

prevented another great conflict. I believe that had it not been for the League of Nations there would have been a very serious war in the far east, and to the extent to which this body, set up by almost universal consent, functioning it is true under great difficulties, has been able to prevent the outbreak of a great war, it is entitled to the sincere thanks of every peace loving man in the world. I measure its worth not entirely by what it has done but also by what it has prevented being done, and I think that is not an unfair test to impose upon an organization of that kind.

On the last occasion on which we discussed the Manchurian situation I ventured to point out to my hon. friend that at that moment a meeting of the assembly of the League of Nations had been called. Those who are familiar with the attitude of deliberate assemblies will agree that if a crisis arises the executive may not always function without the authority of the assembly behind it as successfully as otherwise would be the case. The executive, acting upon the request of China, immediately convened the assembly, which met on March 3, 1932. When that assembly met we had a full and complete representation of the whole League of Nations for the purpose of determining what future action should be taken, and also to prevent, so far as possible, the continuance of preparations for hostilities, if I may use that word in a broad and comprehensive rather than in a narrow sense. At that meeting of the assembly Canada was represented by one of its elder statesmen, Right Hon. Sir George Perley, who has had a very considerable experience in attending gatherings of this kind. If I am not trespassing too much upon the time of the committee I should like to read just a few sentences from what Sir George Perley said on March 8 last, as indicating the attitude of Canada towards the problems then under consideration. He said:

During the last twelve years the world has been endeavouring to build up, through the league, a system of outlawing war and settling disputes by reason rather than by force. The way in which this assembly deals with the question before it will go far to show how successful we have been in this effort. Certainly, if the assembly meets satisfactorily the test which now confronts it, it will mean a long step forward in the realization of the league ideal.

To the Canadian delegation it seems that the work of the assembly must be based primarily upon the following considerations:

- (1) We should stop further bloodshed and bring about a real and effective armistice.
- (2) We should distinguish between the rights of a case and the manner in which those rights are realized and enforced.
- (3) We should affirm as solemnly as possible the fundamental truth that no infringement of

the territorial integrity, and no change in the political independence, of any member of the League of Nations which is brought about by force in disregard of the undertakings of article 10 of the covenant can be recognized as valid and effective by the other members of the league.

We believe that this assembly, the instrument through which the common concern of mankind for the maintenance of peace can find expression and make itself felt, should proceed in its work with the above considerations always in view. We hope that by so doing it will arrive at a solution of the difficulties before it, which will be just, peaceful and permanent.

I do not think any good purpose would be served by reading further from that admirable address. On March 11, at the close of the discussion, a resolution was unanimously adopted with which I will not trouble the committee. But while it did deal in carefully measured terms with the whole situation in a manner perhaps not wholly in accord with what my hon. friend suggests, nevertheless I believe its influence was very far-reaching. The resolution asserts the juridical competence of the league to deal with the Chinese-Japanese dispute, recalls the obligations assumed by the parties to the dispute as members of the league and signatories of the Paris pact for the renunciation of war, affirms the binding nature of the principles and provisions of these instruments and declares:

That it is incumbent upon the members of the League of Nations not to recognize any situation, treaty or agreement, which may be brought about by means contrary to the covenant of the League of Nations, or to the pact of Paris.

Without reading the lengthier resolution I have beside me, which resulted ultimately in the agreement executed by China and Japan by which the armistice came into effect, I think it would serve all useful purposes if I made merely one observation. A gentleman who has had much experience in attending the meetings of the League of Nations indicated this thought to me not long ago: It has always been the case that the representatives of smaller nations or states have made speeches, sometimes of considerable length and of great vigour, while the older, more powerful, and shall I say experienced nations, have remained silent because they recognize that there is a tremendous responsibility in matters of this kind. When committees are set up, when discussions take place across the table and resolutions are arrived at, then the real work is completed. In this instance the lengthy resolution I have mentioned, the sense of which is indicated by the second paragraph just read, had in my judgment a profound effect in influencing the conduct of both China and Japan. I do not