

Koshutniak, or Topshidere, near Belgrade, Michael was assassinated by the emissaries of Alexander on June 19, 1868. He was succeeded by his second cousin, Milan. Milan was born in 1854. He became Prince of Serbia in 1872. In 1875 he married a Russian lady, Natalie de Keczo. In 1878 the Serbs declared war against Turkey, but their arms were unsuccessful, and they were only saved by the intervention of Russia. By the treaty of Berlin, July, 1878, the country received a large accession of territory, and the Prince caused himself to be proclaimed King. Peace continued until the year 1885, and during this period the Serbs seemed to make considerable progress as a nation, in spite of the bitterness of political faction. In 1885, however, Serbia made an ill-judged and selfish attack upon Bulgaria, which was ignominiously beaten off. In seven years the national debt was increased from 7,000,000 francs to 312,000,000 francs.

King Milan was forced to abdicate in 1889. He was succeeded by his twelve-year-old son, Alexander I. In 1903 Alexander and his wife, Queen Draga, were brutally murdered in a midnight attack on the palace because of their supposed leaning toward Austria.

Peter I, the present King, was his successor. He is of the house of "Black George."

In October, 1912, Serbia, in conjunction with Bulgaria, Montenegro and Greece, demanded independence for Turkey's European provinces. The Powers tried to intervene in the interest of peace, but were unsuccessful. The Balkan war broke out on October 17, 1912, and the allied Balkan States were uniformly successful.

As a result of this war Serbia gained some 15,000 square miles of territory.

Servia now ambitiously proclaimed her intention of extending the Servian Empire to the Adriatic. This increased Austria's irritation, and as early as 1912 Austria took steps toward the mobilization of her army. Russia, by way of reply, strengthened her forces in aid of Servia. Germany declared her intention of supporting Austria in the conflict. In this way the Balkan war really paved the way for the European war of to-day, and a similar situation was imminent in 1912.

The assassination of Francis Ferdinand, heir to the Austrian throne, by a Servian and the just refusal of Servia to permit Austria the right of participation in the trial of the conspirators, brought about the present conflict.