note is, to call your attention to this *monstrous abuse of the privilege of a public station*. If such conduct be allowed to pass without censure, by those to whom the law entrusts the government of our literary and scientific institutions, the consequences cannot be contemplated without dismay! If the President of a college may, without danger of reproof, take advantage of his public character, and under the *pretext* of duty slander and libel the reputations of gentlemen in private life; there can be no security for any individual in the community who may happen to incur his displeasure. It is a prostitution of office too base to escape the marked reprobation of the public. We live in a land whose laws secure to us our lives, our liberty and our property, and surely it was never contemplated that the most precious property we possess, *our reputations*, should alone be left without defence.

I complain that I have been *publicly* slandered; that unusual pains were taken to make the slanders as public as possible, and I make my first appeal to you, under whose authority it has been published, (if indeed it be permitted to pass without reproof.) The allegation I now make is too notorious to need testimony; if you should think that it requires it, I refer you to members of your own board, and to the Professors of the College.

I am,

Your's respectfully,

JAMES R. MANLEY.

New-York, November 10th, 1840.

The letter speaks for itself; and although it contains a plain statement of facts with their obvious inferences, and commends itself to the attention of the trustees on the ground of duty; strange as it may appear, after it had been read, it was directed to be returned to the writer! It would be vain to attempt to explain this extraordinary proceeding, in which duty and propriety were alike insulted, public feeling contemned, and college discipline disgraced; and if Mr. Joseph Delafield, who is reported to have made the motion is not ashamed of his agency, it would seem to be high time that he should resign an office which involves duties which he cannot comprehend. The fact must go to the world without comment, since none which could be made could render it more impressive. As before remarked,

Dr. Smith is the President of a medical school, whose varied fortunes, have invariably disappointed public expectation, and conduct like this is little calculated to increase its influence or its popularity. A public school, whatever be the amount of its patronage, or the measure of excellence of its professors, must dwindle to the insignificance of a private stock company, when its president, by management, can control all the departments of its government. If he can control the election of trustees, and through them, when elected, control the choice of lecturers, and through the joint co-operation of both parties so chosen, through a friend in the board of Regents, also control their actions; what security have the public that the whole powers of the corporation, (a college only in name) will not be prostituted to the mere uses of joint stock companies in trade, whose business it is from the employment of small capitals to produce large dividends. The people of this state have had some experience of this kind, and the re-organization of this very school in 1826, is an instructive illustration.

It was a great mistake to place the government of this medical school in the hands of persons, who by the necessity of the case are no judges of medical acquirements.* It was a still greater one, when, as if to render even this organization nugatory, the Regents of the University appointed Dr. Smith who is a professor, also its president; thus making him the channel of communication between the boards of professors and trustees, he holding the one office by appointment, and assuming the other, claiming to preside over both. All communications between these bodies must now be held through an interested agent, who is more intent on preserving his own situation in despite of his acknowledged incompetency, than in protecting and cherishing the interests of the institution. It is this vice in the organization of the college, which furnished him with an excuse for his conduct towards me; when he told his class that he held *two offices*—one as president, the other as professor; and that he acted in his character of president, when he denounced my course of instruction!†

That Dr. Smith's charge was but a pretext, and a mendacious pre-

* About one half of the board of trustees are merchants or men who profess no knowledge of medical subjects.

† It was the cunning manifested in this device, which alone saves him from a public prosecution, by indictment, for a malevolent slander, and a suit for special damages in a civil action, and he knows it; and it is this which leaves me no alternative for the course I now adopt; whatever of meanness therefore which belongs to such a covert attack on reputation, is justly his and he must wear its disgrace.

text too, is shown, 1st. by the fact that it made no part of his opposition to me, while I was the candidate of my friends for the lectureship. 2d. That he never embraced the opportunity of hearing a single lecture delivered to my class, and therefore was not a qualified judge, even allowing that he was capable of forming a judgment if he had heard me. 3d. That if it had been true, there could have been no necessity for anticipating the action which such incompetency would naturally suggest when the course was finished; and 4th. It was denied by every associated teacher, at the time he made the inquiry with a view to their co-operation in his infamous attempt to break me down. But on this point I forbear, circumstances speak for themselves, and nothing which I can say will add to the weight of their evidence.

There are some offences so gross, that the laws of the land have prescribed no penalties for them; perhaps for the reason that those who have opportunity to commit them, are presumed to be men of morals and education, who acknowledge the control either of conscience or of honor, and therefore not likely to be guilty of them; or if peradventure deficient in both, that public opinion will so punish the offences, as effectually to prevent their repetition. Of this description are libels published from privileged places: scandal or slander uttered from the pulpit, for example, will always meet with its just deserts without the aids of the law of libel, because public feeling will not permit attacks on private character to be made, where they cannot according to the ordinary usages of society be publicly answered; and by common consent it is held to be mean and despicable to use a public or official privilege to gratify private or selfish purposes. It would have been fortunate for Mr. Joseph Delafield, and his associates, if the above or a similar reason could have been assigned, for the utter disregard of my letter to them of November 10th, but they have put it out of the power of the reader to make this apology for them, by directing it to be returned to the writer. It is a matter however with which as an individual I have little concern compared with that which the public ought to feel; and it is not probable that this marked contempt for public opinion will be passed over in silence, when another grant shall be asked for the support of the institution.

