

ALBANY MEDICAL COLLEGE.

The history of this institution illustrates the force of individual effort and enterprise, when encouraged and fostered by an enlightened and liberal community.

The ALBANY MEDICAL COLLEGE was founded by Drs. *March* and *Armsby*, with the encouragement and assistance of the citizens of Albany. Dr. *Alden March* removed to this city from Massachusetts, in 1820. He was the first person who suggested, and took an active part in the enterprise. In 1821 he commenced a course of dissections, and lectures on anatomy, to a class of 14 students. He occupied a small wooden building in Montgomery street, above Columbia, near the Bethel, formerly occupied by the Albany Female Academy. Albany at that time, had a population of 15,000. The prejudice against the dissection of the human body was so strong, that Dr. March was obliged to transport all of his material for demonstration, across the country by land, from Boston. This was attended with great trouble and expense, as he was sometimes obliged to make the journey himself, with a private carriage, to accomplish the object with safety. In 1825 Dr. March was appointed Professor of Anatomy and Physiology, in the Vermont Academy of Medicine, at Castleton, which office he held ten years, and was succeeded by Dr. Armsby. Dr. March's private courses were continued during the same time in Albany, where he resided, and was engaged in practice. In 1830 Dr. March delivered a public lecture on the "Propriety of establishing a Medical College and Hospital in Albany." This lecture was published by the class, and excited much interest. Frequent petitions, numerous signed, were presented to the legislature for an act of incorporation, which met with a determined opposition from persons connected with other medical institutions.

In 1831 Dr. Armsby came to this city, as a student of Dr. March, and became his assistant in the medical school as dissector and demonstrator. Dr. March's reputation as a surgeon had at that time become eminent and attracted students from all parts of the country. In 1835 Dr. Armsby was associated with Dr. March in his private school, as teacher of Anatomy, while Dr. March confined his instructions to the department of Surgery, giving a very thorough and practical course on Operative Surgery, and Surgical Pathology.

Dr. Armsby continued his connection with the Vermont Academy of Medicine until 1838, at the same time lecturing in Albany, in connection with Dr. March. He then relinquished his connection with Castleton, and devoted his whole time for three years, to aid Dr. March in the permanent establishment of the Albany Medical College.

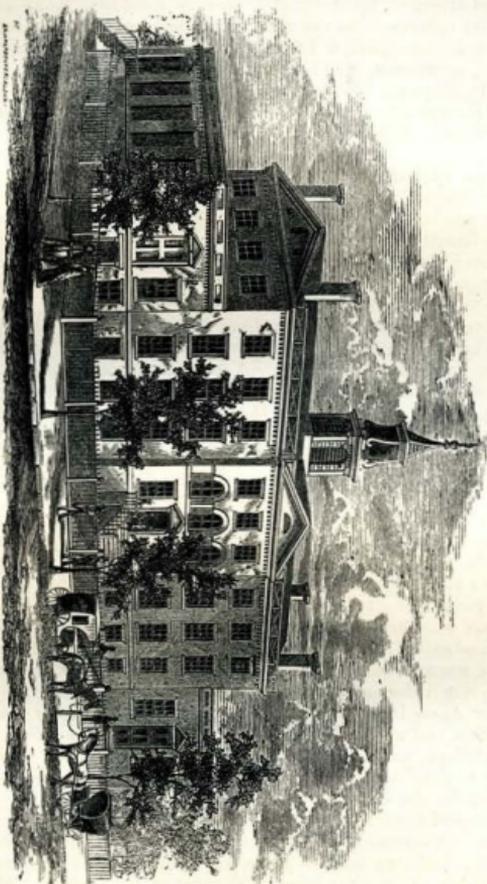
Dr. Armsby delivered several courses of public lectures, illustrated by dissections of human subjects, in this city, and in Troy, and other places, which were numerous attended. One course of his lectures delivered in

this city in 1837, is worthy of record, as having contributed to awaken an interest in behalf of the College, and to have aided largely in the collection of funds for the establishment of the Institution. It was delivered in Morange's Building, corner of Broadway and Maiden lane, and attended by about 300 persons, including many of our most prominent citizens. At the close of the lectures, complimentary resolutions were passed, and a letter addressed to Dr. Armsby, signed by the following gentlemen, who had attended the course: Greene C. Bronson, Daniel D. Barnard, Gideon Hawley, Erastus Corning, Gerrit Y. Lansing, Friend Humphrey, James Stevenson, John I. Wendell, Israel Williams, John Meads, Robert Boyd, Henry Rector, Amos Dean and many others.

