

"For more than a hundred years the British Empire and the United States have found it possible to settle all their disputes by peaceable means. While we may not always have approved of all the terms of these settlements, who is there who will deny that the worst settlement so secured was better for both nations than the best settlement that could have been secured by war between the two great branches of the Anglo-Saxon race? Great Britain and the United States have conclusively demonstrated the possibility of nations settling their disputes by peaceable means, and it is but natural, therefore, that they should have been the leaders among the great powers at the Peace Conference in endeavouring to secure a general world-wide agreement for the peaceable settlement of international disputes. This agreement took the form of the Covenant of the League of Nations.

In the past arbitration and conciliation have been the only peaceable methods available, and statesmen and jurists have recognized the weaknesses inherent in these methods of settlement, where political considerations almost inevitably enter into the final decision. For years, therefore, many of the ablest statesmen and jurists have been devoting their best efforts towards promoting the establishment of a Permanent Court of International Justice, composed of judges of the highest standing, and who, by reason of their integrity, their ability and their permanent judicial position, would decide international causes, just as domestic causes are decided according to the very right and justice of the case.

So far, however, all efforts to secure this result have been unavailing. The final and insuperable difficulty has been the method of selecting the judges. It was on this point that the Hague Conference of 1907 failed to reach an agreement. This difficulty has now been solved through the League of Nations, and if the statute constituting the Court, which was approved at Geneva in December last, is ratified by a majority of the members of the League, as it almost certainly will be within the next few months, the new Court will be established, and the next assembly at Geneva will be in a position to elect the judges.