THE POPE AND FRANCE.

The Sovereign Pentiff has addressed the following important letter to his Eminence the Cardinal Archbishop of Bordeaux:

"They were singularly agreeable to Us, the letters that you addressed Us on the 26th of July, for they gave Us a fresh proof of your affection and of your constant solicitude for the two interests which We have most at heart, the good of the Church and the good of France. Assuredly, according to your detailed description of the present state of your country, We have recognised with joy that the efforts for concord and peace are daily multiply ing. This is what Our letters, renewed at such frequent intervals, had recommended to all men of heart and conscience. We regard as a happy pressge what appears to be the case to day namely, that the voice of reason is beginning to triumph over the false opinion admitted by certain men who seemed to consider the Church as absolutely the enemy of the prosperity of the country. We see returning to more moderate points of view both the most intelligent minds and the men of the people whom their laudable simplicity naturally leads to more equitable appreciations. This fact gives Us reason to hope that the happy and longed-for time is approaching when peace will be solidly established, and when the French nation will be able to unite its scattered forces and utilise them for the common weal.

But in spite of the joy with which We note these new tendencies, We cannot conceal Our feeling of pain and and profound disapproval at the audacity of some men, putting themselves forward as Catholics and attached to the religion of their ancestors, allow themselves to be carried away by the spirit of party to such a point that they do not hesitate violently to attack, by insulting and public written utterances, the highest dignitaries of the Church, not even sparing the Supreme Pontiff in their bitter criticism. It would, indeed seem that these writers, must feel the impossibility of obtaining anything by these tactics for the political cause that they defend, find themselves sufficiently recompensed for their work if they can delay or interrupt by such action the results of our efforts, and thus paralyse the healthy condition of those persons who, weary of the struggle, in-cline towards peace. Thus, as if they feared that that which can bring safely to France may realised, they prefer to see the children of same family in discord one with another, and prolonging the battle of brothers to the great detriment of the Fatherland and religion.

"And yet, in truth, no one could find obscure or ambiguous the thought in our mind when, inspired by the duties of Our sacred ministry, we addressed to the French nation Our first exhortation of good will and paternal affection. A prolonged experience has clearly taught Us that the state of the country is so changed that in the present condition of France it does not appear possible to return to the old form of power without passing through grave perturbations. The Catholic religion, which many—quite wrongfully, however-regard as the cause of annoying divisions, was in danger of running great risks and the Church was exposed to vexations which became daily more and more acute. This situation was so evident that it could escape no one.

"We moved by this state of things-We, whose duty it is to sustain that which can best ensure the safety of religion—aithough We knew that it is permitted to no one without temerity to impose limits to the action of Divine Providence as to what concerns the future of nations—but with no thought at any time of wounding private sentiments, to which all respect is due, We, nevertheless, could not allow some men, led away by the spirit of party, to don, as it were, the buckler of religion to be armed the better in their opposition against the power now so long established. Of these attempts no useful result could be expected, but rather consequences very unfavourable for the Church.

"For this reason We, considering the importance of the situation, and in order that religion in its august majesty should not be mixed in the struggles of human passion or the deceptive complications of politics, but wishing rather that it should guard its place, as it should, above all human incidents, we appealed to all French citizens. men of heart and equity, to persuade them to recognize and loyally preserve the Constitution of the country as it is established, and, forgetful of old quar rels, to work energetically that justice and equity might preside over the laws, that respect and the conditions of true liberty might be insured to the Church, and that thus, in common fraternal effort, they might provide for the prosperity of the common Fatherland.

"As this was the whole bearing of Our thought and acts, it is both unfortunate and absurd that it should meet with anyone, who boasting that he has more solicitude for the Church than We ourselves, arrogates to himself the right of speaking in its name against the teachings, instructions, and prescriptions of him who is at once the protector and the Head of the Church. We believe in truth that these men, whose conduct is both so rash and so unworthy, cannot find in France among the true children of the Church anyone of their opinion will follow their example. For we esteem as true sons of the Church those who know how to make without difficulty, for the very superior good of religion and the Fatherland, secrifice of their sentiments and private interests. We cannot doubt that the docility and solid virtue of such as these will be amply recompensed by God, and that all bonest men will approve them and praise them as they deserve. In these circumstances, We grant you from the bottom of our heart, our very dear son, you and your clergy and the Faithful intrusted to your care, as gage of our special goodwill, our Apostolic Benedic-

"Given at Rome, at St. Peter's, the third day of August, 1893, in the six teenth year of Our Pontificate.

"LEO XIII., Pope."

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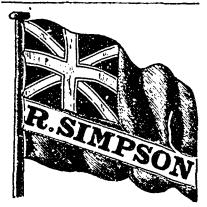
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