To the Public.

I take this method of making a few statements in explanation of the course pursued by me in connection with the recent duel. I can say, with a clear conscience, that I was fully impressed with the responsibility which was attached to my position. I knew that upon one unguarded expression, or one imprudent act of mine, might depend the life of a fellow-being. I can also say that I was not actuated by any feeling of enmity towards the late Dr. Wilkings. We had been born and reared in the same community, and though not intimate friends, we had never had any personal difficulty in our lives. I can say, too, that Mr. Flanner made the declaration before he left town, as he did on the field after the second fire, that he did not desire to take the life of his opponent, and that he hoped a fair and honorable settlement would be made. For these reasons, I went upon the field with the full determination to accept any proposition for a settlement which I could regard as fair and honorable, and during the conversation which occurred after the second exchange of shots, I repeatedly said that I desired a fair and honorable settlement. By way of showing my willingness for such a settlement, I call attention to the fact, that, as the representative of the challenged party, my duty was simply to receive and consider such propositions as might be made by the challenging party, and such is the course usually pursued by persons when placed in the same position, and yet I went beyond my duty by making the proposition for a withdrawal for a specific purpose, as set forth in the card signed by me and published by Mr. Walker in the *Journal* of yesterday.

I deem it due to the public to state, that the first mention which was made of a settlement was immediately after the first fire, when Dr. James F. McRee, jr., who was acting as the surgeon for both parties, remarked that he hoped the difficulty could now be settled, as the parties had taken one fire. Whereupon, I turned to Mr. W. M. Walker, who was the representative of the other party, and asked him the question, in the presence of all the parties: "What have you to say, Mr. Walker?" To which he immediately replied as follows: "Well, sir, we still occupy our former position; you must retract and apologize for your card." I then said, "Is this all you have to say?" He answered, "Yes." And then I said, "We have no retraction or apology to make." We then loaded the pistols and the second fire was made.

The object of this card is not to give a full account of all the facts which occurred upon the field; it is merely to state what is sufficient, and no more, to explain the course which I pursued upon the field. In conclusion, I will say that the position taken by me with regard to a settlement was that I was willing to retract Mr. Flanner's card for a specific purpose, it being so expressed in writing, but that I would not make an unconditional retraction of his card.

I regret the necessity which compels me to publish even this much upon this subject.

O. P. Meares.

May 8, 1856.

The allegation in Dr. Wilkings' speech that the ticket of the opposition was composed of merchants who would not hesitate to sacrifice the public interests (quarantine, etc.) for the sake of a dollar brought out the publication of Mr. Flanner's card on the following day, that the statement was false, and that Dr. Wilkings knew it was false when he made it. Wilkings promptly challenged Flanner, whose first shot struck Wilkings' hat; the third penetrated his right lung and killed him instantly.