The last act of this extraordinary exhibition was in perfect keeping with the previous steps of the process, and may serve as the crowning glory, not only of Dr. Smith's triumph, but of the *Paris concours*, which he and his associates claim to have approximated. The Re-

gents of the University held a meeting at Albany, on the 4th day of May, 1841.

Present.—The Governor, The Lieut. Governor, Messrs. Wendell, Paige, Lansing, McKown, Spencer, Verplanck.

The Regents then proceeded, in pursuance of their resolution of the 5th of May, 1840, to appoint a Professor of Obstetrics and the Diseases of Women and Children in the College of Physicians and Surgeons in the city of New York, and a communication from the Trustees of said College, recommending Chandler R. Gilman, M. D. to be appointed said professor, having been received and read, the Regents determined to make such appointment by ballot.

Mr. Wendell was, at his own request, excused from voting. Messrs. Verplanck and McKown were appointed Tellers, who reported that they had received seven ballots, of which there were four votes given for Chandler R. Gilman and three blanks.

On motion of Mr. Spencer, it was resolved that Dr. Chandler R. Gilman has been elected Professor of Obstetrics and the Diseases of Women and Children in the College of Physicians and Surgeons in the city of New York, and he is hereby declared to be such professor.

The board of Regents consists of twenty-five members, two of whom are *ex officio*.* By a bye-law of the board eight persons constitute a quorum, and it is fair to presume that a majority of the quorum is necessary to constitute a successful ballot; but the above transcript of the minutes shows that but seven ballots were cast, three of which were blanks; so that of a board of consisting of twenty-five men (fifteen of whom were present when it was necessary that an election should be postponed, one year before, when I was a candidate) only four, not even a majority of a quorum are sufficient to elect a professor! and lest a doubt should exist as to the validity of the election, it is on motion of Mr. Spencer Resolved, that it is such; and this is the consummation of what the professors in their circulars dignify by the name of a *Paris concours*!

I have now finished the history of the third dislocation of teachers which has occurred in the College of Physicians and Surgeons within three years, and so far as known, all of them through the agency of its president; the last confessedly so, as he triumphs in his success. The two first 'tis true had the character of resignations and in strictness ought not to be classed as dislocations, since by the same rule Dr. Smith himself would long ago have been superseded: besides, in the two first instances it is said that Drs. Smith and Delafield only were agents in the negotiation, and as gentlemen, strangers in the

* Another *ex officio* member has since been added by law, (the Secretary of State.)

city of New-York, the incumbents most probably preferred resigning to continuing longer in the company of such associates. The last was a pretty well contested trial if we take into account the character of the weapons with which the parties were armed, and the number of auxiliaries which two expectant successors on one side brought into the field, each intent on the rewards of victory, though neither appears to have had much personal agency. To the greater part of readers, the whole narrative although made up of facts, is in danger of being viewed in the light of fable, for want of motive in the agent.

Flagrant offences must have strong temptations of some kind, otherwise they who commit them may be classed with those whom the book of Proverbs denominates fools; and as I am unwilling to place Dr. Smith in this category, I feel bound to find a motive for his conduct. The one he has thought proper to assign, is too bald a pretence to deceive any child who can balance evidence, and impugns the intelligence of the whole medical profession, in this city and state; who at various times have elected him whom he charges with incompetency, to fill the most important offices in their gift; if there is room therefore for the imputation at all, it must apply with equal force to his constituents, of whom Dr. Smith was one, and it will be time enough to refute it, when he is able to adduce one tythe part of the recommendations for any station he ever was invited to occupy.* The truth is, that the charge was a pretext to conceal a motive too mean to be expressed in terms. The excess of his own fears for his own situation, made him suspect an enemy in every man whom he could not use, and he knew enough of me to settle that question with-

* Although it may savour of egotism, it is necessary in order to brand with reprobation the base suggestion, to state that Dr. Manley was twice elected president of the medical society of this county; at one of these elections the contest was a warm one and Dr. Smith voted for him; that he was twice elected their representative to the medical society of the state, (an office which falls in by limitation every four years;) that he was once elected censor of the same society; that he was fifteen or sixteen times elected a censor of the medical society of the state for the southern district, whose duty by law is to examine all candidates for licenses under the state laws, which may present themselves; that he was twice elected the president of said society; and that he now is a censor. That he has been for a number of years, and until the spring of 1840, the resident physician of this city, which is an office in the gift of the governor and senate of this state, and expires by constitutional provision every two years; and that during all this time, embracing a period of more than twenty-one years, he never was charged directly or indirectly, with deficiencies either of talent, tact or integrity in the discharge of the various duties which the offices required.

