

FIGHTING FOR PEACE

aligned in advance by the countries interested. That, of course, was necessary. No sensible government will go into a conference blindfold, without knowing what is to be talked about.

But in 1914, when the matter came into my hands, the lapse of time and the negligence of the nations (the United States included) had made it too late to fulfil both of these recommendations. If one was carried out the other must be modified or disregarded. The then Secretary of State, Mr. Bryan, instructed me to endeavor to have the conference called in 1915, that is, within the period of eight years. After careful investigation and earnest effort, I reported that it could not be done at that date. The first thing was to get the preparatory committee, which would require at least two years for its formation and work. Toward this point, then, with the approval of the President, I steered and rowed hard, receiving the warmest sympathy and most effective co-operation from Jonkheer Lou-