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From the New-Jersey Journal.

TO THE PUBLIC.

THE Trustees of the College of New-Jersey feel the painful task imposed upon them of stating to the public the material facts connected with a late combination of the students under their care to resist the regular authority of the institution. This statement, founded on the most impartial investigation, and drawn from sources the most authentic, they trust, deserve the entire confidence of the public.

The remote causes which have led to this event to be found in the pernicious principles and loose manners of some vicious youths who have obtained admission into the institution; and still more, perhaps, the almost unlimited allowance of money, or of credit, given to many others, and which, in a society of young men, whose passions are not yet corrected by experience and reflection, are so apt to corrupt the mind originally the most innocent. And although the dangerous and unlawful practice of introducing liquors into the College, and of frequenting taverns and other places of entertainment, at late hours of the night, was known or believed to be common among a portion of the students, yet direct positive evidence of these facts could be obtained only against a few who were immediately dismissed from the society. For the more bold and artful offenders, who, by their very boldness commonly render themselves popular among their associates, had too successfully established among them this false but plausible principle, that, to give testimony against a fellow student, however gross his vices or faults might be, was in the highest degree dishonourable. Evidence, therefore, against this class of students, which an act of discipline could be founded, must depend entirely on the vigilance and personal observation of the Faculty themselves. And though they possess much the smallest class, yet were they able, under the protection of this principle, frequently to give disturbance to the order of the College, at distant periods during the late session; and towards the close of it, their insolence, assumed a bolder tone, and windows of the room of one of the tutors who had been the cause of the detection and punishment of some of them, were broken. Attempts had been made at midnight to destroy certain convenient buildings, belonging, and contiguous to, the college, the small building was actually consumed by fire. They were informed that, although the Faculty possessed authority to punish, except on clear and positive proof, yet that the Trustees, whose property the college is, and who were to assemble in a few days, would send away all those students whose presence they deemed dangerous to the institution; and the misconduct of some of them had now rendered it a matter of interposition of that power a measure of indispensable necessity. Those who were most conscious of being exposed to the exercise of that power, which was the last resort of the discipline of the College, from the moment, as has appeared since by the confession of several of the students, planned a combination to resist the authority of the house, and thus to screen themselves, or to diminish their own disgrace, by inducing others in their fate. This combination was formed, and brought into immediate operation by an appeal to the Faculty suspending three of the students, and soliciting certain officers of the College in the discharge of their duty, or for other practices contrary to the laws, and clearly ascertained. One of these gentlemen, especially, was popular among his associates. Many of the more orderly students, and some even deserved praise for their regularity and diligence, were induced to enter into this combination on the notion that it was honourable to come forward in defence of a fellow student; and, as some of them have since declared, from a belief that a numerous and firm association would induce the Faculty to retract their act, and yield to the wishes of the association without producing any further disturbance. They were probably, no apprehension of the violent effects which the excited passions of such a number of young men who had once thrown themselves loose from the restraints of law. Many have said that they believed more was designed than a respectful petition to the Faculty, requesting them to review their proceedings in the case of the last mentioned young gentleman, and under this impression signed without reading the remonstrance which was presented. But the object in this combination had the address to express a remonstrance, which was drawn up under the name of a petition, such language as could not be rejected by the government of the College. It contained an imperious demand, which is not even detest-

ed by a few modest expressions accompanying it, to reinstate all the suspended persons in their former honourable stations in the College, under a name, of no equivocal meaning, if their application should be rejected. It contains, further, a most indelicate requisition to certain members of the Faculty to retract expressions which, probably, for the particular purpose of the combination, had been reported among the students, to have been uttered by them. And, finally, in the pretended petition, they, in effect, erected themselves in a tribunal to re-judge the decisions of the government of the institution. It was couched in the following terms. Common sense is sufficient to interpret their meaning:—

To the Members of the Faculty of the College of New-Jersey.

GENTLEMEN,  
The students of the institution, fully satisfied that the procedure of its officers has been inconsistent with the principles of justice, or that they have proceeded precipitately in their decision of the cases of Messrs. Hyde, Metteau and Cumming, do respectfully request the reinstatement of these gentlemen in their former honourable stations. They humbly conceive that the members of the Faculty have not made those nice inquiries into their several cases, and have depended solely on the representations of a few who are probably prejudiced against the individuals, or who have formed erroneous conceptions of their general mode of conduct. They therefore request an immediate answer to this petition, since their future proceedings will greatly depend upon the propriety or impropriety of their decision. They, in addition to this, moreover request the members of the Faculty to retract or contradict certain expressions which have been thrown out by them, tending materially, in their own estimation and that of the community, to the destruction of their reputations, individually; such expressions being, in their opinion, destitute of the stamp of truth.