out inquiry. Too blind to his own deficiencies to appreciate either the force or the value of professional opinion, and yet in dread of its power, he had for years been endeavoring to fortify himself in his position, by privately suggesting candidates for all vacancies occurring in the board of trustees; and so successful had been his silent management, that at a full meeting, he was confident of a majority on any question that affected his interest; in proof of which, I may only state the fact that during the examination of candidates on one occasion, and just previous to the vote in the board, which would definitively settle the question of my success or defeat, he was engaged in making an outside canvass of the votes of the trustees under the separate heads of *ayes* and *noes*; and in this list are found the names of two persons whom he had recommended to fill vacancies previous to the ballot, neither of whom were then appointed trustees, and one of whom is not appointed yet: it is a curiosity in his own writing, which by accident was left on the table when the examiners adjourned, and is now in my possession. The control of the board of trustees, by consequence would carry the selection of lecturers, and of course no difficulty of any kind occurred in the choice of Drs. Watts or Parker when made lecturers, because the president was satisfied; but when I became a candidate, every thing that could be made available for my defeat was put in requisition, and the certainty which he entertained of the result, made him absolutely savage when he found himself disappointed. With the majority of the trustees; a majority of the teachers, who by this management become his own appointments; and with an influential friend in the board of Regents, he not only calculates to render his own situation permanent, his incompetency notwithstanding, but to govern the institution; and the experiment is now in operation!

I would now willingly close this extraordinary exposition, but I am sensible that the reader without some key to explain Dr. Smith's conduct will be apt to doubt the testimony of his own senses. That the weakest member of a college, one who has himself been transposed because of his incompetency; one who, if he was not blind to his own defects, could not fail to have been chastened into some degree of modesty; one whom every physician and surgeon belonging to the institution, whether professor or trustee, considers as the dead weight which the college has been obliged to carry for more than fifteen years; that such a man with a measure of morals such as I have exhibited, and a measure of talent such as he has shown himself to possess, should have had the temerity to break through all the restraints which society imposes in professional life in order to gratify his own

morbid feelings, is a circumstance calculated to tax credulity to the utmost extent of its capacity. But surprise will moderate when the reader is made acquainted with his character. He belongs to that class of men, who although they may acquire their stock of information early, are too soon satisfied with their measure of attainment; no instruction therefore can make them wiser; with a quick perception, but a narrow field of intellectual vision, he jumps to his conclusions from slender premises, and marvels that his reasoning does not produce conviction. Having been a precocious boy, he has become a vain man, delighting in nothing so much as the sounds of his own voice, provided others can hear it also; and to say truth, gratifying all such as have a taste for Italian music, where sense has no connection with sound, and sentiment makes no part of the entertainment. Vanity in general is a venial offence, because as it usually manufactures its own penalties, it rarely becomes very disgusting; but there are cases, where, like a noxious weed, it stints the growth of every thing around it, not only by absorbing all the nutriment of the soil, but intercepting every ray of science by its upas shade, and Dr. Smith's vanity is of this character; self is the burden of every lecture. If called to deliver the eulogium of a dead friend, he will turn the occasion to account in eulogizing himself,* and once he had the modesty to allow (and to his credit be it said) that he had seen both in Europe and America men greater than himself!

Whatever may be its influence on the writers, it is fortunate for the world, that auto-biographies are often written without any consciousness that they are such; and Dr. Smith is among the number of those who take care to describe themselves whenever they speak or write. It would be impossible to hear his lectures, or read his printed essays, without being convinced that be the subject what it may, Dr. Smith's self makes up a large part of it, and the wonder is, that he is not fatigued by the eternal iteration; any thing will serve to introduce such a hackneyed subject! the incidents of a farm yard, a chicken chase, or a fox hunt, will serve as a point of propagation for argument to display the assumed fallacy of commonly received

* *Vide* Eulogium on the late Wright Post, M. D. published 1828, in which after extolling the character of his subject, he very modestly admits that "*he was the only man with whom in the course of his life, he had come into any sort of collision, whose talents and whose station could for a moment induce him to consider as a rival.*" And as if to add a sanction to the remark, he appends a note, which gives the reader to understand, that Dr. Post was made acquainted with his opinion, and he has reason to think that he was flattered by it!

opinions on physiology, and one *false fact* will be adduced to upset an induction based on a thousand.* His principal object appears to be to say *smart things* without manifesting any great anxiety about the character of his facts, or reflecting on the consequences to which his generalizing propensity necessarily leads; and one fact, if but half examined is for his purposes as good as twenty.