On the 14th of April, 1838, a meeting of citizens was called at the Mansion House, to take steps for the organization of the college. This meeting was attended by Ira Harris, Robert H. Pruyn, Bradford R. Wood, George Dexter, James Goold, John O. Cole, Thomas McElroy, Drs. March and Armsby, and the late James McKown, Conrad A. Ten Eyck, Samuel Stevens and John Davis. Dr. March stated the object of the meeting. The following resolution was adopted:

Resolved, that this meeting deem it expedient to establish a Medical College in this city, and to endeavor hereafter to obtain an act of incorporation from the legislature. A committee was appointed to prepare a petition to the legislature, and to obtain the signatures of our citizens. It was prepared and signed by the gentlemen present. Judge Harris offered the following resolution: Resolved, that a stock of \$5,000 be created, and a committee appointed to solicit subscriptions to aid in the establishment of the institution. Samuel Stevens and George Dexter were appointed a committee to prepare articles of association, and a proper instrument to be signed by those who should subscribe to the fund. A committee was also appointed to apply to the Common Council for the use of the unoccupied Lancaster School Building for the term of five years, for the purposes of the College. The late Teunis Van Vechten was Mayor of the city, and James McKown, Recorder. Both of these gentlemen were firm friends of the institution. Mr. Van Vechten was the first President of the Board of Trustees, and held that office until 1841, when he was succeeded by Jared L. Rathbone. Mr. Dexter who was for several years Alderman, gave much time and efficient effort to the enterprise, Professor Amos Dean, who had most to do in forming our Young Men's Association, and was its first president, was one of the most earnest friends of the College, and Robert H. Pruyn, late U. S. Minister to Japan, then attorney to the Common Council, was one of the most active and energetic collaborators for the Institution.

The second meeting was called May, 1838, and was more numerously attended. A communication from the Common Council granting the free use of the building for five years, was received, and Mr. Stevens was authorized to execute the lease on the part of the College. Mr. Stevens and Mr. Dexter reported articles of association, and the names of the following gentlemen to compose the first Board of Trustees. Daniel D. Barnard, Samuel Stevens, John Taylor, Ira Harris, Robert H. Pruyn, Friend Humphrey, Bradford R. Wood, (late U. S. Minister to Denmark) James Goold, George Dexter, Thomas McElroy, Wm. Seymour, John O.



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Cole, John I. Wendell, Conrad A. Ten Eyck, John Davis, Israel Williams, Charles D. Gould, John Trotter, Arnold Nelson, John Groesbeck, Oliver Steele, and Philip S. Van Rensselaer. A building committee, a committee to prepare by-laws, to solicit subscriptions, and a committee to report the names of suitable persons to compose the faculty, were appointed at this meeting. At the next meeting in May 1838, Judge Harris reported the names of the following persons to compose the faculty of this college. Alden March, Professor of Surgery; James H. Armsby, Professor of Anatomy and Physiology; Amos Dean, Professor of Medical Jurisprudence; Ebenezer Emmons, Professor of Chemistry and Pharmacy; Henry Greene, Professor of Obstetrics and Diseases of Women and children; David M. McLachlan, Professor of *Materia Medica*. At a subsequent meeting, David M. Reese, of New York, was appointed Professor of the Theory and Practice of Medicine. At the next meeting, George Dexter was elected Treasurer of the Board of Trustees. Mr. Dexter has held this office 28 years, and attended every meeting of the Board of Trustees to the present time. The improvements on the College building were immediately commenced by Mr. William Boardman, who has been the only master builder employed in the institution since its organization. The first expenditures on the building amounted to over \$6,000, and were increased during the next two years to about \$10,000, all of which was cheerfully contributed by our citizens. The late General Stephen Van Rensselaer, then about seventy years of age, contributed \$500, most of the trustees \$100, each; but a large portion was raised in sums of \$10, chiefly through the personal efforts of Dr. Armsby. The names of the donors are inscribed on a tablet in the museum. The improvements on the building were completed in September 1838, and the museum thrown open to the public, in November following. Drs. March and Armsby contributed all their collections of specimens to the museum, many of which remain to day, as fresh and perfect as when first displayed to the public. When the specimens had all been arranged for exhibition, the museum was thrown open and for several months crowded with curious and interested visitors. It has been kept open to the public ever since, without harm to the specimens, or injury to the building, and has done much to dispel the prejudice, which has so long existed against the dissection and preservation of the human body for purposes of medical education. This museum by constant and unremitting efforts of the faculty, has become the most extensive and valuable in this country, and is excelled by few in Europe. Dr. March during a surgical practice of almost half a century, more extensive and varied than that of any other surgeon in the country, has accumulated an immense collection of the most rare and valuable specimens of disease, which have been prepared and preserved at his own expense, for the benefit of the college.

