



## CURRENT COMMENT

The most notable event since our last issue is the horrible assassination of the King and Queen of Serbia together with a number of their faithful followers. Nothing so brutally tragic has occurred in Europe for many centuries.

Very interesting, in connection with this tragedy, is the Telegram's interview with Mr. John F. Heneage, of 364 Broadway, Winnipeg. Mr. Heneage, who is a relative of Lord Heneage, belongs to an ancient Catholic family. He was born at Belgrade, where his father was then British consul-general, and was in close touch with the court. "As a boy," he says, "I played marbles with ex-King Milan, the father of King Alexander, and my sister, Mrs. W. C. Walsh, who is now in England, was made a pet of by Queen Natalie, who insisted on her coming to court at the age of 14. I did not know much of King Alexander. He was quite a lad when I was there, and a very fiery, obstinate boy, at that. Queen Draga I knew better because she was a lady in waiting to Queen Natalie, and I danced with her frequently in the days when I myself was a queen's messenger. I left Serbia at the age of 11 and went to school in England, but returned there and carried the British foreign office dispatches between Tesmesvar, where I met the other messenger, and Belgrade. I did this for three years."

Mr. Heneage is not at all surprised at the tragedy. It is just what the Servians were certain to do some day or other. Alexander offended them greatly by marrying Queen Draga, who was 15 years his senior and then by suspending the constitution, but the final straw was his attempt to put the queen's brother forward as heir to the throne. "I knew the present king, Prince Kerageorgevitch very well. He was a pretender to the throne even in my time and is probably the most popular man in the Balkans." "What do you think will be the outcome of the present crisis?" "I think it will mean eventually the solution of the eastern question without the aid of Europe. The Macedonian committee, which is really a great circle of secret societies, is at the back of the revolt. I shall not be surprised to see King Kerageorgevitch made the ruler over the whole of Serbia, Bulgaria and Macedonia. King Ferdinand, the present ruler of Bulgaria, is regarded as an interloper and may be deposed in favor of the present ruler of Serbia, and one great united Slav kingdom formed in the Balkans."

This appeared in the Telegram of last Friday, the day after the assassination. Last Tuesday another Englishman, who withholds his name, but who professes to have personal knowledge of the people and the management of court affairs in Serbia, contributed to the Telegram a sketch of what he considers the real situation now facing the people of Serbia. This is what he writes:

That recent events in Serbia have produced a feeling of revulsion throughout the civilized world goes without saying, but at the same time people connected or interested in that far away small state, although rather flabbergasted at the coup d'etat, have had a feeling somewhere smouldering that such a happening as that which has just occurred, was, although highly improbable, yet just possible, but it was hoped that, if any coup was intended, it

would have been carried out in a civilized manner, and worthy of a so-called civilized country. There can be no doubt that these cold-blooded murders were perpetrated at the instigation of some politicians and army officers who may have had a few grievances, but I fancy promotion and advancement from obscurity had more to do with their actions than any thoughts of the welfare of their country.

That this crime should have been countenanced by the nation is absolutely absurd. The Servian peasant, being uneducated and ignorant, the fact is, it is a matter of perfect indifference to him whether there be a king or not, so much so, that in some remote villages, one would have difficulty in finding out the name of the reigning prince.

That the newly proclaimed king, Prince Peter Karageorgevitch, should be in absolute ignorance of the plot seems to me ludicrous, as his partisans had a complete organization at Belgrade with which he was in frequent communication.

Nothing much can be said in favor of the new king, who seems to follow in the footsteps of the late King Milan, whose mode of life was pretty well known to most people.

While on a visit to Madame Chasserian, at Biarritz, with whom Queen Natalie is at present staying in the rue Royale, Paris, I first met the late King Alexander and Queen Draga, then Madame Machin, lady-in-waiting to Queen Natalie. King Alexander was at that time very delicate and one of the ugliest boys I have ever seen, and it seemed to me a marvel that he could be the son of such a wonderfully beautiful and fascinating mother.

Madame Machin took every one by storm with her beauty and good humor, but there is no doubt she was ambitious. Poor Queen Natalie! Hers has been a sad life! First, exile from Serbia, where in some quarters she was deeply loved; then the marriage of King Alexander and Queen Draga, which she did everything in her power to prevent. And now this tragedy!

