

He concluded as follows :—

“ It is to the principles of the League, and not to any particular manifestation, that the British nation has demonstrated its adherence. Any other view is at once an underestimate of our good faith and an imputation upon our sincerity. In conformity with its precise and explicit obligations the League stands, and my country stands with it, for the collective maintenance of the Covenant in its entirety, and particularly for steady and collective resistance to all acts of unprovoked aggression. The attitude of the British nation in the last few weeks has clearly demonstrated the fact that this is no variable and unreliable sentiment, but a principle of international conduct to which they and their Government hold with firm, enduring, and universal persistence.”

All doubt was resolved. Britain was prepared to shoulder her responsibilities and to take action provided action was collective. A lead had been given. The atmosphere was changed, and the key to future discussion had been struck. Delegate after delegate rose and pledged his Government to observance of the principles of the Covenant. It is not my intention to analyse their speeches, but I will say a few words regarding the attitude of the representative of one of the countries upon which the Assembly's thoughts were centred.

The Abyssinian delegate spoke early in the debate. He certainly kept the promise which he made in his opening remarks that he would say nothing calculated to annoy anybody or disturb the peace. He intimated that any suggestion made with the object of raising the economic, financial, or political level of his nation, provided it proceeded from the League of Nations and was carried out according to the spirit of the Covenant, would be regarded by Abyssinia as the action of sister nations which had reached a more advanced state of civilization and were sincerely desirous of guiding his country in the path of progress. Any proposal of that kind would be welcome and would be examined by his country with the greatest sympathy and with real gratitude ; but it would have to be based on the spirit of disinterestedness and carried out and put into effect for the good of all without any evidence of special and private advantage. He concluded by requesting the League to send immediately to Abyssinia an international commission of inquiry in order to examine the substance of the complaints brought against her ; and he added that the Emperor was prepared to accept any reasonable suggestion in the spirit of high conciliation by which he was moved, and to make just allowance to the demands of modern civilization and to the legitimate interests of all nations.

I myself spoke on the afternoon of the 14th September. My speech was recorded in full in the verbatim report to which I refer you. I may mention, however, that I concluded by supporting on behalf of New Zealand the policy which the Foreign Secretary of the United Kingdom had enunciated. I said that we accepted the implications of that policy, always recognizing, as we must, that the responsibility under the Covenant was a responsibility not for one, but for all of us. No formal motion was before the Assembly. The debate closed on the 16th September.

ELECTION OF A JUDGE OF THE PERMANENT COURT OF INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE.

Owing to the death of M. Adatci, a member of the Permanent Court of International Justice, the Assembly was faced with the necessity of electing a Judge to succeed him. The election was held on the 14th September, when the Assembly had before it the list of candidates nominated by the various National Groups (Document A. 14), together with particulars of the procedure to be followed in the election (Document A. 34).

M. Harukazu Nagaoka had been nominated by the greatest number of National Groups, including that of Great Britain. He obtained 35 votes out of 51. Whilst the election was proceeding the Council was also in session, engaged independently in the election, as required by the rules. The Council's choice likewise fell on M. Nagaoka, who was therefore declared elected.

M. Nagaoka, like his predecessor, is a citizen of Japan, and is well known in League circles. He has at times represented his country at League meetings.

I would here mention that at the meeting on the 27th September the President read a letter from Mr. Frank B. Kellogg in which he tendered his resignation as a member of the Permanent Court of International Justice (Document A. 51).

ELECTION OF THREE NON-PERMANENT MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL.

The mandates of three non-permanent members of the Council—those of Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Mexico—were due to expire, and on the 16th September the Assembly proceeded to elect three countries to replace them. In the morning of that day the request of Poland to be declared re-eligible for election was put to the vote, and that country received 35 votes in favour of the request out of 45 votes cast. In the afternoon Poland was elected, as were also Roumania and Ecuador, these countries receiving, out of 54 votes cast, 42, 50, and 45 votes respectively.

COMMISSION OF INQUIRY FOR EUROPEAN UNION.

It is only necessary to mention in passing that on the 27th September the Assembly agreed to renew the Mandate of the Commission of Inquiry for European Union for the coming year, and to place the question on the agenda for the next session of the Assembly (Document A. 65).

On the morning of the 28th September the Assembly completed the work for which it had been summoned ; but the President, in deference to the wishes of a great many delegations, and in view of the critical international situation, took the wise step of adjourning the Assembly instead of declaring it closed.