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# IN SENATE,

March 5, 1830.

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## MEMORIAL

<sup>New York</sup>  
Of the Trustees of the College of Physicians and Surgeons in the city of New-York, remonstrating against the establishment of a second Medical College in the city of New-York.

*To the Honorable the Legislature of the State of New-York, in Senate and Assembly convened.*

An application having been made to the honorable the Legislature, for the incorporation of a second medical college in the city of New-York, it would seem to be a matter of duty devolving upon those more particularly interested, to inquire whether such incorporation ought to be granted.

If it should appear at the result of this inquiry, that the creation of such college is actually required by the existing wants, either of the profession, or of the public, or that it would prove of essential benefit to either or both, then it would seem to be the bounden duty of the Legislature, to yield its assent to this application. If on the other hand it should appear that the creation of a second college in this city, is required, neither by the public nor the profession, and besides this, if it should be shown that positive injury would result to both, then it would seem equally clear, that the Legislature ought not to yield its assent to this application.

Believing that the latter can be most conclusively established, the trustees of the college of physicans and surgeons, feel it to be a duty which they owe to the medical public, as well as the institu-

tion with which they are connected, most respectfully to protest against the prayer of the application, and to state very briefly their reasons for so doing.

The main reason which they would urge, and which would seem of itself to be conclusive, is this, that the number of students resorting to the city of New-York, is not, and never has been sufficient, competently to support two schools, and therefore, that the establishment of a second college, must unavoidably result in the eventual ruin of one or both, unless supported by Legislative aid.

The fact upon which the whole of this argument turns, (viz. that the number of students in this city, is not adequate to support two schools,) is so well known to all who have the slightest acquaintance with the history of medical affairs in this city, that it would be wholly superfluous to say any thing on the subject, had not misrepresentations been made in relation to it.

On this account, however, it requires examination. It must appear very obvious to every one, that a large establishment like that of a medical college, cannot be sustained in the city of New-York, from year to year, without a very heavy expense, even where the college buildings, library, chemical apparatus, anatomical museum, cabinets of materia medica, &c. &c., are all supplied by public funds, the ordinary current expenses necessarily connected with a complicated machinery like this, amount to more than would readily be credited by those not conversant with the facts. But when in addition to this, all the foregoing expenditures are defrayed out of the receipts, they become so oppressive, that an institution with no larger classes than those which have hitherto resorted to this city, must inevitably sink under the load.

That this may not be looked upon as a random assertion, we shall enter into a little calculation on the subject, and first estimate the expenses and then the gross receipts of a medical college in the city of New-York.

#### EXPENSES.

Rent of college, valued at \$25,000, at 7 per cent,.....	\$1,750.00
Rent of anatomical museum,.....	500.00
Expense of chemical laboratory, besides original cost,..	250.00
Incidental expenses to porter, fuel, printing, repairs of building, &c.,.....	750.00

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\$3,250.00

## RECEIPTS.

Taking one hundred students as the basis of calculation, which at present is about the average number of students, the receipts will be as follows :

Matriculation, \$5 for each student,.....	500.00
The average of pay students attending each professor, about sixty. From whom four of the professors receive \$15 a-piece, and the other two \$20 a-piece, making \$3,600, for the first four, and \$2,400 for the two last, .....	6,000.00
Graduation fees of twenty students,.....	500.00
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Receipts, .....	\$7,000.00
Deduct expenses,.....	3,250.00
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	<u>\$3,750.00</u>

This divided among six professors, will give an average annual income of \$625, to each. But even this small sum is not available, owing to the necessary expenses to which each professor is annually put, in the purchase of books, specimens, &c. for the illustrations of his course.

In the preceding calculation, the rent of a building has been included ; at present, however, the college of physicians and surgeons, is not under the necessity of paying this, and this is perhaps the only reason why it has thus far been enabled to go on. From the suits however, at present pending against the college, and which probably will be decided in a year or two, every vestige of property will be swept off, and it will then become necessary to erect a new building. As the trustees are desirous of doing this without applying to the Legislature for aid, this is a fair item in the future expenses of the institution.

With this simple statement, we leave it to the judgment of every candid man to say, whether it be possible for two colleges to be sustained in the city of New-York, unless the professors labor for nothing, or the Legislature grant them funds for their support, neither of which is desirable, or at all to be expected.

From the foregoing statement, in relation to the necessary expenses of a medical school, it will follow as a necessary consequence,

that so far as the public is concerned, the most economical plan, certainly would be not to incorporate a second medical college. One college can support itself *without Legislative aid*, two cannot do it, and therefore, if another college should be chartered, one or the other of them must break down in a short time, or both must be supported.

