The return of another lecture season causes us to reflect upon the incidents of the few months that have come and gone, since the close of our last lecture term.

Change is the order of the present age; reaction is stamped upon the whole face of nature. Indeed, so rapid, so often, to unlooked for, are the events of Providence, that we know not what a day may bring forth.

In the past few months we have been deeply grieved and afflicting as a nation; and to some of us, at least, the continuance of calamity, and the wreck of some domestic affections, have saddened our hearts, and cast a gloom over our households; and perhaps impressed us with a greater sense of utter, than upon any whose privilege it is now to address you. But let us be thankful for our spared lives—let us be hopeful that Providence will once more smite upon us, and bless us as individuals, as a Seminary of valuable learning, and as a constituent part of a once United, happy, and prosperous nation.

We would invoke the aid, and the blessing of the ever-welcoming arm of Divine Providence, in whose hand are the issues of life and death, for success in the prosecution of our ministerial undertakings, for the speedy restoration of peace and prosperity throughout the length and breadth of our lands.
And that happiness and brotherly love, may again be the
stability of our times, I would be the devout aspiration of every
teen and patriotic heart.

Now before, in the whole history of our people as a
nation, have we ever conceived to prosecute the study of
medicine and surgery under circumstances like those of
the present. We are in the midst of a civil war—a war
that is being waged, not only between the sections of the
South—between neighbor & neighbor—but almost
literally fulfilling the words of our Savior, while he was
upon earth, when he said, 'The brother shall rise up against
the brother to death; and the father against the child; and the
children shall rise up against their parents, and cause them to be put to
death.'

It may be that we had boasted too much of our prosperity,
of our power, and of the justice of our Government; that
we had wronged just and had become wanton, and that
the Lord is about to punish us for our national sins, with
national calamities, such as were foretold in reference to the
annihilation of Jerusalem, 'Ye shall hear of nations and
wars; nation shall rise up against nation, and kingdom
against kingdom; and there shall be famines and pestilences,
and earthquakes in divers places.'

Let us humble ourselves in the sight of God, and earnestly
entreat the Lord to remove from us speedily all the history of
domestic war, and to aver time not the predictor calamities from
his presence; and that he would lift up the light of his
uncorroled constancy and heal all of our backsliding.
If we are destined to suffer the evils of a protracted and severe peace, and if we are exposed to the dangers of divers kinds, it behoves us to be diligent in search of and to acquire that knowledge of the healing art, which is so useful and so essential to qualify us to relieve the sufferings of those who may look to us for professional aid in a time of need.

The fulfilment of this duty will devolve upon the teacher, the pupil, the State, nurses, and practitioners giving medical instruction.

You will naturally expect that the course of surgical instruction, which we are about to receive, should be ample and complete. It is perfectly natural, and proper, that you should look to us, and to all we are responsible for the right and soundness of our part of the duty. And when I consider the responsibility of my position, I reflect on my own imperfections and shortcomings. I am almost ready to shrink, and to retire from the undertaking. But now, upon some similar occasions, I venture once more to bespeak your kind forbearance and liberality in my behalf.

A year of experience and of study, in cultivating the art and science of surgery, should be regarded as a test of my fitness to give surgical instruction. I should feel as though I had some claims upon your confidence.

Know, that matters of a personal character are not often admitted to, in good taste, before a public audience. And, therefore, I am positively distrustful, and unwise, come between a popular or even a select audience.
Now, though, I must frankly confess that vanity, as some other trait of character, quite as little entitled to respect and influence, promptly came to announce, that it is now about forty years since I commenced my career as a teacher of one of the branches of medical science.

In the fall and winter of 1826-27, I gave in this city, what I then called a course of lecturing on anatomy and operative surgery. This was a private, and an individual enterprise. Since that time I have been engaged as a private or public teacher in the departments of anatomy and physiology, and of surgery.

I venture to say that there are but few men in the ranks of our profession, who can claim a longer period of service as a medical teacher. It is proper to state, however, that one of my colleagues, Mr. Dr. Naughton, commenced his liberal professional life during the same fall—so that you will perceive that you are to hoog at least, two "old stagers," to guide the helm of the craft on which you are now embarking in the pursuit of medical knowledge. But you may ask, what will your forty years of experience, and your own hard labor, if you have not kept up with the rapid improvements in the science of medicine?

