(*October 25, 1926*)

# Geneva and the Conference

By Hon. and Rev. H. J. Cody, LL.D., D.D.

President Sedgewick: Our Dr. Cody is a national asset and he is our own and we are very proud that he, out of all the world, was chosen to stand in Calvin's pulpit and preach the sermon at the English service at the recent Assembly of the League of Nations. We know that he did it well and we are glad that he has come to us so soon after he got back to give us his impressions of what he saw there. I am sure you will agree with me that there is no one who can better interpret to us Canadians the significance of Geneva and the League of Nations.

Dr. Cody: Mr. President and fellow members of the Canadian Club, most heartily do I thank you for the cordial greeting you have given to one of your own. I am a Canadian born and bred and never was I prouder of being a Canadian than I am today and never more impressed with the part Canada is playing and still may play not only in the development of her own resources, but in making a contribution to world welfare. Canada is out today in the midstream of international life and is playing her part well in international affairs as conducted from a real international centre—Geneva, the home of the League of Nations.

The president of the club has told you how I came to be in Geneva. A few years ago a committee in the city of Geneva felt that there should be a religious service in the historic cathedral of St. Peter in connection with the opening of the League of Nations. At first that service was an English service but presently both English and French services were held. Five years ago the services were taken by the Archbishop of Canterbury. Next year the Moderator of the Church of Scotland spoke. The following year Bishop Brent of

Buffalo—an old Canadian, by the way—spoke, and last year Dr. Fosdick of New York. A group in Geneva felt that it was time the Overseas Dominions should receive some recognition from abroad in connection with this English service. Last year Dr. J. Murray Clark, who is here, spent the winter in Geneva and I know he had no small share in promoting the interests of Canada there in many fields of activity. Among other fields of activity I have not the slightest doubt that he urged the desirability of having some of the Overseas Dominions represented at this religious service and so in due time it was decided to invite some one member of the Dominions, and as Canada happened to be the nearest, and Dr. Murray Clark was there—I have no doubt those are the combined reasons why the invitation came to myself. I thank him for the opportunity thus given.

I assure you, gentlemen, it was a very thrilling experience to stand in that historic building that dates back to the eleventh century and that was founded in the days when Emperor and Pope were striving for the supremacy of Europe. It stood there during the stirring days when Geneva was fighting for its civil liberty against, on one hand, its Prince Bishop, and on the other hand, the Dukes of Savoy. Civil liberty was won by the Genevans and in the midst of the turbulence of political strife there came the new turbulence of religious controversy. William Farrell, John Calvin, Theodore Beza all bore their part in the great religious revolution and upheaval that took place in Geneva in the 16th century. Geneva has played a great part in the religious, ecclesiastical, social and political history of the world. I have mentioned its ecclesiastical and religious affiliations, particularly with John Calvin. Jean Jacques Rousseau was born in Geneva. His monument is there on an island in the river Rhone and from his treatises on social reform the great step was taken in preparation for the appalling outburst of the French Revolution. And in later days Geneva proved it was an international city. In 1864 the Red Cross Society was there organized. In 1871 the Alabama dispute between the United States and Great Britain was settled by arbitration and a serious barrier removed between those two great branches of the English-speaking race. It was therefore but natural, gentlemen, when the dream was about to be realized of an organization to express international co-operation and



for the prevention of war, Geneva should be chosen as the city of this international organization. The League of Nations has its headquarters in the city of Geneva. Geneva, therefore, has every right to be considered as an international city.

