

CURRENT TOPICS IN EUROPE.

The great celebration by the Servians during the past week of the battle of Kossovo is, properly speaking, an historical rather than a political event. It carries us back five hundred years, and it commemorates one of the most decisive defeats in history. True, the Serbs, the Bosnians, and the other races who inhabited the Balkan peninsula fought well in 1389, and even obtained very favorable terms from the victor; yet this battle marked the end of the ancient independent Servian realm. From that day the Turks became more and more the rulers of the peninsula.

It is curious to note as a trait of human nature that the memories of the vanquished are much longer than the recollections of the victors. The Irish recall disasters to their kings even older than Kossovo. Britons long cherished their local quarrels with the French. The ancient feuds of the Italian cities still live in the memories of the defeated, and the tenacity of Polish nationality is well known. If the Servians had been the victors they would perhaps have long ago forgotten Kossovo and their now expelled masters the Turks. As it is they have nourished the memory of their great defeat, their bands have sung the treachery of Brankovitch and the heroism of Milosch; and their songs have been repeated by the women at the fireside and the peasants at the plow for many generations. Now that Serbia has again raised the standard of nationality, the five hundredth anniversary of the great battle seems to be a good way of keeping alive a national spirit of independence.

But these celebrations are not purely historical. On the other hand, they have a grave and political purpose. We should not forget that what is now known as Serbia is only the remnant of what was once a mighty Servian Empire. This empire once included territories now embraced in Turkey, Austria, Hungary, Greece and Southern Russia. We cannot therefore expect that these nationalities will look upon these Servian celebrations with a great deal of favor, for it is easy to perceive that were it not for the internal dissensions among the Servians themselves, their political neighbors would be apt to lose some of their territories. It is useless to deny that a desire for Servian unity now prevails in the Balkan principalities similar to that which prevailed in the various States, now forming the German empire, immediately before the war of 1870. But would it not be well for these Servian gentlemen to govern well their present little kingdom, before dreaming of the restoration of a vast Servian empire? He who cannot well use one talent can scarcely expect to receive ten.

History is very fascinating no doubt, and it is pleasant for the student of history to have his obscure path lighted up by flashes from the torches of current politics. It is one thing to read of the celebration of

Kossovo but quite another to see how the plans of Servian orators would affect the politics of Europe. Perhaps Plato was right when he excluded orators from his ideal republic.

The European situation, it is useless to deny, is extremely critical, and seems influenced by every passing event. A few weeks ago the press was excited by a declaration of the Czar of Russia in favor of the Prince of Montenegro. Now it is the Emperor of Austria who has aroused attention by his speech on foreign affairs.

The Irredentist agitation at Trieste, fanned as it is by influences at Rome, is not calculated to promote amicable relations between Austria and Italy.

The late agitation in Tessin—a canton in Switzerland, whose inhabitants speak Italian—is still fresh in the minds of the public. Only last week the Swiss and Italian commissioners appointed to locate the proposed tunnel through the Simplon failed in their task, owing to the demand of the Italian commissioners, that one end of the proposed tunnel should be located on Italian soil. This demand the Swiss government, for obvious reasons could not entertain. Meanwhile the Socialist movement is daily gaining strength, and the semi-official German press is gravely discussing the dismemberment of Switzerland. The suggestion of a Hamburg journal recently that the little republic should be divided among different nations, according to the language spoken, Italy taking that portion where Italian is spoken, France taking that portion where French is spoken, and the remainder falling to Germany and Austria, is scarcely worthy of mention except that it shows the uneasy feeling prevailing in Europe at the present moment.

Likewise the opening up of Africa to the enterprise and industry—alas! also to the cupidity—of European nations may yet bring about a terrible strife.

British enterprise in the Dark Continent is pushing, progressive and above all successful. The *Cologne Gazette*, whose utterances are considered of semi-official importance, says: "England, whose love of annexation knows no bounds, is seriously following out a well-considered plan for turning the whole of Africa, from the mouth of the Nile to the Cape of Good Hope, with the exception of those coast territories which are already in other hands, into an English colony. By so doing all the territories belonging to or under the influence of Germany and Portugal are to be entirely hemmed in. The river Zambezi was supposed to be the limit to the commercial enterprise of the British; but now that river has been crossed, and an English company claims rights of suzerainty over the countries between the Zambezi, the lakes of Nyassi and Tanganyika and the Upper Congo. This entirely cuts off the whole length of Portuguese, East Africa and German West Africa from the inland country behind. The courage of

the English is doubtless great, but if they persist in hemming in their German and Portuguese rivals they will go beyond their strength." The foregoing needs no comment.

The internal politics of France seem to have taken a more pacific turn since the opening of the Exposition. There are reasons for believing that M. Ferry has at length succeeded in an object which his friends have had at heart for a long time—that of obtaining the leadership of the republican party, Radicals and Boulangists excepted. Even M. Clemenceau seems to offer no opposition to the old-time leader to a participation in public affairs. M. Ferry is, as is well known, a statesman of world-wide reputation, and even his enemies admit that if the interests of the republic are once placed in his hands, they will be valiantly defended. It is high time that second-rate politicians should cease to impose silence on one who has held the reins of government longer than any other Republican minister.

The wonderful success of the Paris Exhibition, despite innumerable obstacles, has pardonably elated some of the French journals. *La Justice* writes: "The success of the exhibition is no longer a matter of doubt. Foreigners are rushing to it from all quarters of the world. As for France, it is absolutely taking Paris by storm. Everywhere and on all sides there arises a chorus of applause. No international enterprise has ever obtained such success as the Paris Exhibition of 1889. Still, there is no doubt most of the governments of Europe did their best to make the exhibition a failure. The French Republic has conquered a position in Europe despite monarchical governments. If kings and princes are against us, the peoples of the earth are for us."

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Such men as Aristotle, Marcus Antonius, Sir Humphrey Davy, Lord Palmerston, Byron, Thackeray and our own George Washington were regular dandies in their day, while even in our own times men like Conkling, Hill and Tilden were exquisites in their dress. Of the present New York bar, Chauncey Depew, one of the leading spirits, is also one of the best dressed men of that city, with Dan Dougherty, late of the Philadelphia bar and now of national fame, a close second. Of the Philadelphia bar, Brewster, attorney-general under President Arthur, was, during his life, one of the best dressed men, being surpassed in this respect only by Richard Vaux, a leader of the same bar. There is a great deal of difference between a dandy and a dude; for while a dandy dresses only when he has nothing else to do, a dude does nothing else but dress. But a man may dress elegantly without being either, and this is the happy medium to be sought.—*Nashville American*.

Sense is more powerful than education.