Dr. Armsby resided in the college during the first three years and devoted his whole time industriously to the increase and arrangement of the specimens. Drs. March and Armsby have made repeated visits to Europe, each time bringing home numerous additions to the museum. Professor McNaughton's valuable collection made during twenty years of teaching in the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Western New York, are all deposited in this museum. A large portion of the

museum of the college is now the private property of Professors March, Armsby, and McNaughton, and it is hoped that they will leave their collections permanently in the institution, as invaluable legacies to science and posterity.

The first course of public lectures in the college commenced on the 3d of January, 1839, to a class of 57 students. The college had no charter, and no power to confer degrees, and found determined opposition from other colleges in the state, and from most of the physicians of this city. But the citizens of Albany sustained the enterprise, and united heartily with the trustees and faculty, in securing an act of incorporation from the legislature. The first Saturday of the term, Dr. March inaugurated his new and admirable plan of holding surgical clinics in the college, and presented to the class a large number of cases requiring surgical operations and treatment. This new feature in medical education, introduced by Dr. March, has been universally adopted by medical institutions throughout the country. Many thousand important cases have been presented and treated at these clinics, which are still continued at the college, although both medical and surgical clinics are held regularly at the City hospital. All indigent persons who present themselves for surgical treatment are attended free of charge.

During the first few years of the College, Dr. Armsby and Mr. Dean delivered evening lectures to the public in the anatomical theatre, which were numerous attended, and created a lively interest in behalf of the institution. These lectures were attended by our leading citizens, by members of the Legislature, and by strangers sojourning in Albany. They aided much in securing the charter and the subsequent appropriations from the legislature. After the act of incorporation was obtained, the trustees confirmed the election of the faculty, and, on their recommendation, appointed the following medical gentlemen curators, to attend the annual examination of the candidates for the degree of Doctor of Medicine: Peter Wendell, Platt Williams, Barent P. Staats, Thomas C. Brinsmade, of Troy, and Samuel White, of Hudson.

The first annual commencement of the Albany Medical College was held on the 24th of April, 1839, and the degree of doctor of medicine was conferred on thirteen young gentlemen, students of the College. In June following, Professor Greene resigned the office of Prof. of Obstetrics, and Gunning S. Bedford, of New York city, was appointed in his place, and Thomas Hun, of this city, was appointed Professor of the Institutes of Medicine.

In March, 1840, Professors Reese and Bedford resigned their professorships, and were succeeded by Professor James McNaughton, in the department of the Theory and Practice of Medicine, and Professor Emmons, transferred from the chair of Chemistry to that of Obstetrics, and Lewis C. Beck was appointed to the chair of Chemistry. At the same meeting Andrew Kirk and John I. Wendell resigned the office of trustee, and Archibald McIntyre and Ezra P. Prentice were appointed. Mr. Prentice declined the office, and Isaiah Townsend was appointed.

In February, 1841, John O. Cole resigned, and was succeeded by Jared L. Rathbone; Israel Williams resigned and was succeeded by J. V. L. Pruyn. In 1841 Professor McLachlan resigned, and was succeeded Professor T. Romeyn Beck, in the department of materia medica. In

May, 1841, the Legislature made an appropriation of \$5,000 per year, for three years. This was secured mainly through the personal efforts of Dr. Armsby. It was expended in the purchase of a library, and in the increase of the chemical apparatus, and collections of the museum. In July, Dr. Armsby was elected by the trustees "*Curator of the museum,*" which office he has held, in charge of the museum, ever since.