From the days of John Calvin to the present hour Geneva has been a City of Refuge. In one of the old city towers there is a picture by a Genevan citizen representing Geneva holding out hands of welcome and healing to a fugitive seeking for refuge and security, and underneath is the motto: "Geneva, the City of Refuge." During the war Geneva was a centre of refuge for the wounded and abandoned. To Geneva came many exiles. Prisoners were exchanged in Geneva. I went to visit the castle of Chillon at the east end of the lake where the famous prisoner of Chillon was incarcerated whose imprisonment has been made immortal by Byron's lines. In the hall, almost on a level with the waters of the lake, there has just been erected by the Alsatians a statue of a nude fugitive who has broken his chains and is holding out his hands to someone who will receive him. It is erected by the people of Alsace as a tribute of gratitude to the Swiss people for their kindly reception of wounded and exiled Alsatians in the days of the struggle. Geneva, the City of Refuge. And more and more today Geneva is becoming the headquarters of student organizations, of University organizations, of moral reform organizations as well as of the League of Nations and the International Labor Office. It is a centre to which pilgrims from every quarter of the globe are directing their steps. And of all the organizations in Geneva probably that today which is of the supremest importance is the League of Nations and its fellow organization, the International Labor Office.

When I was in Paris a few weeks ago I naturally went out to the palace of Versailles to see the great hall of mirrors in which the treaty of peace was signed. You will remember that all the conferences were held in different places in the city of Paris itself. But the French felt that the proprieties required that in the same hall in which the German Empire was proclaimed the treaty of peace should be signed.

In the Great Hall of Mirrors, looking out on those superb gardens of Versailles, the representatives of the nations sign-

ed the treaty of peace, but, gentlemen, the representatives did something else, they signed a covenant, an agreement out of which has come the League of Nations. On the 28th day of June, 1919, this covenant setting up the League of Nations was signed by thirty-one plenipotentiaries who attached their signatures on behalf of their respective nations. One of those signatures, unfortunately, was not accepted by the country of the signatory. President Woodrow Wilson's signature was not approved by the Senate. Unfortunately some forgot that the President of the United States is not a plenipotentiary, that he cannot conduct the foreign affairs of his country but that the president and two-thirds of the Senate must act in these matters. The delicate mechanism of foreign policy is controlled in the United States by a great political body. That is one of the weaknesses undoubtedly of our friends south of the line in conducting delicate foreign negotiations. Thirty-one signed at the moment. A few days afterwards the Chinese representative signed and now, in the course of time, fifty-six nations of the globe—I include Germany—are members of the League of Nations, having formally signed that great covenant. These represent about three-quarters of the nations of the world. They represent people of white color and black color and brown color and yellow color. They represent the various religions of the world and they have all taken a pledge that they will do what in them lies, according to certain definite and prescribed pledges, rules if you will, to co-operate for international purposes of the world's welfare and to prevent the recurrence of war. Two elements enter into the covenant. The first and most important is that to prevent war by removing the causes of war. The other element is the element of international co-operation and, gentlemen, I am inclined to think that the very co-operation of the various nations in the interest of health, in the interest of child welfare, in the interest of repressing the opium traffic and in various other ways, will do a vast deal to prevent wars. Such co-operation accustoms people to acting together as friends and not as rivals. Those two elements enter into the covenant —international co-operation for the world's welfare and the prevention if possible of the recurrence of war. Those are the two things all the members have promised: to promote



international co-operation and to achieve international peace and security.

Now in order to do this it was felt that three things were necessary. The first is there must be goodwill. That is primary and lies behind every international effort. But all the goodwill in the world is of little value without clear thinking and I am inclined to think that we are apt to forget that in many moral reforms in our own country. It is not goodwill alone that counts, but clear thinking, in order to express the goodwill in the most efficacious way. And when you have goodwill and clear thinking you need some kind of organization to carry into activity both the goodwill and the clear thinking. And so it was arranged that there should be set up in Geneva a kind of international parliament, not a superstate with jurisdiction of sovereign nationalities, but an international organization whose findings have to be ratified by each sovereign state before they have legal validity in that sovereign state. Then it was felt that this international organization to express goodwill and clear thinking must have three elements in its constitution. First there must be a broad parliament to which all the members would send representatives. That is the Assembly of the League of Nations. Secondly there must be a cabinet or executive which will sit more frequently and will formulate propositions to be laid before the League and which will carry out the findings of the League. And that was called the Council of the League. And then there must be a great international civil service, and that was called the secretariat of the League, consisting of experts from the various countries of the world. There are some four hundred experts, secretaries from forty different nations including, by the way, the United States, and these are the permanent civil servants of the League, gathering facts and providing the necessary information for the delegates to the League, who are ultimately charged with the duty of reaching decisions. Those are the three elements that enter into the great organization that expresses international goodwill and international clear thinking—the Assembly, the Council of the League and the Secretariat.

