

FRANCESCO CRISPI (1819-1901)

AN ITALIAN STATESMAN AND PREMIER

FRANCESCO CRISPI filled the double role of statesman and soldier. In 1848 he was concerned in the revolution at Palermo and had to flee for his life. In 1859 he organized a new and successful movement, and went as major under Garibaldi in his invasion of Sicily. In the new Italian kingdom he became deputy and minister, and was prime minister of the kingdom 1887-91 and 1894-96; the Italian disasters in Abyssinia finally forcing him to resign. His powers as a statesman and his talent in oratory gave him great weight in the Italian governmental affairs.

THE RELATION OF THE POPE TO THE STATE

[At the unveiling of the Garibaldi monument at Rome during the fetes of 1895, Crispi delivered the principal oration. In his remarks he diverged from the main subject to define the relation of the Pope to the State.]

The enemies of Italian unity have endeavored to prove that the present celebration is an insult to the head of the Catholic Church. Their object is to excite conscientious scruples against our country. But the common sense of the people is proof against such tricks, because we all know that Christianity is a divine institution, which is not dependent upon earthly weapons for its existence. The religion of Christ preached by Paul and Chrysostom was able to subdue the world without the aid of temporal arms, and we cannot conceive that the Vatican should persist in wishing for temporal sovereignty to exercise its spiritual mission. The Gospel, as we all believe, is truth. If it has been disseminated by apostolic teachings, such teachings are sufficient for its existence.

It is not really for the protection and prestige of religion that our adversaries demand the restoration of the temporal power of the Holy See but for worldly reasons, from lust of power and from earthly covetousness.