

matter. He further states, that the Chapter of this Church, *sede vacante*, had declined to execute the Decree; upon which he exhorts the Chapter of the Church of Malaga to adopt the opinion of all the Prelates (thus reckoning upon their disobedience,) and endeavours to persuade them, that, *by acting according to his advice, they would do an important service to religion, to the Church, and to our Most Holy Father, whose authority and rights he conceived to be vulnerated, without thereby favouring the Episcopal power.* It is also added, that he had thought it his duty to remonstrate (2), in the name of his Holiness, opposing the execution of such Decrees, until the Pope had given his consent or approbation; or, in defect of the Pope, the same were done by a national council; and he, finally, closed his letter with a promise of communicating to them, under the greatest secrecy, every circumstance, as it should take place, which might contribute to regulate their conduct for the future.

Copies of Letters have been also forwarded to me by the Rev. Bishop of Jaen (3) and the Chapter of Granada, *sede vacante*, (4)—similar to the above mentioned, and which, with the same object, and under the same date, were directed to them by the most Rev. Nuncio. From these it appears, that the said Nuncio, trampling on the first principles of international Law, overlooking the boundaries of his public mission, and abusing the veneration in which this pious people hold the Legates of the Apostolic See, has endeavoured to promote, and actually has promoted, under the cloak of Religion, the disobedience of some very respectable Prelates and Ecclesiastical bodies to the Decrees and Orders of the Sovereign Power. If the most Reverend Nuncio had only intended to act as a Legate of the Holy Father, and to avoid any expostulation, to which he might conceive himself exposed for his silence on the present subject, nothing obstructed his way to me through the medium of the Secretary of State. I might overlook his avoiding this regular and official means of communication, when he remonstrated as he thought proper upon the matter, and should have attributed the informality of the conduct which he chose to adopt, to inadvertency, or rather to an excess of confidence. I should have only paid attention to his arguments, and, with the advice of the supreme Congress, taken such Resolutions as the defence of the Holy Church and the temporal good of the State, demanded with one voice from me.

The justice of the national cause makes me feel quite confident that, had this been the case, I should have satisfactorily answered the note of the most Reverend Nuncio, and that I should have been found equal to meet those vague and common-place arguments, which the wisdom of the most August Congress has already defeated. His uneasiness would have been calmed when he should see that the abolition of the Inquisition can, by no means, either endanger Religion, or injure the rights of the Roman Pontiff; and that all the fears which he entertains, on that account, for the primacy of the Holy Father, and the supreme authority which he holds in the Church, are most vain and ungrounded. His qualms would have been allayed, concerning the impropriety which he seems to find in the circumstance of declaring to the people during the celebration of Mass, that a tribunal which was established, and for three centuries protected by the Popes, is useless, injurious, and contrary to the laws of the kingdom. In fine, he would have seen that the August Congress, in this purely political question, has acted in virtue of its sovereign authority, without injuring in any way whatever, the rights of the Holy Father, or, much less, those of the Catholic Church; so that they might, either now, or in future, be in need of the remonstrances of Nuncios or Councils.

But the private letters, which under the same date as the note, were written by the most Reverend Archbishop of Nieca, and the fact of his having mentioned therein that he forwarded a remonstrance to the Government upon the subject, are circumstances which clearly prove, that whilst he betrayed the secrecy which he himself recommended, he aimed not merely to avoid the charge of negligence in the fulfilment of his office, but rather to raise in the pious clergy of Spain, and by their means in the People at large, a distrust of the temporal authorities which he thus strove to decry; and to check their influence over a class of the State, the members of which, by reason of their conspicuous rank, ought to be true samples of subordination and obedience.

This unlooked-for behaviour of the most Reverend Nuncio, has compromised the honour of the National Congress, the security of the Kingdom, the authority of the Episcopal Order, the true rights of the Roman Pontiff, and the respect which is due to the Church. He, on the one hand acknowledges in his note the authority of the Cortes, whilst on the other, by means of a secret correspondence, he sows disaffection and insubordination amongst the Spanish Clergy. In the character of a public Envoy he makes application to the Supreme Government, claiming redress; whilst as an individual Prelate he spreads private letters tending to the discredit of that very Government. When addressing the Regency he conjures the zeal of the Ministers of Religion; and when speaking to those Ministers, he insults that same Religion, by making it a tool to foment the insubordination which it condemns. With the Government he assumes the character of a delegate of the Holy Father, who is thereby to be supposed incapable of making an ill use of his mission; with the subjects of that Government he becomes an intriguer, a secret agent ready to give them private intelligence of the progress of that disobedience, of which he is the promoter and fosterer. As a Nuncio of his Holiness, he affects an eager desire for the concord of the Empire and the Priesthood: as an Archbishop he strives to burst asunder the only bonds which keep them together.

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