So much by way of general premise. Now may I just give my impressions of how this great machine seemed to work? It was determined, I said, that the Assembly of the

League should meet in the city of Geneva. The Council of the League, being a smaller body may meet in various cities in Europe. When the Assembly of the League is on, of course, it meets in Geneva, but it has met in Paris, in Rome, in San Sebastian in Spain, but for the most part it meets in Geneva. The Assembly, then, was to meet in Geneva and the secretariat was to have headquarters in Geneva. On the north shore of Lake Geneva there was a great hotel, the Hôtel National. That was taken over by the League as the headquarters of the secretariat. In the Hôtel National there is a glass room, a sort of conservatory and in that conservatory the Council of the League meets when it meets in Geneva. There is a little dais at one end and a table around which sit the members of the council. Then the greater part of the room is occupied by representatives of the press and there is a very small section open for the public. Some of the sessions of the Council are held in private but for the most part publicity is the note of all the League's proceedings. I would emphasise that. It is felt that publicity ensures that every member of the League must try and justify this policy or this action not simply to his own people but to the common conscience of mankind and an enormous advantage is thereby gained.

The Assembly could not meet in any room in the hotel and there had to be found in Geneva a hall reasonably adequate to its requirements. Some years ago there was built on the south side of the lake a hall called the Hall of Reformation. It was built for the purpose of accommodating great public meetings, something like Massey Hall. It is an extremely plain, unpretentious building. Inside the walls are of plaster painted dull grey. There is a wooden balcony running round at one end and a high raised platform on which sits the president of the League. On his right hand is the official interpreter and on his left Sir Eric Drummond, secretary general of the League. There is a lower platform from which those who address the Assembly may speak and on that lower platform is also the repository for ballots. Official interpreters sit on the other side and some of the secretarial heads of departments. Down on the floor sit the representatives of the various nations.

I would like to explain if I can what it all looks like and as



it struck me. In the centre are about 220 plain wooden arm chairs, four together standing behind very plain brown painted wooden benches. At the end of each bench is a sign with the name of the country whose representatives sit there. Each country is entitled to send three delegates and also three substitute delegates. As a rule one of the substitute delegates sits with the three regular delegates so that as a rule there are four representatives of each of the nations of the world. How are they going to place the delegates? That was naturally a very perplexing question. Who was to sit in the front seats? They naturally fell back on the safe device of the alphabet. Each country is called by its French name, not by the English name, and so they arranged the benches according to the names of the countries in alphabetical order in the French tongue.

At right angles to the cross-benches you find Afrique Sud (South Africa), next to it Abyssinia, and then on the other side there was a vacant place when I first was there kept for a country whose name does not begin with "A" in English, but does in French, Allemagne—Germany. Next to it is Argentine, then Australia and then, lest by any chance it should be said that by beginning always from the right an injustice might be done they adopted the method of the Greeks, and worked backwards, and so the next group on this side was Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria and then Britain and immediately in front, Canada, as "C" comes after "B"; then there is Chile and China, Columbia, Cuba, Denmark, Dominican Republic and Spain (Espagne). And then you start in that corner and come across Esthonia, Ethiopia—one of the most striking of all the delegations, coal-black men—Finland, France, Greece, Guatemala, Japan, Italy, Ireland, India, Hungary, Haiti and so on.

The result of that was that nobody could think he had been overlooked or put in a back seat. As a matter of fact one of the most influential delegations was that of Czecho-Slovakia, led by Foreign Minister Benes and they sat in the back seat side by side with the Swiss. The last two were Uruguay and Venezuela.

