

A GREAT GATHERING IN LONDON

The fourteenth conference of the interparliamentary union was opened at London, July 23. Extracts from an Associated Press dispatch follow:

"Adherents of international peace from all the parliaments of Europe, as well as several of those of the western hemisphere, were present, but hardly had the conference opened when, amidst a scene of considerable excitement, Prof. Maxim Kovalevsky, a member of the lower house of the Russian parliament, announced that he and his colleagues, representing, until yesterday, the youngest parliament in the world, would be obliged to withdraw in consequence of the dissolution of the body they were officially appointed to represent.

"There were about 500 delegates present, the American representation being headed by Congressman Richard

Bartholdt, while William J. Bryan occupied a seat on the platform.

"Lord Weardale (Sir Phillip Stanhope) opened the congress, his preliminary sentences of welcome being specially addressed to the Russian delegates, whereupon the delegates rose in a body and, turning toward the delegation of the late parliament, cheered them to the echo. Lord Weardale also incidentally mentioned President Roosevelt as having been associated with them in the work of peace.

"Premier Campbell-Bannerman, in reply, reminded his hearers that King Edward had always been a great advocate of peace. The British government, he said, was in entire sympathy with the object of the conference, whose work had already aroused among the nations a strong feeling in favor of peace. The world had far too long been nothing less than a huge military camp. The premier especially greeted the members of the Russian parliament present, and also paid a tribute to Emperor Nicholas, who had done so much towards the enhancement of ideas of peace. It could, he thought, be safely asserted that the Russian parliament, although dissolved, was sure to again come into existence.

"Then the premier, in a sudden access of enthusiasm, shouted: 'La duma est morte! Vive la duma!' (The Russian parliament is dead! Long live the Russian parliament!)

"The delegates rose to their feet and a storm of cheering continued for a couple of minutes.

"In conclusion the premier said he hoped that at the next peace conference at The Hague a general act would be drawn up providing for the submission of all questions of dispute without restriction to The Hague tribunal for the universal good of humanity.

"Count Apponyi, the Hungarian minister of worship, followed, characterizing the premier's speech as a direct message from King Edward, the latter announcing on his own initiative his complete adhesion to the work of the conference."

"The count went on to say that the British premier's appeal for the relief of Europe from the burdens of their military budgets could not be fruitless. The parliaments must follow suit.

"On Count Apponyi's suggestion a telegram was sent to King Edward as follows:

"The inter-parliamentary conference received the king's adhesion with profound gratitude. May he long be spared to promote the welfare of his people and the cause of international peace."

"Then came the most dramatic moment of the opening of the session. Professor Kovalevsky rose, but some minutes elapsed before he could gain a hearing, so prolonged was the cheering. Finally, in a voice somewhat broken with emotion, he announced the necessity for the withdrawal of the members of the Russian parliament. He said:

"We came here in behalf of the Russian nation to partake in the great work of the conference. The Russian people desire peace. The mission of the Russian parliament was to snatch a great people from a regime of violence and substitute for it a sense of reality, liberty and justice. We hoped to take an active part in your work, but our mission comes to a sudden end, as our parliament having been dissolved, we are no longer official representatives. Our sympathy remains. We return home with the determination to continue the great struggle for freedom, liberty and justice."

"The announcement of the withdrawal of the Russian delegates was

met with a storm of protests and shouts of 'No! No!' and attempts on every side to induce the Russians to remain, but the latter insisted that they no longer had any official status and must leave England for Russia this evening and return to the 'battlefield.'

"The Russian delegates then left the hall and the conference then settled down to business. But the incidents attending the dissolution of the Russian parliament were for some time discussed far more eagerly than the business of the conference.

"Lord Weardale, who had in the meantime been elected president, had some difficulty in getting the excited delegates quieted, but ultimately attention became absorbed in the discussion of the reports of the commissions on the American proposals for an international congress and a model arbitration treaty to be submitted to the next conference at The Hague.

Mr. Bartholdt expressed particular gratification at the solution suggested by the committee appointed at Brussels of this most perplexing problem. The scheme to convert the next Hague conference into a permanent body, which would meet at stated periods, and to create a council for the codification and development of international law, he considered so thoroughly practicable and timely that no well disposed government could object to it.

"In conclusion, Mr. Bartholdt said: 'What we want is a world organization and a system of law in order to replace arbitrary power in international relations.'

"The former Austrian minister of commerce, von Plener, presented the report of the Brussels commission, giving the proposed model treaty of arbitration. He said that while it was impossible to recommend the American proposal in its entirety some of the features were good, notably the means by which it proposes to decrease the cost of arbitration. Herr von Plener moved the adoption of the model treaty as amended by the commission, together with a recommendation urging on the powers that when arbitration is impossible to have recourse, singly or jointly, to the mediation of a third power before declaring war.

"At this juncture, William J. Bryan rose, his appearance being heartily cheered.

"I can not see," he said, "that the people have any justification in killing each other before investigating the question involved. There is no question of the sufficient importance of this. I want to move an amendment to Herr von Plener's recommendation, to be appended to the commission's report. It goes further than this without going too far. This is my resolution:

"If a disagreement should occur between contracting parties, which in the terms of the proposed arbitration treaty need not be submitted to arbitration, they shall, before declaring war or engaging in any hostilities whatever, submit the question to The Hague court or some other impartial international tribunal for investigation, and report, each party reserving the right to act independently afterwards."

"This resolution I put in order that there shall be no more shedding of human blood."

Mr. Bryan's amendment and Herr von Plener's recommendation were supported by the German delegates, and will be discussed tomorrow.

Congressman T. E. Burton of Ohio, vice president of the American delegation, moved the inclusion in the treaty that questions relating to consular and diplomatic privileges and the collection of debts shall be submitted to arbitration. This was agreed to and the report of the committee appointed at Brussels to prepare a

model arbitration treaty for presentation to the powers and the second peace conference at The Hague, was adopted.

The meeting also adopted the following proposals.

"First—That it would be advantageous to give to The Hague conference a more permanent influence in the organized functions of diplomacy and that the powers should agree in establishing periodical meetings of the conference.

"Second—That in naming their representatives to the second Hague conference the powers may usefully give them instructions to ascertain the best means of constituting a consultative commission charged with the duty of preparing the codification and development of international law.

"Objection was raised to a proposal to attempt unification of national laws as utopian and it was eliminated. Prince Hilko, a member of the Russian delegation from the upper house of parliament, this evening announced his intention to remain and participate in the work of the conference. It appears that Count Benckendorff, the Russian ambassador here, urged the former minister of railways to adopt this course. The prince has been appointed a member of the international council."

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