

parties concerned are represented before an impartial tribunal. Enough materials have been collected, however, and sufficient *prima facie* evidence has been adduced to make it imperative that at the proper time such an investigation should be made. But what I wish to emphasize at the moment is the intolerable pretension of a nation which in advance declines the jurisdiction of the civilized world over its actions, defies public opinion and asserts its intention of disregarding the law of nations and its treaty obligations.

Of the flagrant and deliberate violation of one treaty at least there can be no possible doubt. I refer, of course to that which guaranteed the neutrality of Belgium. A bold and cynical admission on the part of the German Chancellor that this great wrong had been committed because of an alleged military necessity, has been followed by a series of special pleas which have been sufficiently refuted by M. de Lapradelle in the December number of the *North American Review*. It was urged, for example, that the treaty signed by Prussia in 1839 was not binding on the Germanic confederation, that by acquiring a colony in the Congo, Belgium had lost its neutral character, and that its neutral status had also been forfeited by arrangements made with Great Britain and France for the preservation of its neutrality in the event of an aggression by Germany.

It may be interesting, before concluding this address, to draw your attention very briefly to some of the debateable problems of international law which recent events have presented for solution.

The question of the employment of automatic submarine contact mines is one upon which a diversity of opinion still exists. The danger to neutral shipping from unanchored mines is obvious, and even when they are anchored there is a likelihood that in rough weather they will shift their position or break adrift altogether. It is said that during the two years which followed the Russo-Japanese war a great number of disasters resulted in the eastern seas from the use of mines by the belligerents. (Westlake, vol. 2, p. 312). At the sitting of the Hague Conference held on the 9th October, 1907, an article was adopted which prohibited (1) the placing of unanchored contact mines not so constructed as to become innocuous an hour at most after those who have placed them have lost control over them, and (2) the placing of anchored