Now allow me to say a word about the personnel. It was a remarkable thing that nearly all those nations were represented by some statesman of first rank, usually the foreign

secretary was one of the group. Distant countries would appoint the ambassadors at Paris or London or the Hague or Brussels or some other European capital. And I was also delighted to see so many University professors, professors of international law, were appointed by the respective countries to be the official delegates. It seems to me that it is of the last importance that the nations of the world should send men of first rate ability to represent them and speak with authority. Naturally when a foreign minister of any country spoke he spoke with the weight of the authority of his government behind him.

From South Africa came Mr. Smit, high commissioner in London; from Australia the attorney-general, Rt. Hon. J. G. Latham, who is coming back to Australia across Canada—a man of great ability. Belgium was represented by the Burgomaster of Antwerp, a dignified gentleman with a beard almost two feet long, Prof. de Bronckere. The British Empire was represented by Austen Chamberlain, Viscount Cecil, who is perhaps one of the most outstanding figures in connection with the League of Nations; I believe there are few men in the whole world to whom international co-operation and world peace owe more than to Viscount Cecil. Then there was Sir Cecil Hurst, legal adviser to the Foreign Office, the man who really drew up the Locarno pact. And then as substitutes there was the Earl of Onslow, Commander Hilton Young and Dame Edith Lyttleton.

Canada was splendidly represented by Sir George Foster who spoke several times with great effect. I want to mention also Sir Herbert Ames who has resigned his office of financial director after having put the department on a permanent basis. He has administered it so well that there is now a balance of about $6,000,000 and with that balance the League of Nations will be able to have its own permanent habitation on the shore of Lake Geneva. Canadians may well be proud of what Sir Herbert Ames has done for the League and done, through the League, for Canada. The other Canadian representative is Hon. Philippe Roy, High Commissioner in Paris, who speaks both English and French. And I would just like to say here, quite apart from any educational or political consideration, I wish to goodness I knew French so that I could speak it fluently. I can read it and reasonably understand it



but I wish I could speak it fluently. I believe that every Canadian who adds another language to his repertoire doubles his efficiency and intellectual pleasures. Then our fourth Canadian delegate who was sitting there as our permanent representative of the Dominion Government in Geneva, was Dr. W. A. Riddell. I would like to say a word about Dr. Riddell to the people at home in Canada, how much he is doing and how influential a factor and figure he is in the League. I heard him in one of the commissions and I know something of what he is doing there. He is the reporter, that is, the man who makes the summing up of the commission on child welfare. It was to Dr. Riddell that was due that happy suggestion whereby there were three semi-permanent seats established in the Council of the League, a plan which solved that extremely difficult problem created by events subsequent to Locarno—the veto on the entry of Germany by Brazil. Dr. Riddell ingeniously devised this method of solving the problem, subsequently adopted by the League. Dr. Riddell is taking a great part in the preparations for the international economic conference that is to be held, and he is putting on the world map at Geneva something of the natural resources of Canada, particularly Canada's mineral resources. I would like to pay this tribute of respect and appreciation of Dr. W. A. Riddell.

France was represented first and foremost by Aristide Briand, foreign secretary, one of the greatest orators, I suppose, living today. He speaks not only as foreign secretary of France but as a former prime minister. That adds weight to his utterances. Beside him is Paul Boncour, another great orator, and Senator Faure. As substitutes there are de Jouvenal and former Minister of Reconstruction, Loucheur.

India was represented, among others, by the Maharajah of Karpurthala. I heard him speak one day. He spoke in English first, in a cultured English voice, and when he had finished his address in English, without waiting for the official interpreter, he proceeded to deliver his speech in Parisian French. The two official languages are English and French and every speech has to be translated into one or other of those two languages. If anyone speaks in another tongue he has to make arrangements whereby his speech will be rendered into

both English and French. The official records are in English and French. When the Maharajah spoke it was interesting. When anyone speaks in English most of the delegates are yawning and stretching themselves for most of them don't understand. When anyone speaks in French you see some of the English-speaking delegates going through the same performance. The French delegates listened with indifference to the Maharajah's speech in English but it was really a treat to see the way they sat up and smiled when he himself began to speak in the polished tongue of the French. Sir Austen Chamberlain swelled visibly with pride that there was a delegate from the overseas dominions who could speak as good French as any Frenchman.

