

better ones symbolized in the league. It was a popular gospel to preach, this gospel of the league of nations and all that it stood for, and political parties rivalled each other in their support of the league. Up to a certain point they had very good reason for the ground they took. But as years went by new situations developed. I suppose that the League of Nations as the instrument of collective security was at the zenith of its influence around the year 1926, when, in addition to all that the league represented, the world witnessed the United States join with France in bringing into being the Kellogg-Briand pact, or the Pact of Paris, as it is better known, under the provisions of which the nations that were parties to that instrument agreed from that time on to renounce war as an instrument of national policy. I remember very well the scene in Paris at the time that the pact was signed, because I had the honour of signing it on behalf of Canada. It was a beautiful day, above the foreign office in Paris were flying the flags of the nations of the world. In front of the building were hundreds if not thousands of men, women and children for the most part still dressed in black, rejoicing in this new promise of salvation from aggression, but still having very vividly in their minds the ravages of the war not so many years before. Great were the expectations in those years of the new instruments framed for the purpose of maintaining peace.

Well, how have the hopes once entertained of the League of Nations been realized? The League of Nations first of all was based on the idea of universality of membership. It was brought into being by the United States, one of the greatest powers in the world, and a power, considered largely disinterested. Other countries felt that, with the United States one of the members, collective security among the league members was going to be great indeed. Unfortunately, the United States subsequently did not see its way to becoming a member of the institution which owed its origin to the inspiration of that country. That was the first great disappointment. That was the first great gap in universal membership. As time went on, nations began to withdraw from the league. Japan, one of the great powers, withdrew, and shortly afterwards Germany, another great power, did the same. Brazil withdrew from the league. At the last meeting of the assembly, Italy was not represented. Thus, at the last assembly of the great powers that were in the war, Japan, Germany and Italy were not at the league.

Now, that is a very different kind of league from anything which was thought of, or talked about, during the years in which so much em-

phasis was put upon the security which all nations were going to derive from the League of Nations. I shall a little later on have something to say about the position of the league and what is involved in membership at the present time. It is I think an open question whether, instead of being a security, it may not in the present situation be something of a liability to be under the obligations which the covenant of the league imposes on its members with its membership restricted in the manner in which it is. That is a factor which must be taken into account at the present time.

There was another disappointment. The war ended, new democracies it was believed would come into being, and the league was to further that end. Instead of democracies the world has seen growing up in Russia, in Germany and in Italy as well as in other European countries dictatorships of the most powerful character. Instead of the people controlling their institutions and parliaments we have seen in the last few years parliaments swept out of existence. The league's whole strength lay in the fact that it was the people who were going to have the say; the people were going to have the say in Germany, in Italy and elsewhere. Well, we have seen the suppression of parliaments in some of these countries.

Then there was disarmament. That was another of the disappointments. Disarmament was foremost among the objectives of the league. It cannot be said that many nations did not strive to effect that great end. It has, however, thus far failed of accomplishment, and competitive arming is taking its place.

The league was going to bring about a condition wherein peace would be maintained by the furtherance of conciliation and arbitration and by treaties. There were to be all kinds of agreements between the different countries, that belonged to the league. Peace was to be secured by contract, process of law, judicial settlement, a world order based upon contractual relationship; and a world that liked to believe in the sanctity of contracts saw in this extension of treaty obligations another great hope for the maintenance of peace. What is the position to-day with regard to treaties and contracts between nations? We have seen how far the treaty of Versailles has been respected. We have seen how Locarno has been violated. We have but to look at the pronouncements made from day to day by certain nations to discover that they put no faith at all in contracts and will not if it suits their purpose regard themselves as bound by any agreement or obligation. Some nations avowedly are placing their confidence