

RECANTATION.

Mr. Marter Takes His Bearings and Changes His Course.

An Address From the New Leader.

At a local meeting of Conservatives held the other evening, Mr. George F. Marter, the now leader of the Conservative party in the Ontario House, made the most important and the most sensational move that our local politics have known for many a day. The recent election in London was the theme of the address, and Mr. Marter confessed to have experienced a very sad disappointment over the result. One of the causes of failure he assumed to be his expression of his caudid sentiments concerning Separate schools. We opposed the *Times*'s report of his remarks:

On the abolition of the separate schools, Mr. Marter said that the views he had started at London and elsewhere had been given in all honesty. It was a pity they had ever been introduced into the Province. When holding those views other thoughts had come into his mind. After all, could the schools be abolished?

"I have been told by eminent legal lights," said Mr. Marter, "that it is utterly impossible to abolish them, and I ask. Is it worth while keeping up an agitation for agitation's sake?" What would be the ultimate result the speaker could not say.

If we cannot abolish that which has caused so much discussion," he continued, "is it worth keeping up agitation when that is all that can come of it?"

In the matter of teachers for the public and separate schools Conservatives wanted all to pass the same examinations, and Roman Catholics objected to this. Mr. Marter asked. "Is it our place to try and force it down their throats?"

He went on. "We say in the Local Legislature that the schools, public and separate, should be inspected by the public school inspector; he may be Protestant or Roman Catholic; we want one set of inspectors only. But we find our friends of the church opposed to us. We want the text-books the same: and we thought this would at least be a move in the right direction. But here are facts. We have been fighting this matter for about fifteen years, and what progress has been made on the question? I have no quarrel with my Roman Catholic friends, and we should pull together, eye to eye, towards the upbuilding of this province."

Mr. Marter then turned his attention to the situation down by the sea. In Nova Scotia, for instance, where separate schools had no right to exist by law, in districts where Roman Catholics were sufficiently numerous and asked for separate schools, the Protestant school commissioners always acceded to the request. Roman Catholics looked on the matter as a religious duty, and the commissioners consider the request a natural one.

"I say I don't think it wise to keep up an agitation on the question solely for agitation's sake," declared Mr. Marter. "I don't want to do it. I am speaking for myself." He suggested that a conference be called on the subject.

The Empire accepts the altered tone. It says:

"These schools exist as part of the bargain made in good faith at Confederation, and are engrafted in the constitution, so that an agitation to change the constitution is not warranted by any declarations ever made by the Conservative party in this Province, and could not be undertaken without the consent and approval of that party. Mr. Marter is wise in recognizing the plain facts of the situation."

Had the Empire been able to see the wisdom of such a course somewhat earlier in the day, much of heartburning might have been saved both to the

friends of the Conservative party and to the Catholics of this Province who have patiently borne the burden of personal abuse and interference with their private concerns. As it is the evil will perhaps not easily be undone. The *Hamilton Spectator*, one of the most important Conservative papers has the following protest against Mr. Marter's "new light":

"In the matter of separate schools. Mr. Marter professes to have had some new light. 'I have been told by eminent legal lights,' said Mr. Marter, 'that it is utterly impossible to abolish them, and I ask. Is it worth while keeping up an agitation for agitation's sake?' The answer to that question is obvious. It is not worth while keeping up agitation for agitation's sake. Nobody but a demagogue would do that. But there are many people—and many legal lights, too—who think that the separate schools could be abolished, and it might be worth while to carry on the agitation to a sufficient length to ascertain definitely and conclusively whether the schools could be abolished, or whether they are as firmly fixed as the Rocky Mountains. So soon as it is definitely ascertained that the separate schools cannot be abolished, so soon will the agitation cease. Might it not be worth while to carry the agitation to that point?"

The *Globe* says: "There can scarcely be room for two opinions on the suddenness of Mr. Marter's change of mind. It is doubtful if a more complete right-about-face has ever been recorded, and certainly the history of Canada for the past 40 years may be vainly searched for a parallel. The celerity of the change of front would easily be passed over did it not reveal to us what, of course, was before suspected, namely, the utter insincerity of Mr. Marter's conduct. It is impossible to credit Mr. Marter's changed attitude to a change of view. Is it possible to credit that a gentleman who has been as long in public life as Mr. Marter has been is only now making up his mind as to the position of the Separate School question? Is it possible to believe that a gentleman assuming the leadership of a great party presumed to make a deliberate public utterance on a vexed question of this kind while wholly ignorant of its elementary factors? Mr. Marter will scarcely be in a position to complain if the public answer these questions in the negative. He will not be in a position to complain if they believe he was willing to exploit the passions of intolerance in London, and it is only when he discovers that the people are overwhelmingly against such tactics that he indulges in a tardy and pusillanimous repentance. If Mr. Marter had sturdily maintained his position it would be possible to give him credit for sincerity, but his hasty abandonment of his policy after his defeat justifies the belief that Mr. Marter, for purely partisan purposes, was quite ready to disturb the peace of the Province, to put neighbor against neighbor, to plunge the people into bitter sectarian strife, over a matter upon which he himself had no convictions whatever."

In the South and West of Ireland very acute distress may be expected during the winter and spring. The potato crop has been a complete failure, and already the pinch of hunger is being felt by the small farmers and labourers, who largely depend on this crop for subsistence. Mr. Morley's visit to Donegal and also to the South is said to be in connection with the impending distress. It is hoped that relief works may be soon started, so that the poor people may be enabled to tide over the coming season.

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COERCION IN ITALY.

Some Account of Crispi's Methods.