This paper was presented to one of the professors, in the name of the students, by a committee of nine. The Faculty immediately consulted with the only member of the corporation who resided in the vicinity of the college, on the measures proper to be pursued, and, in concurrence with him, determined on such as were at once decided and prompt, and, in their opinion, both necessary and temperate. The students being previously assembled in the public hall, it was represented to them that the laws, those laws which, at their admission into the College, and at the commencement of each session, they had solemnly pledged their truth and honour to obey, had foreseen and provided against such combinations as the present, in which a great proportion particularly to this case is in the following words:—"If any clubs or combinations of students shall, at any time take place, either for resisting the authority of the College, or interfering in its government, or for concealing or executing any evil or disorderly design, every student concerned in such combination shall be considered as guilty of the offence which was intended; and the faculty are empowered and directed to break up all such combinations as soon as discovered, and to inflict a severer punishment on each individual than if the offence intended had been committed in his individual capacity, whatever be the number concerned, or whatever be the consequence to the College." On the ground of this law, the students were informed that nothing could be conceded to combination. On the contrary, if those who were concerned in this transaction did not return to their duty, and renounce the principle of uniting together to control the government of the College according to their humours, they would render themselves liable to be immediately suspended. Every argument was used to induce them to a proper conduct, and time was offered them to reflect on the part they had to act. But their leaders had their minds already prepared. One of them rose, and said they had all concurred in the same resolution, and they would not retract any thing they had done. He left the hall, and the rest followed him with great tumult and disorder. The faculty then pronounced the sentence of suspension on all who had departed in this irregular and tumultuous manner. The more thoughtless and intemperate among them were proceeding to acts of considerable violence, and still greater were threatened; but, by the prudent precautions which were employed, no serious injury was done to the College edifice.

That this combination did not originate entirely from sympathy with the young gentlemen on whose account ostensibly it was chiefly formed, but had a deeper root, and probably the same which has already been pointed out, appears from the following considerations: in the first place, the combination was much too extensive and violent for the occasion; for, although three persons are named in the remon-

strance as unjustly suspended, yet one of these is understood to have been the object of their principal concern. But, in the next place, if this were not so, and all the three stood equally high in the estimation of their fellow students, it was well known that the Board of Trustees was called to meet in a few days, and they were informed that to them lies an appeal from every sentence of the Faculty by any student who thinks himself aggrieved. To this tribunal, therefore, they would have had recourse if their pretensions had been sincere; if, indeed, the combination and revolt had not been previously resolved on by a great part of them, for other causes than those mentioned in the remonstrance. Lastly the young gentleman himself, whose fate is said to have given the chief occasion to the combination; in a letter addressed to the trustees, renounces the principle of combining among the students for attaining any object from the government, and condemns the whole proceeding in his own case.

The Trustees of the college convened on the 8th of April. Shortly after their meeting a paper was presented to them signed by six persons as a committee on behalf of the combination, and desiring to be heard before the board in that character. The trustees directed this paper to be returned to them with an intimation that they could receive no committee who appeared in the name of students combined against the laws and government of the institution; but, if any student had any grievance to complain of in his own case, he should be heard. Some persons in consequence of this intimation appeared before the board, renounced the principle on which they had associated together to resist the lawful authority under which they were placed; and pledged themselves to future submission and obedience. Others, more resolute in error, openly avowed, in the presence of the board, the principle of combination and resistance, whenever they thought themselves, or a fellow student, aggrieved by any proceeding of the Faculty.—They spoke much of rights, comparing the college to a state of civil society in which the people if they are dissatisfied with the government, have a right to rise and resist, or even overturn it. This analogy would have been more perfect if they had founded the college, and appointed its officers; but since the college is the property of Trustees, and students reside in it only by permission, for their own improvement, and during good behaviour, this analogy is most absurd. Every student who is not contented with the administration of the laws, or the modes of instruction in the institution, has a right to withdraw from it; but while he remains in it, and subject to its laws, his right is obedience both by the nature of the thing, and his own solemn promises. He has surely no right to come to it only to violate its laws, and subvert its government.

The Trustees, after the most patient and diligent inquiry into all the circumstances of this insurrection, and taking into their most serious consideration the true and permanent interests of the institution, resolved by an unanimous vote, finally to expel eleven of those who, in their opinion, were the most prominent leaders in the disorder, and to dismiss without a public expulsion six whose improper conduct, in other respects, had rendered them unsafe members of such a literary and moral society. In regard to the residue, many of whom, through misrepresentation, misconception of the object of the combination, or menace, had been induced to join in it, the board, after confirming the sentence of the Faculty, thought proper still to leave the door open to their return to the college, upon their public and explicit renunciation of a principle which has led to such serious evils, and the manifestation of a proper penitence for their past faults.

Finally, letters were directed, on behalf of the board, to be addressed to the parents or guardians of the persons so expelled, dismissed or suspended, expressive of their regret at being compelled to adopt this apparently severe but necessary measure, and requesting such parents or guardians to co-operate in giving efficacy to the discipline of the college. A circular letter has also been addressed to the different colleges and universities of the United States, in which is annexed a correct list of the persons so expelled, dismissed, or suspended, that they may be apprised of the circumstances under which these young men have left the college, if any of them should apply for admission into any other institution.

And because dissipation has been found to be encouraged, and the spirit of insubordination emboldened, by an excessive allowance of money, or of credit, to many of the students, measures have been adopted, which will be laid before the public in a separate address, to restrain as far as may be in the power of the board, both these evils.

From the foregoing statement, of facts, the public will easily perceive, that the single alternative left to the trustees is either to govern their own institution by their own officers, or resign it to the government of insubordinate boys and passionate young men; when