

ASSASSINATION OF FERDINAND.

The assassination of Archduke Ferdinand of Austria and his wife will strike terror to the heart of every crowned head in Europe. The act stands as an appalling reminder of the peril in which kings and princes live and move, whether they are hated and hunted, or whether they have gained the loyalty and love of their subjects, as had the Archduke Ferdinand. There was no apparent reason for his taking off; but the absence of political or personal motive more sharply emphasizes the danger of assassination at the hands of lunatics and anarchists.

The empire of Austria-Hungary may be profoundly affected by Ferdinand's death. Emperor Franz Joseph is near his end, and the prospect of a transfer of power to Ferdinand was acceptable to the people. He had proved himself a good soldier and an able statesman, devoted to the empire, ambitious for its aggrandizement, and strong-willed enough to defend its interests in the midst of the tangled politics of western and southeastern Europe. He was credited with being the controlling mind in Austrian policies with respect to the Balkans and Italy.

The extinction of Ferdinand as a factor in the Balkan situation may have far-reaching consequences, when it is borne in mind that the kingdom of Serbia is rent with internal strife, and that Greece and Turkey are bent upon a renewal of hostilities. The map of the Balkans, radically altered within the last three years, seems to be subject to further alterations as a result of the weakening of Austria-Hungary's influence.