

and to our Most Holy Father, whose authority and rights are vulnerated, according to my opinion, and that, without favouring the Episcopal authority. All this, as your prudence will suggest, requires the greatest secrecy; and with the same, I will communicate to you every circumstance, as it shall take place, that may contribute to direct our proceedings for the future.

God preserve, &c.

Most Illustrious Sir, &c.

(Signed)

P. Archbishop of Nicea.

To the Most Illustrious Dean and Chapter
of the Holy Church of Malaga.

Cadiz, March 5, 1813.

(2.) Most Serene Lord,—The Nuncio of his Holiness has heard in the greatest bitterness of his heart, that your Highness is on the eve of circulating and publishing the Manifesto and Decree of the August Congress, in which his Majesty declares the tribunal of the Holy Inquisition to be incompatible with the Political Constitution of the Monarchy, and substitutes another which may, according to wise and just laws, protect the Catholic Apostolic Roman Religion, the only true one, which exclusively of all others, his Majesty has so piously sanctioned. No one, even among the native Spaniards, feels more respect than I do towards that August Congress, nor will any one exceed my punctuality in obeying its wise commands. But the subject in question belongs to the Church, and is of the greatest importance, and of a very highly important nature, as one in which Religion is concerned, and from which it may suffer irreparable injury. A Tribunal is going to be suppressed or abolished, which was established by the Holy Father in the exercise of his Primacy and Supreme Authority over the Church, for objects purely spiritual, as the preservation of the Catholic Faith, and the extirpation of Heresies, thereby leaving without effect the power which his Holiness had delegated to that tribunal. In such a case, and being enjoined to me by the brief of my legation to make the greatest possible exertion in all things concerning the Catholic faith, and the Holy Roman Church, as also to do whatever I may find to be, in favour of the Church; and for the consolation and edification of the people, and the honour of the Holy See, I should be wanting to all these sacred duties, if, with the greatest respect as well as with the Christian Liberty of an Apostolic Legate and a Representative of the Pope, I did not state to your Highness, that the abolition of the Inquisition may be extremely injurious to Religion, whilst it actually wounds the rights and primacy of the Roman Pontiff, who established it as necessary and beneficial to the Church and the Faithful. What can henceforward prevent the diminution of that reverence and submission which all Christians owe to the decisions of the Vicar of Christ, the visible head of the Church, when in her very bosom, and during the holy sacrifice of the Mass, they shall be told, that a Tribunal established, kept up and defended for three centuries, under the sanction of the most severe penalties, by the Popes, is not only useless, but detrimental to Religion itself, and contrary to the wise and just laws of a Catholic Kingdom?—If his Holiness were free at the present moment, I should content myself with giving him notice of this event; but as He is, most unfortunately, kept in the captivity which we so much lament, I find it necessary and indispensable to protest, in his name, against an innovation of such influence in the Church of Spain, and which wounds the rights of the Supreme Pastor of the Universal Church, the Vicar of Jesus Christ; and trust that your Holiness, led by your well-known religious feelings and consummate prudence, will take the most effectual measures, in order that the August Congress, who so ardently desires to protect the Religion we profess, may be pleased to suspend the execution and publication of their Decrees, until, at some more happy period, the approbation or consent of the Roman Pontiff may be obtained, or, in his default, that of the National Council, whose peculiar province it is to regulate these religious and ecclesiastical matters. None of these considerations can escape his Majesty's wisdom; nor can his great piety take it amiss that I, in the exercise of my ministry, and with all the necessary secrecy and due sense of submission, should, through your medium, lay before His Majesty this most humble Petition, so intimately connected with the good of the Universal Church, and especially of the Church of Spain, the happiness of the Monarchy, and even the honour and prosperity of His Majesty; which is the object of my most ardent wishes, as well as of my incessant prayers to Heaven. God preserve, &c.

(Signed)

P. Archbishop of Nicea,

Most Serene Lord President, and
Supreme Council of Regency.

Nuncio of his Holiness.

Cadiz, March 5, 1813.

(3.) Most Illustrious Sir!—Sir, my most esteemed Brother.—I have thought that it became my office to remonstrate to the Regency, concerning the Decrees of the August Congress, which are ordered to be circulated and published, for the abolition of the Holy Inquisition; and also to give you this information, and let you know that the Chapter of this Cathedral, *sede vacante*, with the approbation of the Bishops resident in this town, are determined not to put the said Decrees into execution, without the previous