It is said of the Physician, that the number of years one has been in practice, is no true test of the amount of experience and skill he may possess. One man may acquire as much experience and useful information in the practice of five, as another can in ten years.
There is a time when vegetables and animals cease to grow—there is a time when the physical organization of man ceases at maturity—so also there is a time when the mental faculties cease to grow; a time when his physical frame and his mental powers must yield to the irresistible laws of nature: they pass away—they die—but, in different individuals, suffering widely diversified. The approach to such a period may be so gradual, and so insensible to the individual himself, that he is hardly conscious of the wearing of his faculties, before he becomes the mere shadow of the man once of mature manhood.

I do not know but I ought to retire, and give place to a younger man, who, though he has the chair of honor, may as long as my health and bodily and mental health is unimpaired, I trust, be happy to be competent to discharge the duties of my post in this institution for a few years longer. A younger man might bring to his aid more book knowledge—he might have come better theoretical instruction—but in fact, we have the full benefit of one of the best pathological museums to be found in the United States.

Reading and discussing are delightfully, and sending it, are vastly different from each other.
For in the more difficult or pathological cases all that is necessary to make it of the most useful, as an element of instruction. The history of the case, the operation, and results are all important to the practical surgeon. The most interesting and valuable portion of the surgical symptoms, however, has been collected from my own practice, as I have

No, we have not, that our object should be to provide for the country (civil and military) Physicians and Surgeons qualified, not only to practice the healing art successfully, but in a way worthy of all confidence. To accomplish such an object, you

Conclude in short, that whatever responsibility will rest on the student. For ignorant, the obsolete, and the indolent student will never become a bright and shining light in the ranks of our profession.

A fact in mental capacity—scarcity requirements in literary attainments—had some advantages, while increasing the study of medicine, may be, in some rare instances, overcome by great industry, by severe study, and by long continued perseverence. All are less equally endowed with the same amount of mental capacity—nor have all enjoyed the same advantages of preeminence—nor the same advantages of a scientific and practical course of medical instruction. For all may be equally industrious, and zealous in the pursuit of literary and scientific attainments.
is said that there is no legal road to a great honorable distinction in the profession—nor any power.

In these times of rapid advancement, the lawyer must be outstripped in the onward march for distinction. Indeed, he might as well withdraw as the contest in the outset as to be out distanced disgraced, by his own self-indulgence. Now is the time to resolve what you will do, and that you will be, and your object in half accomplished.

Although long accustomed to acquire rich the capacities candidates for the practice of Physic and Surgery, and having for many years familiar with the good, bad, and different qualifications of such candidates, yet I must say that I have been struck forcibly before the great variety of talents and attainment, as have been in the past few months.

I presume many of you are aware, that some one a few months since, I was appointed by the executive of one State, one of a Commission of three to examine candidates to fill the places of Surgeons in the Volunteer Regiments of the Army.

Often directly or indirectly, nearly three hundred and sixty three Physicians and Surgeons ages ranging from 2 to 62, have appeared before us, and have submitted to mode of examination, presently to be explained.
The office of examination involved the discharge of a delicate and responsible duty—the duty of virtually supplying the army with a medical corps of men, competent, in all respects—morally, physically, and professionally—

the professional charge of the brave soldiers, and gallant officers, who guard their health and their lives, sustain the good and wholesome laws, and protect our lives and our property.

I shall deem it no breach of confidence of a public trust to declare, that the circumstances of the case were

warrant me, in giving the numerous specimens of the examination of some of the candidates for army service, who presented themselves to our Board for an examination in medicine and surgery.

Physicians and surgeons have been, and are actuated by the same principles and objects that influence other citizens to seek a portion of the army. These objects, as inducements, are—

1. Patriotism. 2. Love of country.

3. Civil. 4. Family, &c., &c.

5. Civil, 6. Military, 7. 8th Class.

The plan and practical operation of conducting one examination, explain—

1. Limited distance.

2. Continuous—Inspection, Surgery, Practice.

3. Examinations—Hypnotism, &c.

4. Medical—

5. Written answers required, and four hours allowed for the writing.
And now gentlemen, can I place a higher motive before you, to induce you to be industrious, thoughtful, and zealous in the pursuit of medical and scientific knowledge? That the glory and honor of a good name and the secondary reward which great excellency and high attainments are pretty sure to bring to their possessors.

Your friends—your country—and last, though not least, the institution you may select for your Alma Mater, will effect a better, and a more honorable account of yourselves, than the present task to us, in some of the examples of those who offered their services to take the medical and surgical care of the sick and wounded soldiers.

We have taken some pains to ascertain the time and place of education of the candidates—thir native country, or place of birth—their ages—and practical advantages.

By this we learn—tht most of the candidates were educated in the respective medical institutions your STATE.

1. College of Physicians & Surgeons—33
2. Albany Med. College—33
3. University of N. York—30
5. University of Pennsylvania—10