

Turkish Empire. Those are the two great outstanding difficulties, but I am very hopeful in regard to both of them. Once those two are settled, then I think we may say that peace has been made; but until then we cannot say, in spite of the fact that we have signed Treaties of Peace, that peace has been made and established in the world.

NECESSARY TO STAND BY PEACE TREATIES.

The first essential of peace—a stable peace—and reconstruction is that we should stand by our treaties. There are those who grow weary of these great responsibilities, and who speak as though it were possible to renounce them in this quarter or in that without injustice to other peoples or detriment to ourselves. I venture to say that such arguments are as short-sighted as they are false. The nations and peoples of the world have realized their interdependence in a measure far greater than ever before the war, and the League of Nations—whatever may be thought of the provisions of the Covenant—stands as witness to their realization of that truth. No progress can be made towards the rehabilitation of Europe or the establishment of permanent peace in the world except upon the basis of acceptance of treaties and an enforcement of treaties. There may be relaxations here and there, following the discovery of new conditions, with the consent of all parties. We have had some relaxations of that kind—and I think they are wise modifications of the Treaty—in the matter of allowing more time for payment, and more time for disarmament; and in the prosecution of war criminals we made a concession to German national susceptibilities. There have been questions of that kind where, by the consent of all the Powers, there have been modifications. But the treaties must stand where such consent is not forthcoming, and no signatory should have the right to override any part of a treaty to which we are all parties. The British Empire from end to end is bound by honour and by interest alike to the treaties which it has signed. We have appended our signatures—all of us—and we must honour those signatures. Unless treaty faith is maintained, an era of disorganization, increasing misery, and smouldering war will continue, and civilization may very easily be destroyed by a prolongation of that state of things.

EMPIRE'S RELATIONS WITH UNITED STATES AND JAPAN.

I propose to call on Lord Curzon, on his return, to give the Conference a comprehensive survey of foreign affairs, and I will not anticipate his detailed statement now. But I should like to refer very briefly to one of the most urgent and important of foreign questions—the relations of the Empire with the United States and Japan. There is no quarter of the world where we desire more greatly to maintain peace and fair play for all nations, and to avoid a competition of armaments, than in the Pacific and in the Far East. Our alliance with Japan has been a valuable factor in that direction in the past. We have found Japan a faithful ally, who rendered us valuable assistance in an hour of serious and very critical need. The British Empire will not easily forget that Japanese men-of-war escorted the transports which brought the Australian and New Zealand Forces to Europe at a time when German cruisers were still at large in the Indian and Pacific Oceans. We desire to preserve that well-tryed friendship which has stood us both in good stead, and to apply it to the solution of all questions in the Far East, where Japan has special interests, and where we ourselves, like the United States, desire equal opportunities and the open door. Not least amongst these questions is the future of China, which looks to us, as to the United States, for sympathetic treatment and fair play. No greater calamity could overtake the world than any further accentuation of the world's divisions upon the lines of race. The British Empire has done signal service to humanity in bridging those divisions in the past; the loyalty of the King-Emperor's Asiatic peoples is the proof. To depart from that policy, to fail in that duty, would not only greatly increase the dangers of international war—it would divide the British Empire against itself. Our foreign policy can never range itself in any sense upon the differences of race and civilization between East and West. It would be fatal to the Empire.