

SECURITY.

MR. CHAMBERLAIN'S
SPEECH.

CASE FOR THE PACT.

(FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT.)

GENEVA, SEPT. 10.

Mr. Austen Chamberlain spoke for over an hour in the Assembly of the League of Nations this morning to a very attentive audience.

It was not a League speech in the ordinary sense; there was no suggestion of adventures into the Empyrean. If some had imagined that the British Foreign Secretary might have attempted to fan the embers of last year's enthusiasms and to make the proposed Security Pact acceptable by indicating some nebulous and comforting connexions between this new plan and the Protocol, they were certainly disappointed this morning. Mr. Chamberlain rejected the Protocol outright. He did it very well, and he made it perfectly plain that the British Government would not accept the product of last year's debate in the Assembly. The effect of the speech was to relieve the League. There is around and about the Assembly a good deal of lingering sentiment in favour of the Protocol, and an attempt is to be made to stimulate it on Saturday by a big public meeting organized by the League of Nations Union. But every Foreign Minister here—and there are 15 of them—knows that the Protocol is no longer practical politics. And there is really no need to make attempts that could only be misleading and futile to conciliate Protocol sentiment. As a matter of fact, Mr. Chamberlain has cleared the air, and at the same time has made an excellent personal impression.

Mr. Chamberlain paid a tribute to the League, the growing importance of which has been recognized in the action of the present British Government in arranging that the Foreign Secretary should be present at every meeting of the Council and that he should be a member of the British Delegation in this Assembly. Then he repeated the substance of the British objection to the Protocol, using as his text a phrase in a speech made yesterday by the Danish delegate, M. Zahle: "It is not our object to punish the aggressor; it is our object to prevent aggression." That the Protocol in aiming at peace might multiply occasions of war, that it was impossible to devise a uniform and rigidly logical scheme to cover the immensely varied conditions and relationships of peace in all parts of the world, were reflections that inevitably occurred to the British mind.

MORAL SANCTIONS.

Referring to a paragraph in M. Painlevé's speech Mr. Chamberlain described the British mentality as one that shrank from extreme logical conclusions and preferred to move from one concrete instance to another. The whole British Empire was an illustration of the British reluctance to confine relationships within a logical framework. It seems to the British Government much more profitable to try to secure peace in a definite and important region that has often been the theatre of war. That attempt was being made now, ~~sanctions, he urged, were much more important and effective than physical sanctions, and the way to peace was to disarmament through security and security through arbitration.~~ ^{sanctions, he urged, would succeed.} Moral

The tenor of the speech obviously impressed the Assembly. It was described afterwards as "distinguished," "thoroughly British." "There," said one delegate, "you have the real tradition. We know where we are. That is the true England we have to deal with." And, in fact, after this speech there is not much that the Assembly can do with the Protocol except to dispose of it decently. Possibly attempts will still be made to raise the decision on the Pact in the Assembly on the grounds that such questions as arbitration treaties on Germany's Eastern frontiers may be covered by some provision of the Protocol. But the Pact is moving away from here. Mr. Chamberlain is leaving Geneva in a day or two. M. Vandervelde, the Belgian Foreign Minister, has already gone, and, though those who remain may consider the development of the Pact idea in other directions, nothing more can be done for the moment on the Rhineland Pact but to await the decision of the German Cabinet and to prepare quietly for the Conference of Ministers.

** A fuller version of Mr. Chamberlain's speech will be found on page 14.