In February, 1842, Peter Wendell and Samuel White having resigned the office of curator, Peter McNaughton and James P. Boyd were appointed in their places. June, 1845, James Taylor was elected Trustee in the place of Jared L. Rathbone, deceased, and Daniel Fry and Orlando Meads in place of J. V. L. Pruyn and Archibald McIntyre, resigned. July, 1845, Daniel D. Barnard was elected President of the board of trustees, in place of Jared L. Rathbone, deceased. December, 1846, Joel A. Wing was appointed curator in place of Platt Williams, resigned. October, 1847, Amasa J. Parker was elected trustee in place of John Davis, deceased. On the 12th of October, 1850, Daniel D. Barnard, having been appointed Minister of the United States to Prussia, resigned the office of President, and Greene C. Bronson was elected in his place. At the same meeting Henry H. Martin and W. W. Forsyth were elected trustees, in place of Daniel Fry and Arnold Nelson, deceased. Judge Bronson declined the office of President, as he was about leaving the city, and Judge Ira Harris, now United States Senator, was appointed President of the Board of Trustees. Senator Harris is still President of the board and professor in the Law department of the University. At the same meeting John F. Rathbone and Watts Sherman were elected trustees, in place of Greene C. Bronson and William P. Van Rensselaer, resigned.

In September, 1852, Professor Emmons resigned the chair of obstetrics, and Howard Townsend was elected in his place. Professor Townsend is a graduate of the College, and has enjoyed the advantages of European hospital practice and study. He has been unwearied in his duties to the College. In 1852, Isaiah Townsend resigned, and Franklin Townsend was elected in his place.

In 1852, the College suffered a great loss by the death of Lewis C. Beck. Ezra S. Carr was appointed in his place. In November, 1853, T. Romeyn Beck resigned the chair of professor of materia medica, and Professor Townsend was appointed to this chair. June, 1854, Professor March and Dr. Beck were elected trustees in place of James Taylor and Friend Humphrey, deceased. Thomas W. Olcott was elected in place of Watts Sherman, resigned, and E. E. Kendrick in place of John Groesbeck.

In December, 1854, Robert H. Pruyn was elected secretary of the board of trustees. June, 1855, Howard Townsend was elected professor of physiology, in place of Thomas Hun, resigned; and J. V. P. Quackenbush was elected professor of obstetrics and diseases of women and children. Professor Quackenbush was a graduate of the College, and is a popular and efficient teacher, and practitioner. June, 1856, U. G. Bigelow was elected curator. June, 1857, Charles H. Porter was elected professor of chemistry, in place of Professor Carr, resigned. In 1859, Professor Dean, who had been connected with the institution since its organization, resigned his professorship in the College, and was elected trustee. When the war commenced Professor Porter entered the United States service, his place was temporarily supplied by George H. Barker, who delivered two

very acceptable courses of lectures. In 1864, Jacob S. Mosher, a graduate of the College, and the present able Professor and Chemist, was appointed professor of chemistry, pharmacy and medical jurisprudence.

Dr. March has been president of the faculty and professor of surgery since the establishment of the institution, and Dr. Armsby professor of anatomy and curator of the museum. Dr. Armsby was the first Registrar of the faculty, and held the office until July, 1842, when he was succeeded by Dr. Hun. Dr. Hun held the office of registrar until 1853, and was succeeded by Dr. Townsend. Dr. Townsend resigned the office of registrar in 1856, on account of a contemplated tour to Europe, and Dr. Quackenbush was appointed in his place. Dr. Quackenbush resigned in 1865, and Dr. Mosher, the present Registrar, was appointed. Thirty-four public courses of lectures have been delivered in the College; twenty-nine of which were delivered in the fall, and five in the spring. Two hundred and forty-three graduates of this College and five of the present faculty, are known to have been in the United States service as volunteer surgeons, or as commissioned officers, during the late war.