The Irish Free State was represented by Mr. Desmond Fitzgerald, foreign minister, and others. It was rather an interesting thing to notice that when the roll was called for the admission of Germany into the League, when the delegates said either "Yes" or "No" or "Oui" or "Non", that the representative of the Irish Free State, to demonstrate the independence of the Irish Free State of English domination, answered in the French tongue. Those things are among the humors of the international situation.

Japan was represented by Viscount Ishii, who is ambassador to France and is the representative of Japan on the Council. The Norwegian representative is sometimes called the stormy petrel of the League, one of the most picturesque figures there, world-renowned—Dr. Nansen the explorer; Dr. Nansen, who as envoy of the League succeeded in bringing back to their homes after the war hundreds of thousands of prisoners in the remote reaches of Siberia and other parts of Europe; Dr. Nansen who was the League's envoy to bring relief to the starving and disease-smitten of Europe; Dr. Nansen one of the towering figures of the League, a man always ready to stand up for the rights of little nations.

The Persian representative was Prince Arfa who, even on the hottest days wore his Persian lamb cap. One thing he said, on another occasion, was very interesting indeed. It was at the opium committee. He said, "You say we should not grow opium. We are willing not to grow opium but we want you to help us by sending an agricultural commission to Persia to tell us what we can grow in the place of opium."



That was a very sensible remark. Many people are anxious only to clean out something. They never think of the results of destruction. What constructive substitute are you going to place there? I am glad to say that a commission is going to Persia and the Persian Government is very largely going to pay the expense in order that Persia may have expert advice on what she may grow instead of opium. So much for the personnel.

Now I want to tell you of the great days, the really thrilling days in the history of the League, when the League of the Allies, strictly speaking, did become a league of real reconciliation. I was fortunate in getting to Geneva just before the discussion on the admission of Germany. As you all remember, after the Locarno pact it was expected that Germany would be admitted into membership of the League of Nations, with a permanent seat on the Council. From the beginning it was always intended that the Great Powers, Great Britain, France, Italy, Japan, the United States and Germany—Russia if it thought fit—should have permanent seats on the Council of the League and that other members of the Council should be elected annually by the Assembly in plenary session. So when Germany was to be admitted to the League Assembly it was assumed, as a matter of course, that she would also be a member of the Council. Now Brazil took the position that she was entitled as an American power to a permanent seat on the Council. Spain took the same position that she was entitled to a permanent seat. Brazil went so far as to say, "If we are not given a permanent seat on the League of Nations, we, as a member of the Council of the League, will veto Germany's admission." All sorts of representations and persuasions were brought to bear on Brazil but she stood firm and vetoed the admission of Germany. The Assembly met, as you know, last March. Many thought that the League of Nations had almost come to the abyss and that the end was at hand. A committee was appointed of which Viscount Cecil was one of the chief members, to devise means whereby the *impasse* would be broken and the means devised I have already mentioned. Germany was to have a permanent seat on the League of Nations, making five on the Council; and the six elective members were to be increased to nine, and Dr. Riddell's suggestion was accepted