Some little time ago in referring to the extraordinary measures taken by the present Italian Government to suppress opposition to its course, Mr. Labouchere in *Truth* was obliged to make this statement;

"If a man merely inculcates political opinions, he is not a fit subject for a prison cell, provided that these opinions aim at political change by legitimate means. If he seeks to subvert the Government of his country by revolutionary action, although he may be in the right and the Government in the wrong, the latter can hardly be blamed for punishing him. But such punishment ought to be in accordance with humanity."

It was the fashion before the time when the temporal power was wrested from the Papacy, to attribute all ills whatsoever that existed in Italy to the influence of the Church. In these days when whole provinces of the fertile and favoured peninsula are in a condition of the most abject misery we hear a great deal less of the story. To maintain the form of unity brought about with the accession of Victor Emmanuel, the country has been taxed into desperation to supply the means for reckless extravagance in naval and military matters, until now the military force which is said to be essential to the preservation of peace with other nations has to be diverted toward quieting the people. At the end of last year and at the beginning of this there were disturbances in Sicily. The people had organized themselves in a society known as the *Fasci* or "groups," each town and village having its own group, the organization being a very loose one, apparently without any recognized central directorate. The groups held public meetings to petition the King for a remission of taxation and for a more equitable distribution of its burdens, it being a notorious fact that the assessment for the taxes was so arranged that many of the more wealthy landlords escaped almost entirely from paying their proper share. King Humbert and his Queen were publicly displayed as a sign that what the agitators sought was not a revolution, but a reform that would make it possible for the peasantry and small farmers to live in some degree of comfort. Undoubtedly some of the Socialist leaders took advantage of the movement to preach their peculiar doctrines but in the main the movement was not Socialistic. The agitation found some echoes on the mainland, and the Government became alarmed. The meetings were forcibly dispersed.

Here and there the people broke out into riots, in which some blood was shed. On the mainland about the same time the Socialist leaders in the district Carrara called the quarrymen to arms, they being at the time discontented with their wages and general treatment. The riots around Carrara and the disturbances in Sicily were represented to be an insurrection, martial law was proclaimed, the reserves of the army were called up. Some of the coast towns of Sicily were bombarded by the fleet, and the Island was inundated with troops. At the same time Crispi took advantage of the general alarm to make wholesale arrests throughout Italy, and then passed through the Parliament a Coercion Bill that conferred upon him powers which make personal liberty in Italy and Sicily dependent on the goodwill of his agents and the officials.

One of the favorite methods of suppressing criticism is to order a person suspected of disagreement to take up his residence immediately in some remote part of the Kingdom or even out of the Kingdom. It is not difficult to form an estimate of the amount of misery this system causes, not only to

the person thus thrown out) of this employment and set down penniless and friendless in a new place, but to those who are dependant upon him for their support. Besides this the Italian prisons contain thousands of political prisoners, whose inhumane treatment has called forth the protest quoted from Mr. Labouchere.

Some of the political prisoners who crowd the fortresses are educated men, many of these being Socialists, who are charged with being Anarchists, though they protest they regard the party of violence as the enemies of all reform. Others are not even Socialists, but have committed the unpardonable crimes of exposing the tyranny of the tax-gatherers and tried to organize passive resistance to them among the poorer people. Others, again, are merely peasants and workmen who joined the Sicilian *Fasci* or were present at the meetings. All these are treated as common criminals, are for the most part kept in solitary confinement, in wretched cells, wearing the prison dress, and with their heads shaven, in order to mark them as guilty of crime. In many cases it is asserted that from week's end to week's end they are not allowed as much air and exercise as can be got by a tramp round the prison yard. The fortress prisons of Iachia are dangerously overcrowded, and the Government is going partly to clear them by deporting some hundreds of prisoners to the islands off that part of the Red Sea coast which is held by Italy. In some cases those who will be thus punished by deportation to one of the most desolate and deadly spots in the world will be real criminals, but in a vast number of cases they will be no more guilty than the political prisoners whom the Czar deports to Siberia. Press offences, presence at proclaimed meetings, resistance to the police, excited by their arbitrary proceedings, these are the crimes which Crispi, the ex Revolutionist, is punishing with the living death of years of solitary confinement or with baking alive on the the African coast.

A Catholic Scientist, whose fame, though great, was not equal to his merits, has just died in England. Terrien de Lacouperie was a Frenchman, who all his life devoted himself to the study of Oriental languages and history. He founded the *Babylonian and Oriental Records*. More than one of his works were crowned by the Institute of France, the University of Louvain gave him her doctorate of philosophy and letters, and the Royal Asiatic Society enrolled him among her honorary members. By his marvellous knowledge of the Chinese language and literature, with a profound study of Assyriology, he traced the sources of Chinese civilization, hitherto lost in the mists of extreme antiquity, to their fountain head. Lacouperie was not a good business man. He lived modestly and died poor.

"REMARKABLE CURE OF DROPSY AND DYSPESIA."—Mr. Samuel T. Casey, Belleville, writes:—"In the spring of 1884 I began to be troubled with dyspepsia, which gradually became more and more distressing. I used various domestic remedies, and applied to my family physician, but received no benefit. By this time my trouble assumed the form of dropsy. I was unable to use any food whatever except boiled milk and bread; my limbs were swollen to twice their natural size; all hopes of my recovery were given up, and I quite expected death within a few weeks. Northrop & Lyman's VEGETABLE DISCOVERY having been recommended to me, I tried a bottle with but little hope of relief; and now, after using eight bottles, my Dyspepsia and Dropsy are cured. Although now seventy-nine years of age I can enjoy my meals as well as ever, and my general health is good. I am well-known in this section of Canada, having lived here fifty-seven years; and you have liberty to use my name in recommendation of your VEGETABLE DISCOVERY, which has done such wonders in my case."

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