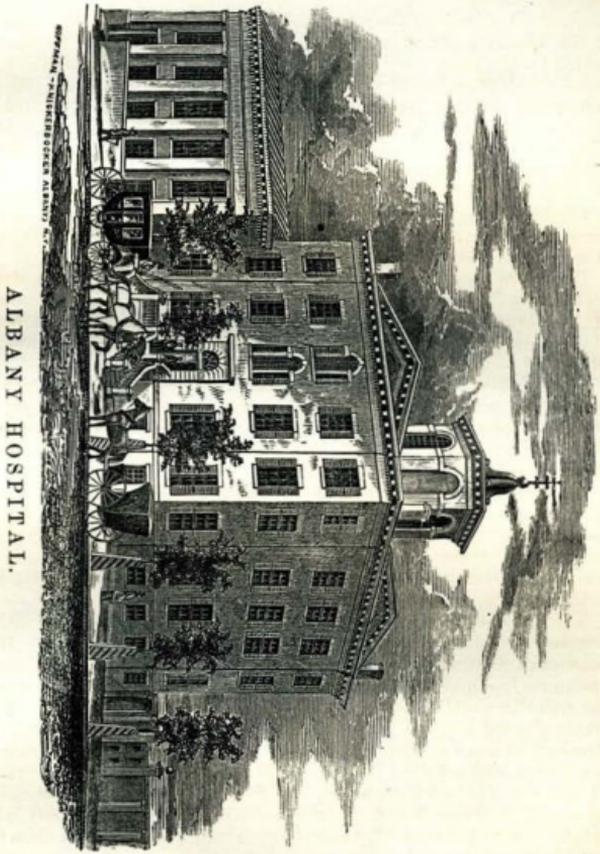
The following gentlemen compose the present faculty: Alden March, professor of Surgery; James H. Armsby, professor of Anatomy; James McNaughton, professor of Medicine; Howard Townsend, professor of *Materia Medica* and Physiology; John V. P. Quackenbush, professor of Obstetrics; Jacob S. Mosher, professor of Chemistry.

The Curators of the College, medical gentlemen of this city, who are present and take part in the annual examinations of candidates for the degree of doctor of medicine, the last day of the session, are: Barent P. Staats, M.D., James P. Boyd, M.D., Peter McNaughton, M.D., U. G. Bigelow, M.D., J. V. Lansing, M.D.

Dr. Staats, the senior curator, has held the office since the establishment of the institution, and has attended every annual examination. He has been in practice in this city nearly fifty years, a longer time than any other medical practitioner in Albany, and is still in full practice, as hale and active as most men of forty. Dr. Peter McNaughton and Dr. Boyd have held the office of curator since 1841, and Dr. Bigelow since 1856.

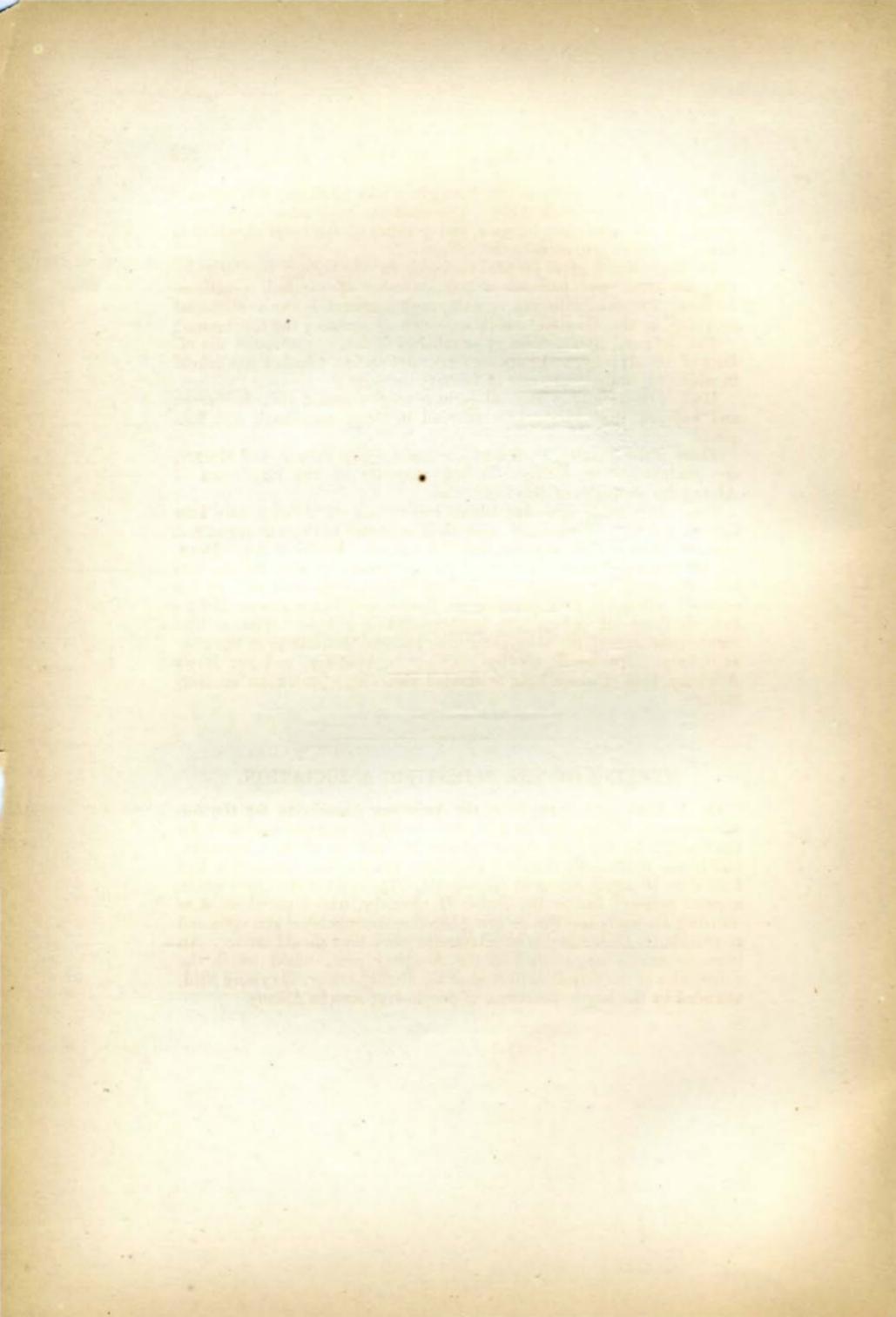
The College building has recently been painted and improved, the museum is one of the most extensive and valuable in the country. It has been much enlarged during the last year by a great variety of casts, models, specimens, and photographs, illustrating the results of military surgery—the collections of Dr. Armsby, while in charge of the late United States Army general hospital in this city. The library numbers about five thousand volumes of rare and valuable medical books. The working laboratory is well supplied with apparatus for the use of students, many of whom avail themselves of opportunities to pursue practical chemistry, by a regular course of experiments and manipulations. Chemistry is here taught as practical anatomy is, in the dissecting room. The student takes a laboratory ticket and devotes a portion of his time to the preparation of medical compounds, and to testing the purity of medicines; to the analysis of blood, urine, and the detection of poisons, and to all the numerous applications of chemistry to medicine and jurisprudence.

