

## THE FRENCH PRESIDENT.

La Forêt, (Marshal McMahon's country seat) is four leagues from Montargis, and as there is no railway from the latter place to Moncresson, the village adjoining La Forêt, visitors must do the leagues in a gig or on foot. If the September lasts, the host of the Inn de la Poste at Montargis may deem it worth while to set up a fly or two, but meanwhile the sixteen miles of road afford a good protection to the Marshal against importunate place-hunters, and this gladdens him, for he gets quite enough worry from the telegraph boys or Home Office couriers, who come pelting through Moncresson a dozen times a day with news more or less unpleasant. The Marshal contrives to be out shooting, if possible, when these bores arrive, and if any of them should wish to run him to earth among the colza or beetroot fields, they would have to run long and fast, for the hero of Magenta is one of those men who can set out with his gun at nine and be still potting away indefatigably at five, many hours after his two retrievers, his aide-de-camp, and the Marquis Améot, his neighbour and best sporting friend, have had enough of it. He is a taciturn sportsman and an excellent shot. Bred to the tricks of partridges from his earliest youth, he aims stolidly and knocks them over, or if, perchance, he misses once in a day, his chagrin finds vent in one of those round expletives which come very venially from an old soldier. For it must be remembered that the Marshal is emphatically an old soldier, and nothing but that—no politician, diplomatist, or mincer of words. He hates politics with a rueful sort of horror, which he confesses in his smileless way to all who talk with him; and though his friends have succeeded in persuading him that he has a saving mission to discharge, yet his presidentship constrains him to varieties of pomp which are most repugnant to his nature. He has never consented to be trammelled in private by the etiquette of a Court. In Paris he goes periodically on foot to have his hair clipped into bristles in the Rue Vivienne, and afterwards he likes to slip off and breakfast in a private room at Durand's or the Café d'Orsay. He is a great stickler for uniform—not quite to the point of utterly eschewing civilian's



MGR RACINE, R. C. BISHOP OF SHERBROOKE.

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY LIVERNOIS, OF QUÉBEC.

dress, like the late Marshal Castellane—but dons military undress in his study, puts on his kepi to go shooting, and of yore he used to make his old regimental overcoats do duty as dressing gowns, until two years ago, when he was stricken with rheumatism, the Duchesse pressed on his acceptance a genuine dressing gown, furled and lined with silk, which gorgeous vestment, however, he wore with sorrow and compunction, as tending to effeminacy. When the Marshal resigns himself to civilian's clothes his garments are stiff and dark, looking as if they had been cut by a pair of sword-bayonets tied together for scissors; and if he were privately asked what causes he considers conducive most to the lax discipline in the Army, he would probably allude despondingly to the long hair and the astonishing tartan waistcoats of Marshal Canrobert as having been at the root of a great deal of it. Such as McMahon is in externals so is he in the simplicity of his character and tastes. He is a plain eater, inclining to English, good, underdone roast beef and the like; he smokes hard, talks little, and grows frankly when displeased; he can play a smart rubber, ride fearlessly at a five-barred gate despite his sixty and six years; and he is a bluff, kindly landlord. At La Forêt he lives *en famille* with his children, several of the Duchesse's relatives, and his aides-de-camp, the Marquis d'Abzac, Colonel de Boye, M. de Vaulgremont, and the Prince de St. Winock. Most of his servants are old soldiers, but he keeps few of them loafing around his halls. When you reach the outer gate of the château there is not even a porter to stop the way, much less anything like a guard, so you push the gate open (it is half-covered with honeysuckles and white roses) and walk across the courtyard, which is planted with a tree or two, but is scarcely thirty yards long. To the left are the stables, to the right a lawn and flower-beds, facing you a short flight of steps leading to the front entrance. It is not a very seigneurial place, despite its venerable age, for many of the old towers have been demolished to make modern improvements, and the mixture of architectures forms a pile rather incongruous. Moreover, the apartments inside are all furnished in the latest Parisian style. But, such as it is, it



SHERBROOKE, P. Q.—THE ENTRY OF THE BISHOP.—FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY BLANCHARD, OF SHERBROOKE.