His great work, his *monumentum ære perennius* is entitled *Select Discourses*, and consists of five introductory lectures, some of which have been so frequently repeated, that the reader has a right to believe that they are free from the feculence almost inseparable from first copies, and yet strange as it may appear, the philosophy they contain is beneath the criticism of the merest tyro in physics. Many things are stated as facts, simply because it would be difficult to prove them false, although no one believes them; consequences are set down as causes, and causes as results; while both are made the bases of tedious arguments to prove what no untutored Indian ever doubted. With respect to some of his arguments, on phrenology for example, it may be safely stated, that although they are intended to disprove the doctrine, and to render it ridiculous, if they possess any weight or influence, they are calculated to support it; it is however not an unusual result of his reasoning, to convince the reader of the

* An extraordinary confirmation of the above opinion is furnished by a fact of recent occurrence. Dr. Smith is the first Vice President of the New York Lyceum of Natural History, and of course occasionally occupies the chair in the absence of Mr. Delafield the president; on one of those occasions, being in the chair, and always inclined to be communicative, he observed, "that he never had a more vivid impression of the infinite divisibility of matter, than that which was presented by the queen bee, whose *one fœcundation served for the procreation of several successive generations!*" What relation the fact, if such, could have with the infinite divisibility of matter, is a little more than common sense can fathom; for he might argue the infinite divisibility of matter, from the transmission of hereditary gout, scrofula or consumption with just as much propriety from kindred premises. But the cream of this serious philosophical deduction is, that the fact which was father to this vivid impression is no fact at all. Monsieur Reaumur years ago settled this question as regards the plant louse, (*aphis*;) but it never entered into his head to predicate the same thing of the bee, (*apis*;) it is true of one but not of the other. It is probable that the doctor in his rapid reading of some extract in a philosophical journal, confounded the two terms; or, if his apologists please, as the character *h*, in Greek at least, *non est litera*, he concluded that Monsieur Reaumur so thought, and that the terms although generic, were synonyms. By the way, it may be well to inform the reader, that the author of this profound speculation, is now engaged in a course of reading to qualify himself to deliver a course of Geology, for the benefit of the Lyceum!

truth of the doctrines which he controverts.* Of one thing the most enthusiastic phrenologists may be assured, and it will go far to answer all the objections which Dr. Smith can offer to their favorite creed, viz. that with an intimate knowledge of his character, and a fac simile of his head to illustrate the subject, it would be exceedingly difficult for the most confirmed sceptic to resist the evidence of its truth.

Dean Swift has somewhere said that the world is our own acquaintance, and the Doctor has improved upon the Dean, by presuming the world to be his own clique; and it is astonishing with what facility, he and others of moderate sense are made the dupes of their own vanity, by associating only with those, who as if by a kind of conventional arrangement are pledged to make themselves great men; and for that purpose burn the incense of adulation under each other's nose.† This

* An amusing instance of this kind occurs in one of the above SELECT LECTURES; where all his reasoning is nullified by presenting himself, and his head particularly, in illustration; and indeed it may be well doubted whether the lecture was written for any other purpose than to exhibit himself as an extraordinary man, whose peculiar and transcendent talents, may be readily explained without the aids to be derived from cranial conformation. He states 'tis true, a fact which may deserve a record, viz. that he has one of the largest heads to be found in America;—that it is very long and very narrow, and that at first view its appearance is deceptive; but he has left the reader to infer its thickness, presuming I suppose that he has furnished him sufficient data in the work, upon which to form his judgment. The above lectures appear to have had few readers. They are said to have been stereotyped, for the benefit of another generation!

† An impressive confirmation of the influence of *combination for mutual benefit* is presented by the following series of facts. There are seven professors in the College of Physicians and Surgeons, four of whom are so closely associated, by instinct or interest, that any one of the number, in case of necessity, and when the subject involves college politics, speaks for the whole. The anomaly which needs explanation is, that but little more than two years ago, these four persons had three distinct personal interests. Dr. Smith had, or thought he had, an interest in defeating me, and for this purpose brought forward Dr. Gilman as *his* candidate; but the board of trustees defeated him. He afterwards made another trial, the history of which will be found in the text, and Drs. Watts and Parker presented for *their* candidate Dr. Bartlett of Lowell, Massachusetts; and that Dr. Smith might insure himself success, he abandoned his friend, (Dr. Gilman,) and gave all his influence to the candidate of Doctors Watts and Parker. This coalition was also defeated; and Dr. Gilman was successful in despite of their opposition, through the agency of my friends, whose votes were then of no use to me. Here we have Dr. Smith, Drs. Watts and Parker, and Dr. Gilman all engaged in a tripartite struggle, each intent on his own purposes; and now, at this present writing, all the four are as closely associated as if they were uterine brothers! But this is not all. Less than one year ago, (in the fall of 1841,) if rumor can be credited, Drs. Gilman, Watts and Parker were all found actively engaged in searching for some man willing to take the responsibility of writing a letter to Dr. John Augustine Smith to induce him to

city has long been controlled by a class of men of this description. For many years has its literary and scientific character been made to depend on the interested, but joint agencies of men possessed of small capital but indomitable industry in turning its amount to the best advantage; and so successful has been this species of speculation, that the reputation acquired by it is, with some honorable exceptions, almost the only celebrity which is within the grasp even of the industrious and talented aspirant. If he be not affiliated with some clique, or attempts to make his way without such aids, he must possess himself in patience, and address the reading rather than the listening public, who will not fail to make a just estimate of his merit, when time has been allowed them to form a judgment.

