



TEACHING IN FRANCE.

THE struggle which parents in France are now making for liberty of teaching inspired the Holy Father to bless the General Intention which is developed elsewhere in the present number. It is only fitting that our readers should take a special interest in that noble nation and pray for her during the crisis through which she is now passing. The Catholic world owes so much to that land of good works and zealous missionaries that we shall not ungratefully refuse France our earnest prayers during the danger of the present moment.

The personal right of parents to bring up their children the Church in France, as elsewhere, always upheld ; liberty to teach and to be taught is a tradition that was venerable a thousand years ago. But in the beginning of this century, Napoleon I. gave a tremendous blow to freedom of instruction when he founded the University of France. In the imperial decree, dated March 17, 1808, we may read : "i.) Public instruction throughout the Empire is given exclusively by the University ; ii.) No school or establishment whatsoever for teaching may be formed outside the University and without the authorization of its head ; iii.) No one may open a school or teach publicly without being a member of the Imperial University and a graduate of one of its faculties." And a decree, issued three years later, restricted still further the little liberty that was left a French parent to instruct his child.

After a desperate struggle for freedom in France, in which