

ment of the United States. Colonel Burr is at their head, and the young gentleman, who delivered you the letter last evening, is one of his emissaries."

"*He has brought me a letter from Colonel Burr, which, being in cypher, I have not yet been able fully to make out, but I have discovered that his object is treasonable, and that it is my duty to oppose him by every means in my power. He assures me he has funds; says the navy is with him; offers to make me second in command, and to give the officers of the army anything I may ask for them; and requests me to send a confidential friend to confer with him at Nashville, Tennessee. In fact, he seems to calculate on me and the army as ready to join him.*'

"I then asked the general whether he had received any information or instruction on this subject from [the] government. To which he replied, that he had not, and that he must therefore adopt such measures as in his judgment were best calculated to defend the country. He said he would immediately march to the Sabine, and endeavour to make such terms with the Spanish commander as would justify him in removing the greater part of his force to the Mississippi; and that the moment this should be effected, he would send me to New Orleans in a light barge, with orders to secure the French train of artillery at that post, and to put the place in the best possible situation for defence, and that he would follow, with every man that could be spared from Natchitoches, with all possible expedition.

"He told me that he would give the information he had received to the president of the United States, and solicit particular instructions for his government, but, as delay might prove ruinous, he would pursue the course before suggested, as the only means in his power to save the country until the pleasure of the president could be known."

"It must be remarked," as General Wilkinson guilefully narrates, "that Burr's letter to me gave me no distinct information of his designs, nor any specific account of the means to be employed, but referred me to Swartwout: it therefore became my duty to draw from the emissary all the information I could of the real designs of his principal that I might advise the executive [officer of the United States] thereof, to enable him to provide the means necessary to defeat it.

"This was a work requiring much delicacy and caution; a work, too, which I abhorred, from the indirection it imposed on me. If, by proceeding too precipitately I had alarmed Swartwout, my object would have been defeated; besides, *after the insidious manner in which Burr had conducted himself towards me, I could not place full faith in the frankness and candour of the emissary, tutored and instructed by such a master. It was therefore necessary to converse with him at different times; mould my enquiries into different shapes,*