It is the influence of these mutual benefit companies which has nominated and elected the presidents, vice-presidents and actuaries of our literary societies for years; and it is this which now controls them.* These are the associations which make great men out of

resign! Would not a ROUND-ROBIN have served their purpose, and covered the transaction? If the report here only stated as such, is not substantially true, Dr. Delafield can, if he will, contradict it.

Are not the reflections suggested by such facts, humiliating? Can the annals of criminal combinations, apart from technical turpitude, furnish any case more instructive? Can a college controlled by such men, "all things by turns and nothing long," lay claim to public patronage? Is there not room to fear that under such rule, it may soon become a private school?

I have suggested the name of Dr. Delafield as the referee, simply because his agency, for the last two years, has been more active and efficient than that of any other person except Dr. Smith: the *wherefore* he may feel himself obliged to explain at some future period.

That Dr. Smith will find it convenient to retire under the pretence of infirm health, is highly probable, and it is just as probable that the time may arrive, at the precise period when the *disputed succession is settled*. But the question of succession if closely examined may go far to account for the extraordinary conduct of Dr. Delafield, who though among the first to suggest the necessity of Dr. John Augustine Smith's retirement from the chair of Physiology, is afterwards found proposing a resolution "*that it is inexpedient to consolidate any of the courses of instruction.*" (Vide page, 26.) Does Dr. Delafield expect that Dr. Smith will be made willing to retire from the office of president of the college, in order to preserve his situation as professor? Or does he think that the interests of the institution require only this change, *if made for his account*? If he does indulge such soft anticipations it would be kindness in his friends to dissipate the delusion. That such a treaty could be negotiated, is highly probable; but that it would be ratified by the regents is much more uncertain.

* Some years since, it was thought necessary to recast some of the professorships in this college with the view of increasing its usefulness and adding to its reputation, and on this occasion as now, professors had the whole control of the institution through the agency of some two or three influential men. They sent to

small materials, and qualify lecturers on every branch of science without the labor of study.* It is owing to agency like this, that one man may be at the same time, an anatomist, a physiologist, a metaphysician, a political œconomist, nay a *naturalist or geologist*; a president of one institution and vice president of another, or indeed any thing as per order, and claim excellence in all! He is qualified by patent to teach any thing or every thing by turns, which his vanity,

Paris and invited a gentleman then resident there, and formerly our consul, (Mr. David B. Warden,) to qualify himself as a chemist as soon as possible, and take that chair; which he accordingly accepted. He commenced his course of labor and study with Mons. Vauquelin for this purpose, but when he was prepared to embark for America, other arrangements had been made, and he was informed that the chair had found an occupant! During the struggle for the new places, those of most profit, were of course most in demand, and considerable altercation ensued; Dr. A. would not have this place—Dr. B. would not have that—Dr. C. insisted on the one he occupied, &c. At last one of their number appealing to Dr. D. said, “*well then what will be left for you?*” to which he with great good humor answered, “*Oh gentlemen, gentlemen, don't differ longer about it; suit yourselves—I'll take whatever you leave, for it makes little difference to me, as I shall have to qualify myself before the course commences, be it what it may!*” He was as good as his word, and took Natural Philosophy that he might have a wide field for the exercise of his talents!

If my recollection be correct, it was at this time that the professors dislocated the late Dr. Hamersly, the professor of the theory and practice of physic, after having crippled his course, by procuring his removal from the New York Hospital, and making it necessary for him to give his clinical instructions in the New York State Prison, at the distance of two miles from the college where he could not have, at the most, more than twenty beds.

* We have in remembrance a special case in point;—a gentleman well known in our clique circles now extant, by this management *was* made qualified to lecture on Midwifery, Institutes of Medicine, Medical Jurisprudence, and *Materia Medica*; and it is remarkable that he lectured on all with an equal degree of facility and success! and so well settled is this clique concourse, that almost any individual in the least degree familiar with their policy, can predict with certainty who will pronounce the eulogiums on the *penultimate members*, or the *Octogenarians of Literature* in this city or state. We trust that the reader is too well informed to require more particular information, more especially, if he be a resident of either.