To Queen Natalie, by a curious coincidence, Donahoe's Magazine for this month devotes a well-written article on her public profession of the Roman Catholic faith, which she embraced last year at Biarritz. The writer, "B.O.B.C." says: "To Catholics who have known her in her previous career as crowned sovereign of a devoted people, who have watched her untiring efforts for their amelioration, who saw in her the embodiment of all that a pure, high-souled woman should be, the word 'conversion' with regard to her latest step seems somehow unfitting. It sounds more correct to say that she has, at last, openly joined the Church to which unconsciously she always belonged."

The Greek Church in Serbia is supposed to keep a very strict fast in Lent; no meat, no eggs, no milk. In practice few observe these ancient usages. The masses do not even pretend to do so. The priests themselves are extremely lax. But when Queen Natalie reigned in Belgrade, the Lenten rules were strictly observed, even though her own adherence to them seriously injured her health.

Mr. Herbert Vivian, author of a charming book of experiences in Serbia, leaves pretty much the same impression of Servian religion, although, being a hidebound Tory High Churchman, he tries to make the best of the Servian Church so

that he may claim kinship with it on the rotten Branch theory. Church duties are merely nominal. There is no piety, no living faith. Here is a picture he gives of a "popadie" or pope's wife. "I remember one, whose moral reputation was above suspicion, but who possessed few rivals in a carouse. She would break glasses and bottles, stand on the table, and sing in tones that would almost reach the next village, and dance or drink any man silly." (The Romance of Religion, p. 275.)

The writer in Donahoe's must now find an added vividness in the concluding words of his own article on Queen Natalie: "In truth, the ways of God are wonderful. Looking back on her stormy past and contrasting it with her peaceful haven at Biarritz, the Queen of Serbia will not regret her thorny crown, but will say with thankfulness: 'Thou hast led me, O Lord, by strange paths, into the haven of Thy House!'" What a contrast between Draga, the ambitious, the licentious, and Nathalie, the pure, the pious; one is cut off in the very act of begging pardon, she is spurned like the vilest of her sex; the other is mercifully saved from a treacherous army and brought gently into the peace that surpasseth all understanding.

Representative government for a people of serfs like the Servians is the veriest farce, or rather it is a safe cloak for the crimes of every clique that has momentarily the upper hand. That figment "the will of the Servian people" effectually silences all the diplomatists of Europe—a fitting nemesis for an age of shams, for a period of phrase-tyranny.

We comment elsewhere on the address of the Supreme Orange Grand Master. An interview with His High Mightiness appeared in the Telegram, the general drift of which was that the Conservative party was identified with the Orange Society. This, of course, may be only Dr. Sproule's view; but he makes the most of it, pats Mr. Tarte on the back, and implies that the latter will win over from the Liberal party many French Canadians. It is to be hoped that all sincere Catholics will one day realize the incongruity and folly of being yoked with so anti-Catholic an organization. The proper solution of the difficulty would be the formation of a really independent centre party at Ottawa, which would vote with either of the old parties when either happens to be right, but whose chief purpose would be to defeat every government that refused to restore our school rights.

The Rev. F. C. Fillingham, of London, England, preaching in the James Street Baptist Church, Toronto, last Sunday, bewailed the undoing of Protestantism by the High Church party. "In three-fourths of the schools," he said, "the children are now taught the doctrines of the real presence, confession to priests" and devotion to the Blessed Virgin. This is almost too good to be true. We fear that Mr. Fillingham, when preaching to the Torontonians, was "filling 'em" with lurid exaggerations. There is no doubt, however, that Catholic ideas are fast gaining ground.

When the Rev. F. C. Fillingham went on to say that this is the kind of education he and all other non-conformists had to pay for, he said what is not true. No portion of the rates is to be devoted to sectarian purposes. The new Education Act in England provides no "rates" or support for any religious purpose. "What it does pro-

vide," writes the able editor of the N.Y. Freeman's Journal (May 30), "is that certain payments shall be made to parochial schools for secular education according to the standard required by the State. In the parochial schools, religious instruction will also be given, but not at the State cost. All the expenditure that such instruction will involve will be borne entirely by the religious bodies under whose auspices the schools are conducted. There are Catholic parochial schools and Protestant Episcopal parochial schools and parochial schools under other religious denominations, and all will have a share of the rates, not for teaching religion, but for teaching just the same secular branches that are taught in the board, that is, public schools, in which there is no religion at all. These last mentioned are open to the non-conformists, or, if they choose, they, too, may establish parochial schools and have their due share of State support.

