

spiritual power was more completely subdued by the civil than in any other place beyond the Byzantine boundary. In the struggle for the inheritance of the Suabian emperors, the Sicilians resisted for centuries the anathemas and the arms of Rome, and the kings of the House of Aragon maintained themselves in defiance of excommunications which were almost perpetual, and of an interdict which lasted seventy years. In a country which had endured ecclesiastical isolation so long, the Papacy could not recover its influence when the dynastic strife was ended. The Kings of Sicily acknowledged no superior, but exercised all jurisdiction themselves, allowing no appeals, and holding under strict control the intercourse between Rome and the Church within the island. This system of undivided power, consolidated and codified under Ferdinand the Catholic, became known by the significant designation of the Sicilian Monarchy. It was established without a conflict, and without ostensibly derogating from the papal dignity, by the instrumentality of the fiction that the King was, in his own dominions, hereditary Legate of the Pope. The combination of legatine authority with the highest political office in the person of Wolsey was an expedient that bore close practical resemblance to this institution.

It was in 1515 that Ferdinand proclaimed himself the virtual head both of Church and State in Sicily—*cujus tam in spiritualibus quam in temporalibus curam gerimus*. In the following year Henry VIII. demanded that Leo X. would appoint his favourite minister Legate *a latere*. For three years he made the demand in vain. It was granted at length, and the appointment was justly described as the keystone of the Cardinal's position. Henry had too much of the instinct and of the passion of power to surrender willingly the advantage which it gave him. That advantage could be preserved only by close union with Rome, or by the exclusion of its authority. The intimate alliance with the Papacy through every vicissitude of political fortune which is characteristic of Wolsey's administration, actually prepared the way for