

immediate sequel, if Belgium had quietly acquiesced in the passage of German troops. But what a disservice to France, which had made no difficulty whatever about renewing its guarantee to respect Belgian neutrality! It would have been like letting a burglar in by a back-door. Belgium would thereby have placed herself in a state of war with France. And there is the further consideration of the obligations of international law, which cannot be treated as a "scrap of paper" without the direst consequences to civilization. It is an elementary principle of the law of nations that a neutral state is bound to deny a right of passage to a belligerent. Here Britain had a clear duty to perform, in the interest of international faith and the right of a weaker nation to maintain its independence. One only regret is that it did not occur to the King of the Belgians, in appealing to England for aid, to appeal at the same time to the United States as well! All neutral nations have an interest in preventing the world from being swept back into barbarism, with all its attendant phenomena of violence and terror, by an open disregard of so much as there is of international law. It is only a short year since the Lord High Chancellor of England, speaking before the American Bar Association on the subject of "Higher Nationality," was sanguine enough to speculate on the growth among nations of a habit of looking to common ideals "sufficiently strong to develop a General Will, and to make the binding power of these ideals a reliable sanction for their obligations to each other." Lord Haldane took the German word "Sittlichkeit," or "mannerliness," to illustrate his meaning, defining it as the system of habitual or customary conduct, ethical rather than legal, which embraces all those obligations of the citizens which it is "bad form" to disregard. In view of what has happened in Belgium, he could not make such an address to-day. Germany has revived the traditional barbarism that looks to conquest and the waging of successful war as the main instrument and aim of the highest statesmanship. In place of the "Sittlichkeit" that was to incline nations in ever-increasing measure to act