

Canada Law Journal

VOL. LVIII.

TORONTO, MARCH, 1922.

No. 3

THE PERMANENT COURT OF INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE.

One of the products of the upheaval caused by the Great War is the new tribunal known as the Permanent Court of International Justice.

What it will amount to remains to be seen. A Court for the trial of the disputes between citizens of a nation is one thing, and a Court to decide between different nations is another. The former is a recognised and obvious necessity and is therefor permanent, the latter is an experiment and a very doubtful one at that. The former has a police force at its back supported by the strength of the whole nation. The latter has not and never can have any police force and is supported only by the temporary sentiment of perhaps only some of the nations it purports to deal with. One of the litigants, one of the parties to a treaty, whilst the Court is adjusting its spectacles, may jump up and say this treaty is "only a scrap of paper" and promptly declares war against the other fellow. The Permanent Court thereupon also becomes scraps and passes into oblivion. We trust, however, that its permanence and usefulness may long outlive our expectations.

This Court was inaugurated at the Hague last month, and we are told that the President of the Court, Chief Justice Bernard Loder, of Holland, opened the proceedings, and the registrar read congratulations from many of the European Governments after which all arose and took the oath successively, in the form of a "solemn declaration" in French or English, according to nationality.

Dr. Dacunha in his address, declared that February 15 was one of the great days in the annals of human justice.

"Among the peoples of the young American continent," he said, "the idea of international justice is perhaps stronger and