

**A
BALKAN PRINCE**

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A Balkan prince by Charles G. D. Roberts

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CHARLES G. D. ROBERTS

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THE SKIRMISH



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LONDON
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1913

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By CHARLES G. D. ROBERTS

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CHAPTER I

THE HOLY STONE OF VOUSIC

Never had he seen anything
UNWILLING to betray the excitement which worked in his lean face, Sergius got up from his chair by the writing-table and crossed over to the window. For some moments he stood staring down over the steep, bright confusion of roofs and streets and terraces which formed his beloved city of Belgrade. The fingers with which he pulled at his moustache trembled a little. At last he turned back to the table and sat down again.

"Then, the fact is, we will be able to save Servia," said he, quietly. He looked at his visitor with a smile, but a kind of exultation burned in his eyes.

Prince Sergius Charles de Plamenac, known to his intimates as Serge Ivanovich, had schooled himself to curb the impetuosities of his Serb temperament. Educated in England, at Harrow and Oxford, and afterwards a graduate of the mining-camps of Nevada and Nome, he prided himself upon his imperturbability. But just at this moment he was near losing it. From the sheet of dark green blotting-paper beside him, he picked up a