

of Miro. Both were ambitious of the favor at court, with which the success of their undertakings would be rewarded; and hence they desired to keep as a secret the means by which the object was to be effected.

“In a dispatch addressed by Miro, on the eighth of January, 1788, to Valdes, the minister and secretary of state for the department of the Indies, writing of the plans of D'Argès, he says:

“‘I fear that they may clash with Wilkinson's principal object. In the first place, D'Argès having presented himself here with very little prudence and concealment, it may turn out that Wilkinson, in Kentucky, being made aware of the mission of this agent, may think we are not sincere, and that, endeavoring to realize his project without him, we use him merely as a tool to facilitate the operations of D'Argès. Under the impression that D'Argès may reap the whole credit of the undertaking, in case of success, it may happen that he will counteract them, for this reason I have been reflecting for many days whether it would not be proper to communicate to D'Argès Wilkinson's plans, and to Wilkinson the mission of D'Argès, in order to unite them, and to dispose them to work in concert. But I dare not do so, because D'Argès may consider that the great projects of Wilkinson may destroy the merit of his own, and he may communicate them to some one who might cause Wilkinson to be arrested as a criminal; and also because Wilkinson may take offense at another being admitted to participate in confidential proceedings upon which depended his life and honor, as he expresses himself in his memorial.’

“In the same dispatch he continues: ‘The delivering up of Kentucky into his majesty's hands, which is the main object to which Wilkinson has promised to devote himself entirely, would forever constitute this province a rampart for the protection of New Spain. \* \* \* \* The western people would no longer have any inducement to emigrate if they were put in possession of a free trade with us. This is the reason why this privilege should be granted only to a few individuals having influence among them, as is suggested in Wilkinson's memorial, because in their seeing the advantages bestowed on the few, they might be easily persuaded to acquire the like by becoming Spanish subjects.’

“Wilkinson, having remained several months at New Orleans, instead of returning to Kentucky by way of the river, sailed for Philadelphia, whence he proceeded to Richmond, Virginia, then the seat of government for the Kentucky district. From this point he addressed a letter to Gardoqui relative to the affairs of Louisiana, and, as he subsequently informed Miro, to sound him on his plans, and to divert his attention from himself, as he had been informed that his own reception at New Orleans had been the subject of comment by the Spanish minister.