



The Kiss

By *ROBERT GRAVES*

ARE you shaken, are you stirred,
By a whisper of love?
Spellbound to a word,
Does time cease to move,
Till her calm, gray eye
Expands to a sky,
And the clouds of her hair
Like storms go by!

Do the lips that you have kissed
Turn to frost and to fire?
Does a flame shot mist
Enwrap your desire,
Till back to their birth
Fade water, air, earth,
And the First Power moves
Over void and dearth?

So the elements return
Into chaos of night.
Yet the hot flames burn;
They dazzle your sight;
And desire rules the world
Till it fails, goes by,
And death down is hurled
With a ringing cry.

Such is love; for love is death,
A passion, a shout,
The deep inbreath,
The breath roaring out,
And once it is done,
You must lie alone,
Without life, without love,
Poor flesh, poor bone.



The Roots of the War

By WILLIAM STEARNS DAVIS

In collaboration with
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XV. THE BUILDING OF THE ALLIANCES

AFTER the smoke of the Franco-Prussian War had rolled away, Europe found herself facing a new diplomatic situation. France was fallen from her old post as the pre-eminent power. Germany had taken her place, and for long statesmen hardly knew what to make of it. The power of the new Hohenzollern Empire was obviously so great that any blundering attack upon it was likely to be resented with fearful results. Bismarck, however, did nothing to make the powers which had stood neutral in 1870 repent of their inaction. With Russia for some time he was friendly, with England and Italy reasonably cordial, with Austria at least correct. He realized keenly, perhaps too keenly, that by taking Alsace-Lorraine he had relegated any genuine reconciliation with France to a distant future. Henceforth, whenever Germany found herself in difficulties, right across the Vosges lay a nation of ill-wishers whom Teutons at least believed to be always ready to stab or strike. In view of this "French mortgage" Bismarck's policy therefore seemed dictated along rather simple lines. He worked on three plausible hypotheses:

I. That after the lessons of 1870-71 it was not likely France, without allies, would attack Germany unless Germany foolishly reduced her armaments. Therefore the new Hohenzollern Empire must remain armed to the teeth.

II. A Republican system of government in France was likely to keep the country faction-rent and on bad terms with the various great monarchies, especially Russia, which might possibly

help her. Therefore to keep France weak and isolated, Bismarck deliberately discouraged attempts, very natural for Prussian monarchists, to undermine the Third Republic. When Arnim, the German ambassador at Paris in the early seventies, seemed coquetting with the French royalists, Bismarck had him recalled and disgraced.

III. To prevent any other power from giving comfort to France, the Iron Chancellor studiously avoided all incidents that might give them offense. England was treated with marked consideration by him. Italy was praised and cajoled. As to Russia and Austria, the great minister soon went much further.

England, Italy, and France had each, after their manner, liberal constitutions. In Germany, Austria, and Russia, although the first two empires had the forms of constitutions, the personal influence of the monarchs was still, to state it mildly, tremendous. These three empires were therefore the bulwarks of militarism, autocracy, and anti-liberalism against all the rest of the civilized world. Their rulers had very many interests in common, and every reason to work together. Austria had been beaten roundly by Prussia in 1866, but she was already getting over the effects of a defeat which Bismarck had taken pains should not be humiliating. The relations of William I and Czar Alexander II were excellent.

The chancellor was speedily to turn this community of interest into something tangible. In Austria in 1871 the old violently anti-German foreign minister Beust had been replaced by the Hungarian Andrassy, who was on far better personal terms with Bismarck.