

# I.—HISTORY OF THE GREAT WAR, 1914-1918.

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## ORIGIN OF THE WAR.



THE news of the murder of the Austrian Heir Apparent, and his wife, in the streets of Serajevo, the capital of the province of Bosnia, on June 28, 1914, came upon the world like a thunderbolt from a blue sky. Demonstrations of popular indignation and hostility to Serbia followed in Vienna and other Austrian cities. The government press in Austria and Germany at once adopted the theory that the murder was the result of a wide-spread conspiracy in that country, although the assassin declared that he alone was responsible for the deed. Three weeks of ominous silence followed. On July 23, Austria presented an ultimatum to Serbia which it was impossible for that country to accept and remain an independent state, and to which was attached a peremptory demand for its entire acceptance in forty-eight hours. Within the period named, Serbia, with Russian approval, announced her willingness to accede to all the Austrian demands except two, which she desired should be referred to the Hague Tribunal.

At noon, on July 28, Austria declared war by an open telegram, and on the following night, the Austrian batteries on the left bank of the Danube, and their gun boats in the river, began a bombardment of Belgrade, the Serbian capital. An invasion of that country followed at once.

Meanwhile, the British Foreign Secretary, Sir Edward Grey, made strenuous efforts to maintain peace. He proposed a European