But this will not satisfy the non-conformists. The education system of all England must be as they please or else they will rebel. The Catholics and Church of England people have built their parochial schools at their own expense, and, moreover, they pay taxes toward the building and maintenance of the board schools, which they do not use or derive any advantage from. But the non-conformists have built no schools. They use schools which the Catholics and Episcopalians have helped to build and help to support. Still they are not content. What bigots and intolerant they are. They constantly talk about liberty and freedom of conscience, yet they deny both—or would if they could deny both—to all but themselves in the matter of education. As to their threat of rebellion, we have no doubt the Government of England is able to take care of that matter."

One other Orange curiosity is the Deputy Grand Master, W. Galbraith. At the Grand Lodge banquet on the 12th inst. in this city he is reported to have said that we "had room enough and to spare out west for desirable emigrants, but did not want some of the class now being turned out of France. They did not object to them on religious, but on economic grounds. They produced nothing, not even families." Evidently this cowardly insult is aimed at the religious orders. There is nothing in Galbraith's words but pure, unadulterated lie. The religious orders produce more than any other bodies of all those elements that contribute to material progress. For instance they turn out more and better educated people at much cheaper rates than any other educators in the world. In fact that is precisely why they are suppressed by jealous rivals. As to families, they do indirectly contribute to their growth by elevating the general level of morality. We do not of course expect a swaggering blusterer like Galbraith to understand this, but we are not writing for him. Religious orders raise the general standard of purity by going beyond the ordinary requirements for salvation, the consequence of their example being that the people among whom they live, stimulated by that ever present example, rise for the most part to the level of the necessary laws of Christian marriage. If Galbraith had any honesty he who, we believe, lives in Montreal, could not help seeing the difference, as to the production of children, between the province of Quebec filled with religious orders and large families, and Ontario, where religious orders are rare and large families also. He might also remember that his fellow Protestants of Ontario beget so few children that, were it not for the Catholic minority, which

observes the laws of matrimonial life, the total population of the "premier province" would have shown no increase at all in the ten years between 1891 and 1901.

The Telegram of last Saturday reproduced from the New York Tribune a highly colored description of the scenes that were enacted in several Paris churches four weeks ago, when episcopal letters were read enjoining prayers of protest against the persecuting government. Free fights between Socialists and Catholics took place in several churches. Although the report does not betray any violent animus against Catholics, yet it should be taken with a grain of salt, as when we are told that "a priest in black Jesuit dress handed the curate a revolver." Considering that the Jesuits wear no distinctive uniform in France but are dressed exactly like secular priests, the "black Jesuit dress" does not mean anything in particular, the so-called priest may have been only a lay sacristan with a soutane on for the moment. At any rate the curate "prudently slipped the weapon under his surplice and made no attempt to use it."

Since the above paragraphs were written we have read "Le Manitoba's" scathing article on Dr. Sproule. We trust somebody will translate it for the doughty doctor's benefit.

While deeply regretting that an increase of other work obliges "Finem Respicere" to bid our readers farewell, we feel that we are voicing the unanimous verdict of those readers in expressing, together with the highest appreciation of his articles, the earnest hope that his silence may be only for a time.

## Clerical News

His Grace the Archbishop of St. Boniface, accompanied by Father Beliveau, his secretary, Father Mirault and Father Rockliff, were guests of Father Gendreau yesterday. The party are on their way east to attend the celebration in connection with the hundredth anniversary of the Nicolet college. His Grace will be in Montreal on June 24, where he will participate in the St. Jean Baptiste celebration, the chief event of which will be the unveiling of a large statue of the late Archbishop Bourget, who was the first archbishop of Montreal.—The Rat Portage News, June 5.

Rev. Father Beauregard, of Makinak, came here last week to meet six Brothers of the Cross of Jesus who are destined for the Orphanage farm at Makinak and who have just arrived from France.

Recent rumors of the Holy Father's failing health were dispelled by the following cablegram, which appeared in the daily papers just after the publication of our last issue:—

The Pope is Well.  
Rome, June 11.—This being the feast of Corpus Christi, the Pope insisted on celebrating Mass. Only the members of his household and intimate friends were admitted. After the ceremony, although he was fatigued, the Pontiff repeated several times that he was feeling perfectly well and turned laughingly to Dr. Laponi, saying: "I am glad to see you; but I have no need of you."

The Oblate Fathers of the Holy Ghost Church are advertising for