

we have never formally proclaimed a protectorate over Egypt, and that Mr. Gladstone made his unfortunate engagement to evacuate the country "when circumstances permitted," have furnished a dozen French foreign ministers with opportunities for harassing English cabinets with inquiries as to the date of our departure, and the reasons for our delay. All reforms which we made in Egypt, even the most simple and necessary, formed the subject of angry diplomatic notes. The anomalous position occupied by a state which exercises the reality of suzerainty without its legal form, rendered such criticism only too easy.

As long as France stood alone in Europe, and the League of the Three Emperors still existed, her intrigues against us in Egypt were tiresome rather than dangerous.

**The Triple  
Alliance—  
Friendship  
between  
Russia and  
France.**

Circumstances, however, gradually changed; the Czar Alexander II. had been assassinated by the Nihilists in 1881, and his son Alexander III. was not a friend of Germany. Moreover, the old Emperor William I., who always preserved a kindly feeling for Russia, died in 1888, and with his decease the influence of Bismarck, all-powerful in Germany since 1866, and in Europe since 1870, began to wane. Even before his old master's death, the breach between the two empires had been clearly marked, and Bismarck had publicly announced that a continuance in his former policy was no longer possible. There followed a rearrangement of the relations of the great Continental powers, Germany and Austria avowing that they had concluded formal treaties with Italy, and taken her into partnership in a new "Triple Alliance." Russia and France, thus left in isolation, were forced by the logic of circumstances to look toward each other for support. Their drawing together only began to be evident about 1891-92; down to that date the Russian Government had doubted too much the solidity of the French republic, whose ministries were always changing, and whose very existence