

of the dread secrets his acuteness had drawn from that agent of treason. Governor Claiborne, too, addressed the meeting, exhorting every citizen to stand to the defence of a country toppling on the verge of ruin. The volunteer battalion offered its services; its ranks were swelled by hundreds of recruits; and, dividing itself into companies, it paraded by day and patrolled by night, giving the city the appearance of a garrisoned town. New stockades were constructed in all directions. A party of sixty men were stationed at a point some distance above the city, and ordered to stop and thoroughly overhaul every descending craft."¹

Erick Bollman, the German physician, from whom General Wilkinson had received a letter inclosing two communications in ciphers from men interested in the enterprise, was arrested on the fourteenth of December and confined by his orders. Doctor Bollman's association no doubt greatly disturbed the general's thoughts, for he knew most, if not all, the particulars relating to the heroic and unsuccessful attempt made at Olmutz, Austria, by the distinguished Hanoverian, and Francis Kinloch Huger, a patriotic American, on the eighth of November, 1794, to effect the release of the Marquis de Lafayette from unjustifiable imprisonment.

On the sixteenth of December application was made to Judge Workman of the county of Orleans for a writ of *habeas corpus*, in behalf of Samuel Swartwout and Peter V. Ogden, who had been arrested at Fort Adams, on the Mississippi, about thirty-five miles south of Natchez, also by the order of General Wilkinson, and were then on board of a bomb-ketch, or small vessel carrying mortars, anchored before the city of New Orleans.

"Judge Workman immediately granted the writ, and called on Governor Claiborne to inquire whether he had assented to General Wilkinson's proceedings. Governor Claiborne replied that he had consented to the arrest of Doctor Bollman, but that his mind was not made up as to the propriety of that of Ogden and Swartwout. Judge Workman then expatiated on the illegality and evil tendency of such measures, beseeching Governor Claiborne not to permit them, but to use his own authority, as the constitutional guardian of his fellow-citizens, to protect them; but he was answered that the executive had no authority to liberate those persons, and that it was for the judiciary to do it if they thought fit. Judge Workman added that he had heard that General Wilkinson intended to ship off his prisoners; and if this was permitted writs of *habeas corpus* would prove nugatory.

"From the alarm and terror prevalent in the city, the deputy-sheriff could procure no boat to take him on board of the ketch on the day the writ was is-

¹ The life and times of Aaron Burr. By James Parton, vol. ii., pp. 82, 83.