

of the principals were the more culpable, it was Hamilton; for he was the aggressor, and a few words from him might have prevented the meeting. But thoughtful men will find the real culprit in the barbarous blood-thirsty public opinion of the day, that made such Golgothas as that at Weehawken both necessary and honorable. The challenge was given and accepted. With the result of that meeting the world is acquainted. Burr escaped unharmed, the ball from his adversary's weapon, cutting the twigs near his head. Hamilton received a mortal wound, from which he died after thirty-one hours of intense suffering.*

The popular clamor that then arose against Burr, unjust and indecent as it was, made a temporary retirement from New York necessary, and early in July he set out on a southern tour, visiting his daughter, Theodosia, at her home at the "Oaks," and spending several weeks with old political friends in South Carolina and other southern States; from this tour he returned at the sitting of Congress, in the fall of 1804, to resume his duties as President of the Senate, as before related.

In the spring of 1805, Col. Burr set out on a six months' tour through the western and southern States. On his return, he commenced preparations for the execution of one of the most brilliant and stupendous plans of empire ever conceived. What that plan was, we, in the light of later developments, are enabled definitely to determine.

In a few words, he proposed to wrest Mexico—ignorant, oppressed and degraded—from the rule of the hated Spaniard, and to rear there an empire of progress and civilization, with himself at its head. This plan was perfectly feasible. War with Spain seemed inevitable. The bent towards southwestern acquisition in this country was large. The Mexican people were ripe for revolt, and at the first unfurling of his standard on the Mexican frontier, Burr might safely have counted on enrolling a band of gallant adventurers drawn from every quarter of the land. With this army he proposed to invade the country, and after a short and brilliant campaign, Mexico would have been his. Then what?

Pen can scarcely portray the unrivalled future which would have been Mexico's, had Burr been "let alone" to realize his

* The writer, in what has been said, has no desire to belittle the talents or services of Alexander Hamilton, but since, in the effort to make him a demi-god, it was found necessary to paint Aaron Burr in the lurid colors of the pit, both justice and truth demand that the above facts should be stated.