

Columbus, Rodrigo Perez, the lieutenant of the admiral, and other persons of note. Mass being ended, and those persons, with a multitude of the populace, being assembled at the door of the church, Bobadilla ordered his letters patent to be read, authorizing him to investigate the rebellion, seize the persons and sequester the property of delinquents, and proceed against them with the utmost rigor of the law; commanding also the admiral, and all others in authority, to assist him in the discharge of his duties. The letter being read, he demanded of Don Diego and the alcaldes to surrender to him the persons of Fernando Guevara, Pedro Requelme, and the other prisoners, with the depositions taken concerning them; and ordered that the parties by whom they were accused, and those by whose command they had been taken, should appear before him.

Don Diego replied that the proceedings had emanated from the orders of the admiral, who held superior powers to any Bobadilla could possess, and without whose authority he could do nothing. He requested, at the same time, a copy of the letter patent, that he might send it to his brother, to whom alone the matter appertained. This Bobadilla refused, observing that, if Don Diego had power to do nothing, it was useless to give him a copy. He added that, since the office and authority he had proclaimed appeared to have no weight, he would try what power and consequence there was in the name of governor, and would show them that he had command, not merely over them, but over the admiral himself.

The little community remained in breathless suspense, awaiting the portentous movements of Bobadilla. The next morning he appeared at mass, resolved on assuming those powers which were only to have been produced after full investigation, and ample proof of the malconduct of Columbus. When mass was over, and the eager populace had gathered round the door of the church, Bobadilla, in presence of Don Diego and Rodrigo Perez, ordered his other royal patent to be read, investing him with the government of the islands and of Terra Firma.