

neglect anything which may contribute to European and world peace. The German Government will understand that the examination of these suggestions cannot be continued until France has submitted them to her Allies and has come to an agreement with them for the establishment of a system of security within the framework of the Treaty of Versailles.

Paris, February 20, 1925.

No. 3.

*The Marquess of Crewe to Mr. Austen Chamberlain.—(Received May 14.)*

SIR,—

Paris, May 13, 1925.

I have the honour to transmit to you herewith a copy of the draft note proposed to be sent by the French Government to the German Government in reply to the latter's memorandum of the 9th February.

In forwarding this document to me, the Political Director at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs stated that M. de Fleuriau had been instructed to hand a copy of it to you.

I have, &c.,

CREWE.

*Draft Reply to the German Memorandum.*

As they have informed the German Government in their note of the 20th February last, the French Government have studied, in common with their allies, the suggestions contained in the memorandum forwarded to them on the 9th February by his Excellency M. von Hoesch.

The French Government and their allies regard the step taken by the German Government as an earnest of pacific intentions which agree with their own.

Wishing to give to all the States concerned supplementary guarantees of security within the framework of the Treaty of Versailles, they have examined the German proposals with all the attention that they merit in order to judge what elements they may afford for the consolidation of peace.

Before embarking, however, on an examination in detail of the German note, it has appeared desirable to set out clearly the questions which it raises, or may raise, and on which it is important to know the views of the German Government because a preliminary agreement concerning them appears to be the necessary basis for any future negotiations :—

I.

The memorandum only mentions incidentally the League of Nations.

Now the Allied States are members of the League of Nations and are bound by the Covenant of the League, which involves for them clearly defined rights and obligations with the object of maintaining general peace.

The German proposals no doubt lay claim to the same ideal, but no agreement could be achieved unless Germany on her side assumes the obligations and enjoys the rights laid down in the covenant of the League.

This agreement, then, can only be conceived if Germany herself enters the League of Nations under the conditions laid down in the note from the Council of the League of Nations, dated the 13th March, 1925.

II.

The search for the guarantees of security which the world demands cannot involve any modification of the peace treaties.

The agreements to be concluded ought not, therefore, either to imply a revision of these treaties or to result in practice in the modification of the conditions laid down for the application of certain of their clauses.

Thus the Allies cannot in any case give up the right to oppose any failure to observe the stipulations of these treaties, even if the stipulations in question do not directly concern them.

III.

The memorandum of the 9th February contemplates first of all the conclusion between the " Powers interested in the Rhine " of a pact which might be inspired by the following principles :—

- (1.) Repudiation of all idea of war between the contracting States.
- (2.) Strict respect for the existing territorial situation in the Rhineland, with a joint and several guarantee by the contracting States.
- (3.) A guarantee by the contracting States of the execution of the obligations concerning the demilitarisation of the Rhineland which Germany has undertaken under articles 42 and 43 of the Treaty of Versailles.

The French Government do not fail to appreciate the value to the cause of peace, side by side with a renewed affirmation of the principles inscribed in the Treaty [of Versailles], of a solemn repudiation of all idea of war (an undertaking which, moreover, ought not to contain any time-limit) between the contracting States.

Those States must clearly include Belgium, who is not expressly named in the German memorandum and who ought to be a party to the pact as a State directly interested.