that of the nine three were to be eligible for re-election if they so desired. It was an ingenious method of saving the faces of Spain and Brazil, if they wished to have their respective faces saved. Each has given notice of withdrawal but it does not become operative for two years and much may happen within two years. And so the scheme finally adopted by the Assembly of the League of Nations was that the Council should be increased to fourteen—five permanent seats, three semi-permanent, if those who hold them desire it, and the other six to be elected annually. Well, the committee brought in its report. The president was the Jugo-Slavia foreign secretary, M. Ninchitch. It was very commonplace at first. The report of the special committee was presented and that recommended, first, that Germany be admitted to membership of the Assembly and a permanent seat on the Council of the League and recommended the reconstruction of the Council. Then Doctor Nansen arose and made a protest. He thought it was not a proper and constitutional method of procedure and then the representative of Sweden and the representative of Holland each made a protest; not against Germany, but against the tying up in one report of two intertwined resolutions—the admission of Germany and the reconstruction of the Council and the method of election. Then the president said: "If there is no further objection I shall proceed to call the roll on the admission of Germany to membership of the League of Nations." It was not a vote by ballot. Each representative as the names were called out answered "Yes" or "No," "Oui" or "Non." It was one of the most tense experiences, I am sure, in the lives of all who were present. No one knew exactly whether someone might not block, even at that last moment, the admission of Germany, but it was felt that it was a great deal better to have difficult problems, where German interests might be divergent from those of the rest of Europe, discussed and settled in public and above board than settled between the League and an outside Germany, possibly in alliance with Russia.

Forty-eight of the nations answered. Some were absent —Spain and Brazil, and I think some others. At least a unanimous vote was recorded, the tension was raised and there was some slight applause. People, as it were, drew in their breath, and then the League proceeded to other business. At



once Sir Eric Drummond notified Germany that the German application for membership of the League had been granted and the next day at four o'clock the German delegation arrived and took up their quarters at the Hôtel Metropole. I was not there at the time the luggage arrived but a friend who was there told me that he was very much impressed by the fact that the luggage of the three delegates, the substitute delegates and about forty secretarial experts represented a democratic Germany. They were not of the dominant Junker class. The trunks were old battered tin trunks and the hat boxes were sometimes of paper. It was the luggage of the common folk, he said.

They arrived at four o'clock on Thursday and on Friday morning they were to take their places in the seat that had been kept for Allemagne, just to the left of the President's chair. The place was packed, the atmosphere stifling. The second balcony always reserved for the press of the world was packed. The other side of the room was occupied by massed cameras of all the illustrated papers of the world waiting to snap them as they came in and to snap each representative as he spoke. The galleries were crowded. It was very interesting to find the seat just in front of me occupied by Mrs. Woodrow Wilson who was there to see what happened.

Very prosaically the proceedings began. The president called for the first order of the day which was the presentation of the report of the committee on credentials. The chairman of the committee said that the credentials of Germany had been examined and found to be in order and he moved therefore that the German delegates be admitted to a seat on the floor of the house. It was all so natural. My son was seated in the gallery just opposite where they were waiting, and told me afterwards—a human touch—that they were bashful. Each digged the other to go first and lead the way into the Assembly and in due time Dr. Stresemann, head of the delegation, led the way—a square, stocky, bald-headed man. He was followed by Von Schubert and Herr Ganz and they quickly took their seats. Then the president, Mr. Ninchitch, called on Dr. Stresemann to address the gathering. You will allow me a moment or two to summarise what happened. Dr. Stresemann, amid applause, took his place. He spoke in German, afterwards to be translated into French and English. It was

really a masterly address and gave in the most public and solemn way the pledge of the new Germany to co-operate in the solution of European difficulties in which Germany was particularly interested and then went on to speak, I thought very wisely, on the value of the national factor in life. He said, (and this is remarkable,—he did not hesitate to refer to God; many don't dream of mentioning God in the League of Nations or other deliberative Assemblies) he said the divine architect and author of human life had not seen fit to make people all of one kind. There were different types and different nations and each nation had its own genius and its own contribution to make to the common life of the world. No man is a better friend of the world because he despises his own country. I have no use for the vague cosmopolite who loves every country but his own. A man must love his own country first and when he loves his own country there is a possibility of him seeing good in other countries. Stresemann built up a strong argument on the value of nationality and of it being an aid to internationalism and the international spirit. It was really a great address and was applauded even though there were signs all round the room "You are asked not to applaud."

