

up by the League under Article V (2) with broad terms of reference and co-operating with non-League members), to identify and examine the claims of the dissatisfied states, followed by a World Conference to consider the whole complex problem of the world's distress—including armaments, trade, tariffs, and economic autarchy, raw materials, colonies, labour conventions and minorities—and to draw up the new Treaty of Peace.

Youth, united the world over, can still win through to these almost impossible ideals. It can overwhelm the entrenched irrational opposition that such a policy encounters from its older fellow countrymen, and it can force older statesmen to save the world, or make way for youth.

At the end of this month there will meet in Geneva a World Congress of Youth larger and more representative than any of its kind hitherto. Over twenty countries will send representatives of their various youth organisations, in delegations of fifty per country, to discuss their common agreement and differences. Then they will decide what youth shall do about it. A pledge by the youth of the world actively to oppose all wars other than collective wars against a state which has broken its covenants would be a revolutionary outcome. Yet, if it covered the youth of the majority of the democratic countries alone, it may well be the event that will save our world from destruction. It may also be youth's last chance.

E. P. WALLIS-JONES.

A YOUNG CONSERVATIVE

THE failure of the League of Nations to save Abyssinia from Italian aggression has caused many men and women in this country to reconsider their attitude towards a League policy. Everyone is convinced that another war on the same scale as the last will be the end of civilisation, but on the best method of preventing the recurrence of such a catastrophe there is not the same unanimity. There seems at least a danger that Europe will revert to a policy of big armaments once more and the inevitable spark will occur to set the whole continent ablaze once again. The splendid results of the Peace Ballot showed that there had been a great change in the attitude of public opinion towards the League of Nations. Three years ago, supporters of the League were regarded by their neighbours as unpractical idealists, if not as cranks. Now all that is changed and the majority of the electorate is "League-conscious." These new supporters have received a nasty shock from the League's failure. The universal condemnation of Italian aggression and the imposition of sanctions, if somewhat overdue, had led them to hope for further and more drastic action and a final vindication of the principle of collective security. What actually happened is already a thing of the past. In the years to come, when lips are unsealed, memoirs written, and histories published, there will be much mutual recrimination in Europe, when national historians seek to fasten the blame for the League's failure on any but their own country. A later generation will have to decide between their conflicting testimonies; what concerns us is rather how the League can succeed than who is most responsible for its failure.

First of all, Italy had a grievance against Abyssinia. Whether it was a legitimate grievance we do not for our present purpose need to decide. What is more important is that she did not consider the League Council and Assembly fit tribunals to try her case, and that too when she had pledged herself to submit to their ruling. There is more in this refusal than mere perfidy. The whole essence of arbitration is

psychological. The judicial ability of the arbitrator weighs but little with the parties; his impartiality is of paramount importance. The national delegates at Geneva were as much concerned with the interests of their respective countries as with the merits of Italy's case. This same narrow national outlook was no doubt responsible for the sanctions fiasco; too much attention to possible losses in national trade caused the delegates to lose sight of the more vital issues of international peace.

If the world is to be made safe for future generations, these defects must be remedied, and men of all parties would do well to give more consideration to the plans of THE NEW COMMONWEALTH which have been devised solely to strengthen the League in exactly those places where it is at present so weak. An equity tribunal is not, like the League Assembly, open to the criticism that it represents national interests. The Court could be elected when required from a panel of judges, and thus an impartial decision could be secured. The usual objection to this plan, which generally comes from the right, is that it is too much to expect nations to abandon their sovereign right of settling their own disputes in whatever manner they choose. Let us examine this argument more closely. At present the two most important methods of settling disputes between nations are diplomacy and war, arbitration being included under the first heading. The first will not be affected by the Equity Tribunal, but will still be encouraged like settlement out of court in civil cases, and, as in these latter, subject to the settlement being approved by the Court. As for the second, to renounce war as a method of settling disputes is not so much the sacrifice of a sovereign right as the implementing of a promise long since made, that is, of course, unless the League Covenant and the Briand-Kellogg Pact are not regarded as just so much paper. To sign such a pact and then claim the right to break your pledge when you think fit is not sovereignty, but anarchy.

The idea of an International Police Force is a natural complement of an Equity Tribunal. A court with no means of enforcing its decision is a mockery or a waste of time. The two most important benefits which such a force will confer are the effective and certain punishment of aggression and the disappearance of the national armed forces. By taking the infliction of penalties out of the hands of individual nations, the likelihood of disobedience is greatly diminished. In the Italo-Abyssinian dispute, the deliberations preliminary to any action were so lengthy that when they were over Italy had raised so many troops that the other nations were reluctant to intervene effectively and the Abyssinians were left to their cruel fate. With an international force such delay would be unnecessary and punishment would be swift and sure. With the introduction of this force the need for more than a skeleton national army retained merely for internal police work would disappear, now that the territorial integrity of each nation was guaranteed against unjustified attack. In the air too, the abolition of national air forces would give a great impetus to commercial aviation, with a corresponding effect on world trade. THE NEW COMMONWEALTH aims at strengthening the League and improving the Peace system in the very points in which reinforcement is required. The criticism that such schemes will impose too great a strain on human nature meets with the answer that human nature has no choice; we must act or perish. By making known the aims and objects of THE NEW COMMONWEALTH we can build up a favourable body of public opinion which can compel governments to give that lead which the world so greatly needs.

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