We recollect the time, when the officers of the several societies who gave a tone to the public taste were, nearly all, the same men; and for the dispatch of business it was found very convenient: for example, the Literary and Philosophical Society, the Historical Society, and the Academy of Arts were so happily situated, that if a meeting of one was called, it served for all three: the officers had only to declare one meeting adjourned, and another opened, and by opening another sett of books it was done; and when that business was disposed of, declare another society in session, and it was so. One of these fraternities found themselves in difficulty, by having seriously declared that the books of admission were closed, and a death or resignation only could admit a member!

and a week's preparation may prompt him to attempt. Now to all this pretence, however ridiculous, there can be no serious objection provided it be restricted within its own proper limits, and confined to subjects of mere taste or the fine arts, where mistakes have no serious consequences: but it is far otherwise in the various departments of medicine where ignorance and error are liable to be attended with fatal results; here it is essential that the teacher be qualified by study and observation before he attempts to become an instructor; he has or ought to have higher aims than the mere pecuniary emoluments of his vocation, and when he has not, he disgraces the chair he occupies. It need not be disguised, that the practice of physic has within a few years lost much of the respect which it, formerly, enjoyed; and to nothing is this more justly attributable, than to the mercenary spirit, which the public think (wrong or right) pervades the medical profession. Medicine practised as a trade is certainly as discreditable as it is dangerous, and if the scandal attaches, the odium is merited: whether it does or does not, every intelligent man must answer for himself; but of one thing we may be assured, if it does not, it soon will; since nothing is better calculated to produce this result, than the conversion of the business of teaching it, into one merely of profit. In many parts of this country it has become a profession by itself, and teachers travel from place to place to instruct, who have no experience to illustrate or confirm their lessons. At the present time, the labor saving process of lecturing is more in request than at any former period, simply because it is easier to listen than to read; and when the lecturer looks only to be compensated in coin, it is obviously his interest to make his lectures popular, and there is great danger that instruction may be sacrificed to mere amusement. Nothing can illustrate the above remark with more force, than the course of physiology as conducted in this college, although this has failed of its ordinary result, from the ignorance, the indifference, and the vanity of the professor: the attempt however to render his lectures amusing rather than instructive, is as obvious as the failure to do either; and his class, although, as before remarked, he has the most interesting course of study in the college for his subject, is less in number than any other of his associates.

A sound moral is the basis of all character worth possessing; and although it sometimes happens, though unfortunately, that great talents in the estimation of the world appear to redeem the want of it, yet it would be difficult to make the public believe, that the persons more immediately engaged in this unrighteous war against an indi-

vidual, possess an amount sufficient to shield them from the just indignation which their conduct merits; since the testimony is yet to be presented on which any of them can claim distinction for capacity or acquirements, or the useful application of either, which can give them a right to be rated above their fellows. Official distinction never can confer such a right, although it is often presumed upon. In medical schools the office of a professor is and ought to be honorable; but it cannot create intelligence or morals; it only furnishes opportunities for their display; and when the opportunities have been enjoyed for years, the public have a right to require evidence of the possession of the talents upon which in advance they have predicated their confidence; and more especially is this their duty, when professors in place of presenting their own qualifications for the stations they occupy, are particularly anxious to depreciate the acquirements of others. The whole subject from its inception to the final settlement, presents a series of expedients to avoid a just issue, and Dr. John Augustine Smith has been peculiarly unfortunate in finding men to be his associates in this unhallowed enterprize, through the temptation presented, of serving both themselves and their friends. In order that the reader may have a full view of his conduct, and its results, we will endeavor to group the incidents, since the panorama can be exhibited in a nut-shell. Dr. Smith, for some cause or other thinks that Dr. Manley is not the proper man for lecturer on Obstetrics, and does all he can to prevent his election; he is defeated, however, the trustees having decided otherwise; and here his opposition might have stopped for a season, and taken counsel of discretion; in place of which it becomes more violent. Dr. Manley commences and proceeds in his course till half advanced, (13th January,) when he is informed that Dr. Smith has denounced him for incompetency before the board of trustees; in the belief that as the denouncement was made within four walls, it ought not to have been communicated to any person abroad; he not only denounces, but makes the occasion to do so, urging as a reason, what was not such, viz. that "it was the proper time to render a report to the Regents, and that it was usual to speak of the different courses of instruction in such reports;" (although it had not been done for ten previous years.) Dr. Manley notwithstanding the embarrassment necessarily caused by such conduct, proceeds and concludes the course. After it is concluded Dr. Smith, without warrant from law or precedent, calls the professors together, in order as he said, to take their opinion of Dr. Manley although they were not apprised of the business of their meeting. When met

