Friends and Fellow members:

To be called to preside over your meetings, is in my opinion as great an honor as can be conferred on any person connected with this University.

This distinction having been shown me once before, I hardly again expected to receive this expression of your esteem; and did it not appear to me that this deference on your part should be doubly appreciated, inasmuch as you selected me as your President during my absence from the Hill and when there were others who might claim your attention, the duties incumbent upon me at this time, as a member of the graduating class, would undoubtedly incline me to decline the acceptance of this office. Having considered it therefore, under the circumstances, my paramount duty to abide the result of your kind suffrages; I now return you my most sincere thanks for this appreciation of me.

To speak at any length to you of the condition of your Society, since this summer has been so frequently and ably referred to recently, I would consider not only preposterously absurd. All Therefore