

swerable, and no opposition was manifested in the course of the debates. It was conceded unanimously that the present connection was injurious to our interests, and that it could not last any length of time. Nevertheless, sir, when the question was finally taken, fear and folly prevailed against reason and judgment. It was thought safer and more convenient to adhere to the recommendation of congress, and, in consequence, it was decided that the people be advised to elect a new convention, which should meet in the month of November.<sup>1</sup>

“ ‘To consolidate the interest and confirm the confidence of our friends, to try our strength, to familiarize the people with what we aim at, to dissipate the apprehension which important innovations generally produce, and to provoke the resentment of congress, with a view to stimulate that body into some invidious political act which might excite the passions of the people; *these are the motives which influence me, and on which I rely for my justification.*’

“ Wilkinson’s solicitude for the measure at length became so apparent that it excited the suspicions of the people. *But, judicious in the selection of his agent—adroit in pushing others forward, while he, the arch-mover, concealed himself behind the screen of secrecy, corresponding monthly with the Spanish authorities, and forwarding volumes of plans and information respecting affairs, not only in Kentucky, but throughout the United States, he presents an unparalleled success in the art of traitorous diplomacy.*

“ General Morgan was now actually in league with the Spanish authorities. He had accepted his grant; had surveyed the land, and laid out the town of New Madrid. It was a princely donation, extending from the mouth of the St. Francis to [the] point [called in French] Cinque Hommes [Five Men], embracing from twelve to fifteen million of acres. Already had fifty adventurous settlers planted themselves in this garden of the western wilderness. But the settlement presented a serious impediment to Wilkinson’s progress. It was too near the scene of his own operations not to become familiar with his intrigues; besides it was known that the town had been purposely established to intercept descending trade, for which reason it had been declared a free port of entry. ‘Probably,’ says Wilkinson to Miro,<sup>2</sup> ‘it will destroy the noble fabric of which we have laid out the foundation, and which we are endeavoring to complete.’

“ ‘I am informed,’ he continues, ‘that Morgan intends visiting you as soon as he shall have finished the survey of the lands conceded to him. Permit me to supplicate you, my esteemed friends, not to give him any knowledge of my plans, sentiments, or designs. It is long since he has become jealous of me; and you may rest assured that, in reality, he is not well affected toward our

<sup>1</sup> Gayarre’s history of Louisiana, vol. iii., p. 227.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. iii., p. 244.