But it may be said, supposing it does fail, let the experiment be made by those who choose to run the risk. This we humbly conceive to be a very limited view of the subject. The glory of a nation or state is as much identified with her literary institutions as it is with her agriculture, her commerce, or her canals, and a failure in the one tarnishes her character quite as much as a failure in the others: and when the state lends her sanction to an institution, by giving it a charter, she identifies herself with it so far, as to make the ignominy of a failure a common discredit. But it is contended that the mere fact of having two colleges, would, by the salutary influence of competition, increase the number of students, and thus enable both to prosper, and, besides this, lessen the price of education. These things have been urged so repeatedly and assiduously, as really to have produced in the minds of many honest men a sort of conviction of their reality. On this subject all general speculation is misplaced, and an appeal to facts must decide it, and so far as these are admitted as testimony, it has been proved most conclusively that such are not the necessary effects of competition. Four years have now elapsed since two medical colleges have been running the race of competition in this city, and it is about time that some of the boasted effects of it ought to begin to show themselves, if they are ever to appear. And what is the fact? Why the number of students attending the two colleges this season is about fifty less than it was last year. The truth is, the existence of two colleges in the same place, so far from augmenting, will generally have the effect of diminishing the number of students, by the incessant broils and contentions to which they inevitably give rise. During the last season, it is understood that at least twenty students left New-York on this account: and so far from competition having had the effect of lowering the prices of instruction, the contrary has been the result. In Rutgers College, during the present session, the ticket of the professor of anatomy has been raised from \$15 to \$20 for each student, and the matriculation fee has been raised from \$3 to \$5, for each student. Indeed, such seems to be the unavoidable consequence. Where the number of students is so limited, the

highest possible prices must be obtained to meet the expenses of the establishment, and save it from bankruptcy. In the state college nothing of this can take place. The prices of the lectures are established by the Regents of the University, and cannot be raised to suit the wishes or interest of the professors. A system of checks and balances is established, by which both the student and the public are secured from imposition. Having shown, as we think, that a second medical college ought not to be established in this city, we might here rest the question.\* It may be proper, however, to say a few words in relation to the present applicants, and we believe it can be shown that even were a second college necessary, they are not the persons entitled to the charter—and for the following reasons :

1. Because, previously to their soliciting a charter, the applicants have appointed themselves to all the offices of honor and emolument connected with the institution, and they now ask a charter simply to be protected in their auto-appointments.

Now, we believe there never was a literary institution got up in this state, or in any other state or country, upon this principle. In the establishment of institutions of this sort, it has always been considered a matter of right that the offices in their gift should be open to the competition of all the scientific men of the country ; and hence the usual course has been, to invest the charter in independent boards of trustees, or of regents, who afterwards fill the various offices with the first talent that can be procured. And such a course is perfectly consonant with reason and justice. Literary institutions are designed for the accommodation and benefit of the public, and they should therefore be kept open for general competition.

This is the plan upon which all the institutions of this state have hitherto been constructed. If, however, the principle is once sanctioned, that a few monied individuals may first appoint themselves to office, and then obtain a charter to confirm them in office, all competition is at an end : men of science will be disregarded, and all our literary institutions be at the mercy of a monied aristocracy. If a new medical college is required in the city of New-York, let it be established in the usual way. Let the charter be vested either in the Regents, or in an independent board of trustees, and let them have the right of filling up the professorships. It is only in this way that the selection of men competent to these stations can be se-

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\* See a report to the honorable the Regents, by Mr. Cochrane, in 1817.

cured. Men of talent and science in different parts of the country, will then be enabled to compete for these places of distinction, and the true ends of competition be answered.

2d. But there is another, and perhaps, stronger reason why the present applicants are not entitled to a charter, and it is simply this: that most of them were formerly professors and trustees of the state college, and that during the time they had the chief management of it, they sunk about \$60,000, and brought the college in debt to themselves upwards of \$20,000, for which they are now prosecuting the college: and there is now remaining to the state only the college buildings, and a small library, valued at about \$15,000. What shows still more conclusively the impropriety of the present application is, that when the Regents, the rightful governors of the institution, attempted to exercise a wholesome control, the present applicants resigned their places in the state college, with the avowed determination of breaking it down, as being injurious to the interests of medical science; and it is to aid in this scheme that your honorable body is now called upon to grant them a charter, and clothe them with the very privileges that are so hostile to medical learning.

For the foregoing reasons, the undersigned, therefore, respectfully pray your honorable body not to yield to the application for the establishment of a second medical college in the city of New-York.

By order of the board of trustees,

JOHN WATTS, Jun. M. D., *President.*

NICOLL H. DERING, M. D., *Registrar.*