

observing the canons and following the example of his predecessors in similar cases; on the other hand by not sacrificing too lightly the consideration which he owed to the Emperor, to the Empress, to the Republic of Poland, to the King of Sardinia, to the Venetians, Genoese and to the King of Prussia, who did not demand the suppression; that although he had been threatened and made to fear, even for his life, it certainly was not fear which hindered him from giving satisfaction at once to the sovereigns of the House of France: but that he knew the laws and his duties, and that no human consideration could compel him to violate them; that he promised in advance to the three monarchs to approve what they had done in their States, concerning the Jesuits, and that they should be hindered from ever re-entering those countries; that he would ask the council of the clergy of those three kingdoms, and when he felt himself supported by the clergy of France, Spain, Naples and Portugal, then he might be able to work honorably and with some ground to stand upon."

From this letter it can be inferred that Clement XIV., in the early part of his pontificate, was quite averse to the suppression of the Jesuits, and that he hoped to arrange everything by sanctioning the measures, taken by the three powers, against the order.

But the three courts did not permit him to remain for a long time under the influence of this pleasing delusion. The ambassadors had taken occasion from the brief of July 12 to demand of the Pope their suppression, and the French government availed itself of this opportunity to let the Pope know that the three courts would not be satisfied with half measures, and that they were not at all disposed to grant him what had been refused to his predecessor. The language used by the Duke de Choiseul with the Nuncio at Paris, had a severity that was alarming. Let us hear this language from the Nuncio himself. The subject of the discourse was the celebrated brief of the 12th of July, concerning which the Duke de Choiseul asked an explanation. Not being satisfied with that given him by the Nuncio, he threw off all restraint and uttered threats which made the poor Nuncio tremble. "Then," he writes, "assuming that ministerial tone which at the present time is not unknown to your Eminence, he declared to me that the kings of France and Spain and the other princes of the house of Bourbon were not people to be trifled with; that after having led them to hope for the speedy suppression of a society which disturbed

the peace and quiet of the two sovereigns and which even compromised religion, no favor ought to be conceded to them; that His Majesty was tired of these temporizings, and in consequence had resolved to renew publicly through his ambassadors at Rome, his pressing solicitation that the Holy Father would totally suppress the company; and if he did not obtain it in six weeks to ask his passports, abandon the embassy and break relations openly; adding that even if the ministers of the other Bourbon courts, for want of instructions, would not join him in this determination, he would alone carry it out, *ad litteram*."

The instructions sent to the ambassadors at Rome were of the same date (Aug. 7) as that of the letter of the Nuncio, recounting the discourse held between him and the French minister. The solicitation which Cardinal Bernis was to make to the Pope was really an announcement in the name of his king. "You will say," the Duke de Choiseul wrote him, "that His Majesty has allowed the first moments of the pontificate to pass before renewing the demand that was made of Pope Clement XIII. for the abolition of the Jesuits; that he knew his excellent personal disposition to secure tranquillity for himself, for his State, and for religion; that the existence of this society of monks imperilled these objects; that all the States of the House of Bourbon are in the same situation; that His Holiness could not fail to regard the princes of this house as the strongest supporters of the Catholic religion, and it was just and reasonable that they should obtain from an enlightened Pope, whose good disposition they could not doubt, a satisfaction so essential to the happiness of their kingdom."

In his instructions, Bernis was directed to insist that the Pope should give to the king the most positive promises concerning this matter.

The time which the King of France conceded to the Pope for the suppression of the Jesuits was two months; if the suppression was not accomplished within that time, the ambassador was to ask for his passports.

This intimation had been made in August, 1769, that is to say, in the first day of the Pontificate of Clement XIV.; the suppression of the Jesuits was not effected until four years after! Before arriving at the final act the Pope had, however, by a series of acts, reassured the three courts as to his good disposition.

He had said very frankly to Bernis that overhaste would not enter into the principles of his conduct, and that no one