

"I could not have supposed that you would have completed the catalogue of your crimes by adding to the guilt of *treachery, forgery, and perjury* the accomplishment of cowardice. But every succeeding day presents you in a new light to the public, and plunges you still deeper in crime and ignominy. Having failed in two different attempts to procure an interview with you, such as no gentleman of honor could refuse, I have only to pronounce and publish you to the world as a coward and poltroon.

"One more word before I take my leave. This is a critical moment in the life of your excellency. Your reputation is gone forever, and your life totters on the verge of dissolution. As you cannot pretend to the esteem of any man living, you should have sought a momentary reputation in the applause of even your enemies. *You should have been brave, and died like a man.* Your enemies would then have forgotten the wrongs you had done them. Your country would have been appeased, and even *Judas* forgiven. You should have considered that there is some small merit in even a villain's bravery; it was all you were supposed to possess this side of the grave. You should have made much of it; it might have served to wipe away some portion of the stain which your treachery and turpitude have fixed upon your character.

S. SWARTWOUT."<sup>1</sup>

"Richmond, 21st October, 1807.

The imputations of General Wilkinson's guilt of treachery, forgery, and perjury were not effaceable from the public mind. There was a fixed belief that his artful dissembling, numerous subterfuges, pretentious truth-telling, and blatant patriotism might be advantageous to him as long as he could possibly conceal from the people at large the knowledge of his traitorous transactions with Spain's accredited agents and the spuriousness of his loyalty to the United States. It was generally conceded that there would come a time when his faithless conduct toward those whom he had inveigled into his plots and covertly used for their furtherance would bring upon him the obloquy it merited, and present him as he had been for many years a traitor and conspirator. The unsuppressible character of these current imputations concerning his being in the pay of Spain, and being the instigator of the projects which had disgraced Aaron Burr, caused charges to be brought against General Wilkinson, in 1811, of that purport, for which he was tried by court-martial. The evidence adduced at the trial was found insufficient to convict him, and that which would have then branded him forever as a traitor and conspirator was not at that time accessible, although it was afterward discovered and published.

<sup>1</sup> Reports of the trials of Colonel Aaron Burr. By David Robertson, vol. ii., pp. 446, 447; 535. The Blennerhassett papers. By William H. Safford, pp. 422, 423; foot-note, pp. 459, 460.