Then a little man with a drooping mustache and a big head, and somewhat bent, was seen to be making his way to the front. Who was it? Who should reply but Monsieur Briand, the representative of France. It was a great moment, a great occasion, a great theme and a great speaker to handle the theme. As long as I live I shall never forget it. It was really a great address and you saw all the contrast between German and French in the attitude of the two men. Stresemann stood stock still in front of his desk and read every word of his speech. Briand, with graceful gesture, spoke with hand as well as voice, and moved up and down. With his hand on his heart he waved his greetings to Stresemann. He touched high emotional chords and one word he used, curiously enough, did not appear in some of the official records of his speech. It was "C'est fini—la guerre entre nous"—ended is the war between us. And then, dramatically, he said, "Behind are the guns, the machine guns, the cannon and the battles and the bloody disputes of the past. In front of us is conciliation and peace, and the mother no longer after this day need



look upon her baby boy with dread lest the hour come when he must be sacrificed for his country's continued existence."

It was a great speech and I never heard such applause in my life. The whole Assembly broke loose and in the midst of it all our senior delegate, Sir George Foster, in spite of his seventy-nine years, jumped to his feet and called for three cheers. Most people did not know what he was saying, but he whipped out his handkerchief and the English-speaking delegates, including the Irish, gave three cheers. And so ended that dramatic day. I think *Punch*, with that unerring instinct that marks its cartoonists, interpreted rather correctly the general feeling. *Punch* represents the League of Nations as a beautiful woman holding out her hands to welcome the German —given in the cartoon with a silk hat, although in reality it was an ancient bowler—to membership in the League, and the title is this little Latin phrase, "Ave et cave"—welcome, but be careful, and the words below are these: "I am glad to welcome you into membership of the league but may I just give one word of advice? Don't rattle your ploughshare too vigorously."

So Germany has now become a permanent member of the Council of the League and a member of the League of Nations. Undoubtedly new problems will be created by Germany's entrance, possibly some question of modifying the peace of Versailles may arise, but that at any rate will be discussed within the compass and circle of the League of Nations. Gentlemen, it did seem as though the League of Nations had made a fresh start in its world-wide operations. Please God, it has.

When I came back from Geneva to Paris I wanted to go out to see some of those fields that I had last seen in those awful months at the close of the war. I saw something of the devastation of war. I wanted to see what progress had been made towards reconstruction. It is gratifying to see what progress has been made and yet awful gashes on land and houses remain and there are graveyards in which lie hundreds of thousands, in all ten millions, of men who were killed in the Great War. I saw our own English graves. I saw the cemeteries so beautiful, so well kept, a stone above each grave, with flowers there and the lovely greensward, the text at the bottom of each stone chosen by the parents. I saw

the cemetery where General Mercer lies, besides our English graves and French graves, aye, and a group of Chinese coolies who came to do war work behind the lines. And sometimes in the same cemetery there is a group of black crosses and on the other side a group of white crosses—the Germans on one side and the French on the other. And one could not help breathing a prayer to God that the one organization that is trying to secure international peace and international co-operation should grow in power and influence and that we might find a better way of settling international disputes than the grim arbitrament of war.

I don't think Western Europe will fight again. There are grave dangers between the white and black and yellow people. Everything depends on our attitude to them in the days to come, but I believe that the great spirit that lies behind this effort to create and develop and maintain the League of Nations will, by the blessing of God, make it increasingly difficult to resort to that futile and fatal method of settling disputes by brute force.

In Geneva I ventured to conclude my sermon by quoting some lines from Tennyson's Idylls of the King. May I repeat them to you here? There is a wonderful description of King Arthur's great hall,

> "Where twelve great windows blazon Arthur's wars.
> Nay, one there is and at the eastern end,
> Wealthy with wandering lines of mount and mere,
> Where Arthur finds the wand Excalibur.
> And also one to the west, and counter to it.
> And blank: and who shall blazon it? When and how?
> O, there, perchance, when all our wars are done,
> The brand Excalibur will be cast away."

I wondered whether it might be at Geneva, when by the blessing of God the affairs of this world should be so ordered and settled upon the best and surest foundations, that peace and happiness, truth and justice might be established among us for all generations.