Five of the professors of the college are connected with the Albany city hospital, a noble charity, which may be considered the offspring of the college. Fifty generous citizens of Albany have given each \$1000,



ALBANY HOSPITAL.

NEW YORK - WOODS BROS. ENGRAVERS



to this institution. Fifty others have given each \$500, and fifty ladies of Albany, have given each \$100. The students have admissions free of charge, to the clinics, lectures, and practice of the hospital, which is situated in close proximity to the college.

Professor March gives surgical clinics in the college regularly during the term, and performs a large number of surgical operations. Professor Townsend delivers a very thorough course of lectures on clinical medicine, in the hospital, which are much esteemed by the students.

The Soldiers' Home, recently established in this city, through the efforts of Dr. Armsby, and Surgeon General Pomfret, affords a fine school in which to study the results of military surgery.

Most of the faculty of the college have made repeated visits to Europe and enjoyed the opportunities afforded in European schools and hospitals.

Three of the Faculty, Professors Townsend, Quackenbush, and Mosher, are graduates of the college. A large majority of the Physicians of Albany are graduates of this institution.

Two other noble and flourishing institutions of Albany, the Law School, and the Observatory, owe their existence to the enterprise and personal effort of those who founded this college. Professor Amos Dean, for 20 years professor of medical jurisprudence, in this college, has been the principal manager of the Law School, supported ably by his eminent colleagues, U. S. Senator Ira Harris, and Judge Amasa J. Parker, all three of whom are trustees of this college. The college has become one of the oldest, and most honored institutions in our city. It is only surpassed in age by our Female Academy, and our Boy's Academy, both of which have celebrated their Semi-Centennial anniversaries.

MEETING OF THE SCIENTIFIC ASSOCIATION.

On the 20th of August, 1856, the American Association for the Advancement of Science met in this city. Great preparation was made for the occasion by the learned and enterprising portion of the community, and it was confessedly the most important meeting the Association had held since its organization, in all respects. The *eclat* of the event was in a great measure due to Dr. James H. Armsby, whose exertions were untiring for many months, to bring together distinguished strangers and to provide for their suitable entertainment when they should arrive. An immense canvas was erected in the Academy park, under which the ceremonies of the formal dedication of the Dudley Observatory were held, attended by the largest concourse of people ever seen in Albany.