

## DOES INTERNATIONAL LAW STILL EXIST ?

I AM honoured by the invitation of this Union to address them on the subject of International Law. It is a subject which is attracting much attention at the present time, and deserves that attention. There are some who say that International Law has ceased to exist by reason of recent events ; on the other hand we see in our papers, day by day, appeals made to the law and issues raised as to whether this or that action of this or that belligerent is in accordance with law ; and that could not be done if in fact there were no law. I propose to-night to present to you some considerations on this point ; to tell you briefly what International Law is and what it purports to do, and then to ask you to consider to what extent, as a system, it is affected by this war. Legal matters are not always easy to explain in a popular way, but I will endeavour to make the main points as clear to you as I can within the limits of time at my disposal:

International Law is the law which regulates the rights and duties of States ; it defines their property, declares their mutual powers and privileges, and controls their relations and their dealings with each other. In time of war it is concerned in the first place with the respective

<sup>1</sup> An Address delivered to the Workers' Educational Union at Birmingham, December 2, 1914.