for the more successful discharge of our duties in life or the more expedient performance of active business in the world. Compounding speaking and debating are all productive of
good improvement when properly regarded. As to composition
and speaking, I would here only observe that to compose well
it would not be amiss to attend to the directions of Horace
who condemns the writer that composes mirths in little time and
follows "Variae Smylum" by which is intimated the necessity of time
spend in arranging the subject at which one writes and in ex-
cluding of improper words to express our ideas with force, precision
or elegance. And to speak well due regard should be had
in the selection of phrases and suitable attention to the
decline of natural emphases which informs us with the sense of
the subject and brought us to speak with vehemence.
Debating is a source of great improvement in itself and should
be more especially prized and attended to by us because we can
enjoy it only here in this hall. I would not in general
recommend writing and memorizing debates. But I would
have you study your subjects of debate maturely, and
attentively, having the questions, make yourselves acquainted
with its principles, and when called upon in the debate
order into the merits of the discussion with becoming zeal
and animation. To engage in a regular course of reading
during a collegiate course is not for us to be recommen-
ded, as the small knowledge of history which would be
acquired in the intervals of leisure that could be devoted to
reading without neglecting the studies of College, or exercising
of Society would make but a partial instruction in
mind. This remark should not however be understood
to exclude due attention to useful essays or the reading of
good authors on various subjects of common information
especially such as may have connection with our social
exercises or as may assist us in writing compositions or preparing debates.