they determine and give it as their conviction, that Dr. Manley is the best candidate for the chair whom they know, who has not heretofore been in the habit of lecturing; but one of their number (Dr. Watts) *does* know a gentleman, a Dr. Bartlett, a friend, accustomed to lecture, who would suit the station exactly; whereupon Dr. Smith agrees, that be he who he may, he is to be preferred to Dr. Manley, and immediately a bargain is concluded that the said Dr. Bartlett shall be the candidate to receive their joint support, although it be at the expense of his first nominee, Dr. Gilman. After a suitable time to prepare for the ballot, a meeting of the trustees is called; Dr. Smith having previously informed Dr. Gilman, that the professors preferred Dr. Manley to any man who had not lectured, and that therefore he could not now support him, but would be obliged to give his influence to Dr. Bartlett; his intention being to defeat Dr. Manley at all events. When the trustees meet, they find Dr. Manley a candidate for the *professorship*, and Drs. Bartlett and Gilman candidates for the *lectureship* in the event of Dr. Manley's defeat, which Dr. Smith fully anticipated. The question comes up "Resolved, that Dr. Manley be recommended to the Hon. Regents as Professor of Obstetrics," &c. and as Dr. Smith had directed, it was negatived *in open vote*. Dr. Manley has then no more to do with the matter. Now the lectureship comes up, and a ballot is resorted to, when to the confusion of the partnership, notwithstanding the bushel of recommendations for Dr. Bartlett, (few of which were read,) Dr. Gilman is found to have a majority of their votes, and is declared to be elected; all the friends of Dr. Manley casting their ballots for Dr. Gilman, and he having *two friends*, and a neuter to produce this result. Not long afterwards the Regents determine to appoint professors, and fix upon the fifth day of May, for their meeting; whereupon the whole coalition is in trouble through fear that the Regents may appoint Dr. Manley to the chair, their election of a lecturer notwithstanding. At this point the affair assumes extraordinary interest. Two papers are circulated about the city asking the Regents to refrain from appointing a professor of Obstetrics, as the trustees had elected Dr. Gilman their lecturer, and they hoped that they, the Regents, would permit him to deliver a course under that authority, not doubting his capacity, &c. as usual in such cases. The professors also had a meeting, if *four* can be called such when the board consists of *seven*, and they seriously represent, that it would be highly injurious to the college, if at this time they appointed a professor! and to secure success, Dr. Smith volunteers to repair to Albany, to be present at the meeting of

the Regents and represent in proper person the interests involved in their action, especially as he had some business of his own relating to *consolidation of courses of instruction*.* With this tremendous battery and Dr. Smith in person, the Regents were assaulted in May, 1840, and it was hardly to be expected, that they could resist the attack. The Regents did not appoint a professor of Obstetrics; Dr. Gilman did continue the lecturer on Obstetrics, and one year afterwards was appointed professor of the same branch. *Vide minutes of Regents, page 36.*

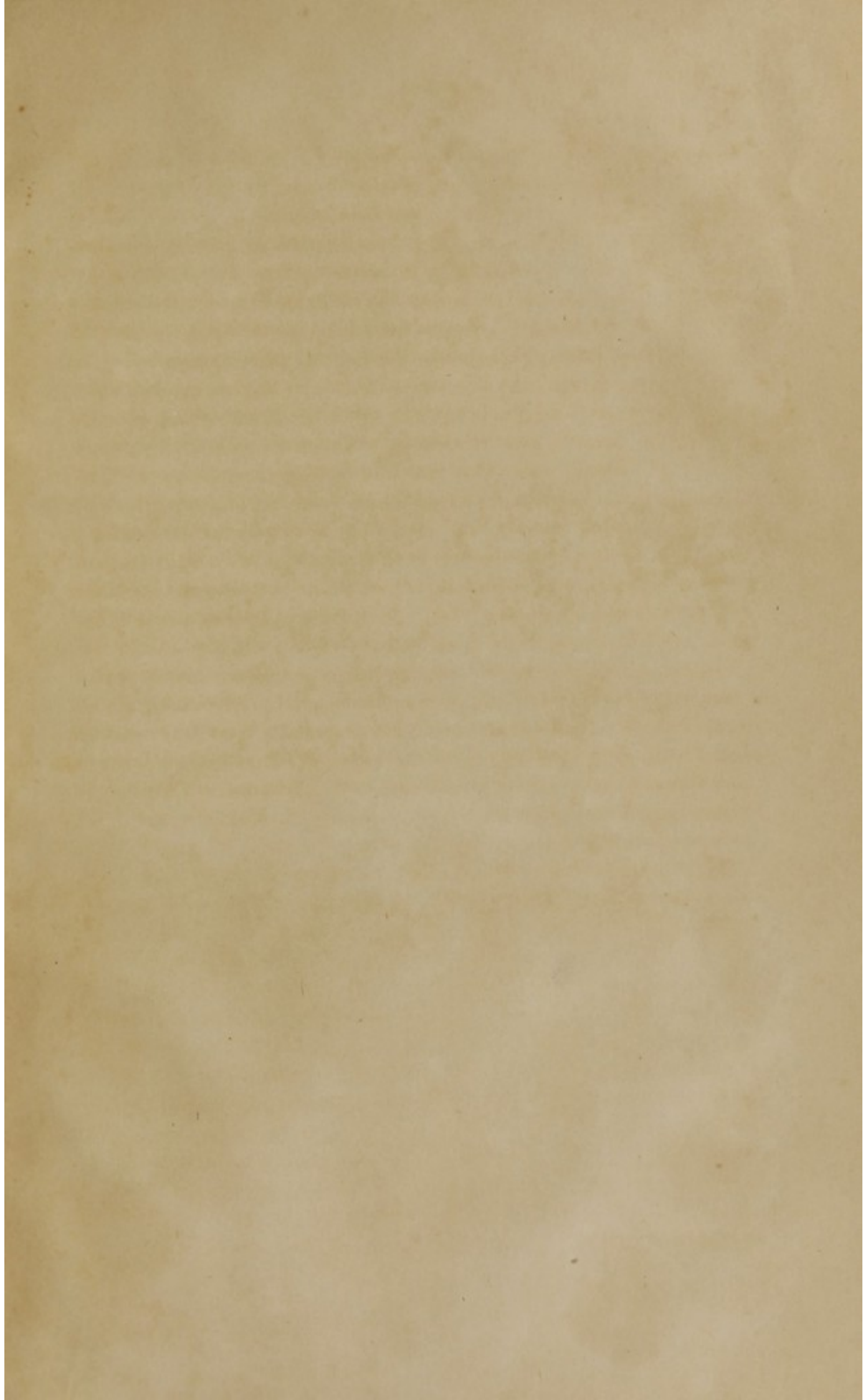
So far, management had been successful, but it seemed expedient that it should be endorsed by the trustees in order to conceal its true character; for which purpose a college circular is drawn up, dictated if not written by the same parties; in which this outrageous conduct is dignified by the name of a *Paris concours*; and in order that the reader may judge of its merit, we will give him its definition extracted from the best authority. *CONCOURS: Mettre une chaire au concours*, (the precise sense in which the term is used in the circular,) *la mettre à la dispute entre plusieurs prétendants pour la donner à celui qui aura le plus de capacité*; in fact, to declare a professorship to be disposed of in favor of the best qualified candidate. If the reader will turn to the foot note of page 7, he will have a striking exhibition of professorial assurance. The *concours* in the cases of Drs. Watts and Parker was composed, if report is to be credited, of Drs. John A. Smith and Edward Delafield! and in the case of the professor of obstetrics, of Messrs. Griswold and Wyckoff! It has served the purpose, however, and given to all concerned, some celebrity. Without the appendage of the college circular, the whole might have been considered as an affair between medical men, discreditable enough 'tis true, but only involving individual interests; but now the institution has been made to endorse the deception, and must suffer in its credit, having been made the dupe of her agents. Who can be made to believe that qualifications had any agency in selecting either lecturers or professors, when the term *concours* is thus prostituted? It is an unworthy attempt to make character, at others' expense, and when it is

