

She desired much to accompany me to your house, but we have compromised by my consenting that she shall meet me at Belpré on the 1st of October."

Late in the month of August, Colonel Burr, accompanied by Colonel De Pestre and Dudley Woodridge, junior, presented themselves at Blennerhassett's hospitable mansion. Regarding the contemplated expeditions Colonel Burr, as is said, made the following statements :

"From information received from reliable sources, he was induced to believe that the sentiments of a respectable majority of the people of Orleans and Mississippi territories were disaffected to the [United States] government; that such was the dissatisfaction of the people, unless early measures were adopted to prevent it, they would fling themselves into the arms of any foreign power which should pledge itself to protect them. \* \* \* \* So far as he was personally concerned, he had no further interest in the event than of a speculative character. The people, however, should be advised, lest they should be unexpectedly involved in a crisis for which they were unprepared.

"The separation of the western from the Atlantic states, he assured them, was no new project. It was a subject of daily discussion at the seat of government, and by some of the heads of department; that it was seriously apprehended the mal-administration of the government might precipitate the event much sooner than it was desired or expected. So thoroughly disgusted were the people of New Orleans with the conduct of the administration, both with reference to themselves, and as to Spanish-American affairs, that *he expected to hear of their beginning a revolt by seizing on the bank and custom-house and appropriating to themselves the revenues and forces of the territory. Even then, he declared, there was a society of young men in New Orleans, denominated 'The Mexican Society,' who had seized and shipped a number of cannon belonging to the French, for a Mexican invasion, and that while there but a short time previous, he himself had been solicited to become their leader.*

"With the questions of a war with Spain, and the separation of the western from the Atlantic states, Burr declared he had no concern; but, in any event, neither would interrupt his enterprise; nor would they be adverse to his own views, let them precede or follow his own undertaking.

"He assured Blennerhassett that he was advised as to the views of the administration; that the expulsion of the Spaniards from the American territory then violated by them, or even an invasion of Mexico, would be pleasing to Mr. Jefferson, *if either could be effected without a declaration of war against Spain, which was now prevented by parsimony on the one hand, and dread of France on the other.*"<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Blennerhassett papers. By William H. Safford, pp. 122, 123, 124, 125. Memoirs of my own times. By General James Wilkinson, vol. ii., p. 315; appendix, doc. xcii.