

hopes, as one who looked forward to remote time for their fulfilment, voiced his fears in these words :

"Who can say that these times breathe the spirit of peace? There is war in the air. Nations armed to the teeth prate of peace, but there is no sense of peace. One sovereign burthens the industry of his people to maintain military and naval armament at war strength and his neighbor does the like and justifies it by the example of the other; and Great Britain, insular though she be, with her imperial interests scattered the world over, follows, or is forced to follow, in the wake. If there be no war, there is at least an armed peace. * * * When will governments learn the lesson that wisdom and justice in policy are a stronger security than weight of armament?"

"Hail to thee, orator of 1896! All hail to thee, Lord Russell of Killowen!

"The lesson that you helped to teach is being rapidly learned. The story of 'overburthened industries, waste of human energy unprofitably employed, squandering of treasure which might have let light into many lives and of homes made desolate,' has been told so often that the truth has penetrated even into the breasts of military chieftains and from The Hague has come the first tangible promise of peace and gradual disarmament.

"It took the nations by surprise that the initiative of the conference should have come from the empire of Russia, but it should be recollected that the conference of 1864 at Geneva, that mitigated the horrors of war by recognizing the beneficent Red Cross society, and the movement that forbade the use of explosive bullets, both had their origin with the Czar. The youthful autocrat that issued the invitation of August 24, 1898, was following closely in the steps of his ancestors.

"The rescript was transmitted by Ambassador Hitchcock to this government with these words :

"The high and humanitarian importance of this document cannot fail to recommend it to the absorbing interest of the president and people of the United States, and the fact that Russia is the first to take a step in the direction of a general disarmament and towards that universal peace which all Christian peoples must regard as the haven to which Christian progress ought to tend, places her in the very front rank of the civilized nations of the world."

"The rescript set forth that 'the maintenance of general peace and a possible reaction of the excessive armaments, which weigh down upon all nations, present themselves * * * as the ideal towards which should tend the efforts of all governments.' Further the imperial government urged 'that the present time is very favorable for seeking through the medium of interna-

tional conference the most effective means of assuring to all nations the benefits of a real and lasting peace.'

"It set forth that 'the ever increasing financial expense touches public prosperity at its very source; the intellectual and physical powers of the people, labor and capital are, in a great measure, turned aside from their natural functions and consumed unproductively.'

* * * 'To put an end to these increasing armaments and to find means for avoiding the calamities which menace the entire world—that is the supreme duty which today lies upon all nations.'

"This admirable state paper closes: 'This conference will be, with the help of God, a happy augury for the century which is now about to open.'

"Our government accepted the invitation in the lofty spirit in which it was given. There was much of criticism and many evidences of suspicion of the motives of the Russian. The idea obtained with many that the scratching process would bring forth the tartar.

"Our embassy to Russia, in a letter to the state department dated November 9th, 1898, commented upon this fact in very interesting fashion. I quote: 'The general consensus of opinion among the members of the diplomatic corps, now present, appears to be that the proposition is visionary and utopian if not partaking of Quixotism. Little of value is expected to result from the conference, and indeed every diplomatic officer seems to regard the proposition with that technical scepticism which great measures of reform usually encounter.'

"January 11th, 1899, there came to all the powers the second communication from the Russian imperial minister of foreign affairs speaking on behalf of his royal master. In it the tentative details of the proposed conference were given. The main purposes as stated in this most interesting paper were: 'placing a limit upon the progressive increase of land and naval forces' and 'preventing armed conflicts, by the pacific means at the disposition of diplomacy.' The themes for discussion were suggested to be :

1. "The non-increase of war budgets and a reduction of effectives in armies and navies.
2. "Interdiction of new fire arms and new explosives.
3. "Prohibition of throwing explosives from balloons.
4. "Interdiction of submarine torpedo boats and plungers, and building of war vessels with rams.
5. "The adaption of the provisions of the Geneva conventions of 1864 and 1868 to naval warfare.
6. "Revision of the laws and customs of war as elaborated by the Brussels conference of 1874.
7. "The acceptance of the principles of mediation and optional arbitration

and establishment of a uniform code of practice in their use.

"I may be pardoned for this extended reference of these documents, believing as I do that they stand second in importance and in their influence on the future of mankind to none others of the century, unless we except the declaration of emancipation of our own headman of the nation, Abraham Lincoln.

"On May 18th, 1899, the representatives from all the powers met at The Hague in response to the invitation of the Czar. Leading diplomatists and prominent jurists had in charge the interests of their governments. The United States was particularly fortunate in the selection made by President McKinley. The Honorable Andrew D. White, our ambassador at Berlin, one time college president, scholarly author, legislator and minister to Germany and Russia; the Honorable Stanford Newell, our minister at The Hague, able lawyer, wise counsellor, broad citizen; the Honorable Seth Low, president of Columbia university, leading educator and once the chief executive officer of a great city; Captain Alfred T. Mahan of the United States navy, retired, naval strategist and historical scholar, who, after thirty years of active service in the navy, achieved fame by his works on 'The Influence of the Sea Power upon History,' and the 'Life of Lord Nelson'; Captain William Crozier of the United States army, ordnance expert, instructor in mathematics, efficient officer; Mr. Frederick W. Holls, secretary of the delegation, accomplished linguist, international lawyer—these formed the six representatives of the great republic, who were to wield an influence more potent for results than any other delegation from a single nation. In the conference were the six great European powers, Russia, Germany, France, England, Austria-Hungary and Italy; the ten smaller states of Europe, Holland, Belgium, Denmark, Sweden and Norway, Switzerland, Spain, Portugal, Servia, Rumania and Turkey; four Asiatic nations, China, Japan, Persia and Siam; these, with the United States, making twenty-one in all.*

"The instructions given by our government to its commissioners presented a plan for a permanent tribunal of arbitration, and provided for the submission to it of all questions of disagreement, except such as relate to or involve political independence and territorial integrity. They were also to present a proposal regarding the immunity from seizure on the high seas, in time of war, of all private property, except contraband; unless the vessels containing such

*NOTE—Later advices from The Hague show that the following countries were also represented, making twenty-six in all: Greece, Luxembourg, Montenegro, Bulgaria and Mexico.