* By the way, these voluntary journeys of Dr. Smith to Albany were made at the college charge! He went to Albany before my appointment as lecturer, and while there Dr. Delafield, the resigned professor, is made a trustee. In the present case, he went partly to defeat the action of the board of trustees who had previously determined, that the appointment of professors was none of their business and that they would not interfere; and partly to save his own professorship which he had good reason to fear was in danger; *but he made out his bills of expenses; as President, he audited them; and they were actually paid as college charges!*

known that this college circular was drawn up by the four professors, Dr. Smith, Dr. Gilman, Dr. Watts, and Dr. Parker, who affect to control the college, and only presented to trustees, in order to have it properly authenticated to serve for a public advertisement; it is calculated less to provoke our contempt, than our pity. This abortive attempt to clothe the management of Dr. Smith & Co. with the character of a *Paris concours*, however ridiculous, is pardonable compared with the pretension which marks the circular of the present year, in which the public are seriously assured that "IT MAY BE CONFIDENTLY DECLARED THAT THE FACULTY ARE DISTINGUISHED FOR A DEGREE OF TALENT, ENERGY AND SCIENTIFIC ACQUISITION NOT SURPASSED IN THE UNITED STATES." This is extracted from the report of the Regents of the University, but the above mentioned gentlemen, although they give it as an extract, have forgotten to tell the public that *they themselves wrote it!* the trustees having no more to do with it, than with a national treaty! and that three of the seven professors never saw it till it was in print, is a fact which will not be denied. If either of these men should publicly advertise that he possessed wit, talent, energy and scientific acquirement equal to any person in America, what would the public think of his pretensions? What name would be appropriated to designate such rabid conceit? Would any individual of the four be willing to be the author of the article? And yet they write it as they would a round-robin, and procure it to be authenticated as an academic document, presuming that no person will be curious enough to inquire into its paternity.

I have now done what I purposed; I have uncovered rottenness too offensive to allow me to prosecute the dissection farther; and it is for the public to determine on the merits of the operation. I have no personal interest in the result, but I have a right to presume on the integrity and common sense of the community who will not permit such conduct as I have unmasked, to pass unrebuked. The attempt to destroy me had its origin in cowardice; it was a failure, till temptation enlisted auxiliaries; the opinion of Dr. Smith's associates with whom he advised, counselled him to caution, if his vanity would have permitted him to listen; "*but I know a man who is in the habit of lecturing, who I think would suit the place,*" was the cabalistic sentence (uttered by Dr. Watts to serve his friend, Dr. Bartlett,) which robbed him of his discretion, and made him the dupe of his pupil.

"How oft the sight of means to do ill deeds,
Makes deeds ill done!"



NATIONAL LIBRARY OF MEDICINE



NLM 03206434 9