

BELGIUM AND GREECE

Greece. According to the general principles of European relations, it was open to any State which had a serious cause of difference with Greece to make on her those demands which she required in her own interests, to embody them in an ultimatum, and, if necessary, to enforce them by war. Conduct of this kind would be judged on the particular case; it might be justifiable, it might be reprehensible; all would depend upon the questions at issue and the cause of difference. When two Powers are at war, to present demands, and, if necessary, go to war with a third Power, is in itself in no way more contrary to ordinary political convention than is the original declaration of war. Much has been talked about the rights of neutrals which is quite beside the point. The state of neutrality is not a positive, but a negative one. It means only that at a particular moment the neutral State is not party to the conflict which is in progress. It may become one at any moment, either by its own action or by the action of either of the belligerents. Any such action should, of course, be well weighed and undertaken for serious and honourable objects. If these objects are right and sufficient, the entanglement of another State in war is not in itself something to be reprobated, though it may be regretted. And there may be cases where the maintenance of neutrality is in itself a crime, just as the violation of neutrality in other cases may be a crime.

Now, how did this matter stand with Greece? Here, again, everything is really of transparent simplicity. In the year 1912, after the first Balkan war, when a quarrel arose among the allies, a fresh