

FAIR-WEATHER AND STORM SIGNS

shown so that you could notice it. They expressed opinions on the value of peace conferences in general which I am not at liberty to repeat. The idea of a third conference at The Hague may have seemed beautiful to them, but it looked as if they felt that it was lacking in actuality. Possibly I did not understand them. That was just the trouble—I could not. It was all puzzling, baffling, mysterious.

It seemed as if all our efforts to forward the calling of the next conference in the interest of permanent peace brought up dead against an invisible barrier, an impassable wall like the secret line drawn in the air by magic, thinner than a cobweb, more impenetrable than steel. What was it? Indifference? General scepticism? Pre-occupation with other designs which made the discussion of peace plans premature and futile? I did not know. But certainly there was something in the way, and the undiscovered nature of that something was food for thought.