

Switzerland for their kindly reception and care of the British prisoners (many of them wounded) who were interned in those countries or who passed through them on their return to the United Kingdom. I was at the Hague when some contingents of these men arrived there from Germany on their exchange. It was one of the most moving sights I have ever witnessed; and I remember that I did not please the diplomats at the Hague by saying that these prisoners appeared on leaving Germany to have emerged into the upper air. The Germans were annoyed to have the Fatherland compared even indirectly with the lower regions, but I still think that Holland may have seemed by comparison to be an earthly paradise.

"But I must pass on, and will say a few words only on the question of Contraband. I am strongly in agreement with the opinion expressed by Lord Finlay that when, at the commencement of the War, the British Government adopted the Declaration of London as their guide, they fell into error. And it is fortunate that, under the pressure of hard facts, the error was in time repaired. The fact is that nowadays when not armies but whole nations make war, and when success or failure depends as much upon the national spirit as upon prowess in arms, meticulous rules as to what is absolute and what is conditional contraband, or as to what is or is not a continuous voyage destined for the enemy, simply will not work. I remember the day when first a cargo of food intended for Germany was seized and held as prize, and the day when the same fate first overtook a cargo of cotton. If we had been bound by the Declaration of London it is probable that neither could have been seized. Both were detained and rightly detained, and action of that class helped to win the War. In saying this I do not intend for a moment to depreciate the value of the established rules of International Law or of well considered agreements operating in wartime. England kept her agreements and observed all the rules by which she was bound. Even Germany kept some of them; and there was no belligerent nation which did not pay at least a verbal homage to the principals of International Law. It cannot be denied that those principles suffered in the War a partial eclipse; but I still