

## CHAPTER X.

### THE SERVICES OF A FRIEND.

1808, 1812, 1836.

THE necessity which compelled Aaron Burr to borrow large sums of money to defray the expenses of his trials for treason and a misdemeanor did not apparently diminish the ardor of an urgent desire to become a titled ruler of a trans-Mississippi state or kingdom. While still in the gloom of the humiliating ordeal at Richmond his irrepressible imagination failed not to picture a near future in which he should enjoy the political distinction which his inordinate ambition made him constantly crave.

Writing under the date of October 4, 1807, at Richmond, Harman Blennerhassett records in his diary the following incidents :

“ I called on Burr this morning, when he mentioned to me during a short *tête-à-tête* that he was preparing to go to England ; that the time was now auspicious for him ; he wished to know whether I could give him letters. I answered ‘ that I supposed when he said England he meant London, as his business would probably be with people in office ; that I knew none of the present ministry, nor did I believe I had a single acquaintance in London.’ He replied, ‘ he meant to visit every part of the country, and would be glad to get letters to any one.’ I said that I would think of it ; that I might discover whether I had any friends there whom it would be an object worth his attention to know, and took leave.

“ Thus it is this strange man continues to expose his inconsistency with himself rather than lay aside the mysterious mask with which he has ever sought, and still continues, to disguise his very hints, a practice, I believe, he has not departed from in any instance, from Wilkinson down to myself. We can only conjecture, therefore, his designs.

“ For my part, I am disposed to suspect he has no serious purpose of reviving any of his speculations in America, or even of returning from Europe, if he can get there. His anxiety to elude his creditors is, I believe, occupation enough for his energies, which are little, except in his reveries. Out of them