

[Columbia University Health Sciences Library Archives & Special Collections](#)

[College of Physicians and Surgeons in the City of New York. Documents relating to the Merger with Columbia College.](#)

**COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS AND SURGEONS IN THE CITY OF NEW YORK.**  
**Documents relating to the Merger with Columbia College,**  
**1878, 1890-1891.**  
**.15 cubic feet (1 box)**

**SUMMARY:** Correspondence and financial and legal documents relating to efforts in 1878 and 1890-91 to merge the College of Physicians and Surgeons in the City of New York with Columbia College. Correspondents include Cornelius Agnew, Morgan Dix, Hamilton Fish, Seth Low, James W. McLane, William Schermerhorn and others.

**SCOPE & CONTENT:** These approximately 30 documents are largely between the principle figures in the 1890-91 negotiations that led to the merger of the College of Physicians and Surgeons with Columbia College: James W. McLane, the President of P&S; Seth Low, the President of Columbia; William Schermerhorn, Hamilton Fish, Morgan Dix and Stephen Nash, all Columbia Trustees.

Also included is a publication, *For the Use of the Trustees of Columbia College and of the College of Physicians and Surgeons*, a 24 page compilation of correspondence between McLane and Low (including letters that do not appear in this collection) and financial documents. Other items include drafts of the provisional merger agreement and the New York State bill permitting the union.

It is impossible to say how complete this record is, but it does seem likely that this is merely a fraction of the documentation generated by this important transaction.

**HISTORICAL NOTE:** The College of Physicians and Surgeons of the City of New York had formed a nominal affiliation with Columbia in 1860 after it had severed its relationship with the state's Board of Regents. The President of Columbia became a member of the P&S Board of Trustees; jointly presided with the President of P&S at the medical school's commencements; and, with the P&S President, jointly signed the school's diplomas. While an earlier merger attempt in 1878 failed, the union between the two schools was finally accomplished in 1891. Both boards approved the agreement in February 1891. Legislative approval was won on March 24<sup>th</sup> of that year when the Governor signed the act authorizing the union (Chapter 101, Laws of 1891). The merger took effect July 1, 1891.

**RELATED RECORDS:** Researchers should consult the P&S faculty minutes for these periods for fuller information on the negotiations between P&S and Columbia. There may also be relevant documentation in the "P&S Manuscript Collection." For Columbia's side of the story, researchers should consult the University Archives & Columbian Library on the Morningside Campus.

**PROVENANCE:** It is not known where these documents originated. The wide variety of recipients makes it difficult to trace these records to a common source and it is possible they were pulled together from a variety of offices. They were clearly at some point in the Columbiana Library on the Morningside Campus as the original folders had the Columbiana stamp on them.

## **SUBJECTS**

Dix, Morgan, 1827-1908.

Fish, Hamilton, 1808-1893.

Low, Seth, 1850-1916.

McLane, James W.

Nash, Stephen P.

Schermerhorn, William C.

College of Physicians and Surgeons in the City of New York.

Columbia College (New York, NY)

Medical colleges – New York State – New York.

Medical education – New York State.

Columbia University. College of Physicians and Surgeons.

**College of Physicians & Surgeons in the City of New York.  
Documents relating to the merger with Columbia College,  
1878, 1890-1891.**

- 1 C.R. Agnew to Edward Curtis, May 18, 1878
- 2 C.R. Agnew to Hamilton Fish, October 24, 1878
- 3 John Green Curtis to Cornelius R. Agnew, February 5, 1878
- 4 H. Satterthwaite to C.R. Agnew, February 22, 1878
- 5 G.M. Ogden to C.R. Agnew, March 12, 1878
- 6 C.R. Agnew to F.A.P. Barnard, March 18, 1878
- 7 C.R. Agnew to Mr. Ogden, April 3, 1878
- 8 G.M. Ogden to C.R. Agnew, April 3, 1878
- 9 A[lonzo] Clark to “Dear Doctor,” April 13, 1878
- 10 College of Physicians & Surgeons: Proposed merger with Columbia College,  
[1878]
- 11 Seth Low to Hamilton Fish, October 8, 1890 with attachments from James W.  
McLane and John G. Curtis
- 12 James W. McLane to Seth Low, December 3 [1890]
- 13 Seth Low to J.W. McLane, December 17, 1890
- 14 William C. Schermerhorn to Seth Low, December 18, 1890
- 15 J.W. McLane to Seth Low, December 26, 1890
- 16 Seth Low to [James McLane], December 31, 1890 [Draft?]
- 17 J.W. McLane to Seth Low, January 3, 1891
- 18 [?] to J.W. McLane, January 3, 1891
- 19 Hamilton Fish to Seth Low, January 9, 1891
- 20 William C. Schermerhorn to Seth Low, January 10, 1891
- 21 Morgan Dix to Seth Low, January 12, 1891
- 22 J.W. McLane to Seth Low, January 20, 1891
- 23 J.W. McLane to Seth Low, January 23, 1891
- 24 Stephen P. Nash to Seth Low, January 24, 1891
- 25 S.P. Nash to Seth Low, January 27, 1891
- 26 S.P. Nash to Seth Low, January 28, 1891
- 27 Hamilton Fish to Morgan Dix, January 29, 1891
- 28 Morgan Dix to Seth Low, January 30, 1891
- 29 *For the Use of the Trustees of Columbia College and of the College of Physicians  
and Surgeons*: a 24 page publication consisting of correspondence between James  
McLane and Seth Low, dated between Dec. 18, 1890 and Jan. 3, 1891 as well as an  
appendix of balance sheets and reports relating to financial aspects of the merger.
- 30 Provisional Agreement of Union, College of Physicians & Surgeons with Columbia  
College, [1891] [several drafts]
- 31 “Suggestions in reference to the legislation...” [1891] [draft]
- 32 NY State Legislature: Act to Permit Union of College of Physicians & Surgeons  
with Columbia College, [1891] [draft]