

POPE LEO'S LETTER.

ROMA locuta est: causa finita est. As loving children in a foreign land are overjoyed on receiving a father's letter, so do the Catholic people of Canada rejoice to-day over the recent encyclical of their spiritual father. Their joy is twofold; first, because they see in this encyclical a pronouncement on the great federal issue which has disturbed Canada for the past seven years; and secondly, they rejoice in the inestimable advantage which will accrue to the Canadian nationality, by the fact of its being brought so prominently before the eyes of the world. It is surely a signal favor that the Sovereign Pontiff, acknowledged as the Master of his age, should deign to take particular notice of our Canadian questions, to make examination of our social weakness and inequalities, "to probe into the causes of our suffering and strife," that he may point out to us the remedies therefor. And yet, this loving solicitude is his usual course. Since his accession to the Papal throne, now twenty years ago, not only has he guided the Universal Church, but he has made himself familiar with the local questions that affect even the lowliest of the countries in which Catholics reside, and it has been well said, "that there hardly remains to-day a single church either in the east or in the west, to which his voice has not spoken, which has not received from his august lips, counsel and direction." It was only natural then that the people of

Canada, whose eyes for some months past have been eagerly turned towards Rome, should expect something great, something far more than ordinary, something prudent and at the same time heroic, from the Grand Old Man, of the Vatican, from him who stands forth acknowledged by the whole world, as one of the greatest theologians, one of the first and wisest men, one of the deepest thinkers and one of the coolest and best heads of the age. In this they have not been disappointed. Within the octave of the New Year chimes, has been addressed to them the letter, which they as dutiful children of mother church have yearned so long to possess. The authoritative voice of Leo has spoken, but with that prudence and foresight for which he is remarkable. As the representative of the "Prince of Peace," he forwards to the Canadian people at this auspicious season a message fraught with sound advice, the literal acceptance of which must redound to their final triumph. By it he shows himself the wise governor of the Church of God. Let us ponder on what a remarkable thing is the government and administration of the Catholic Church. It branches out into a thousand ramifications, it is brought home to every individual, to every house, to every parish; it ramifies all over the earth, but as a fruitful vine, which, no matter how it extends itself here and there, still is derived from one root from which it draws all its sap and richness, so the whole