

that the prevention of war by the League was possible. The League was initiated to promote peace—peace by arbitration, peace by conciliation, or peace by bringing to bear public opinion. I say now that I believe a very great deal of good has been done by the League, and it ought to get credit therefor.

STATEMENT BY THE PRIME MINISTER OF THE UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA.

Appreciation of Lord Robert Cecil's Work for League.

General Smuts : I wish to join those of my colleagues who have already spoken in expressing very strong appreciation of the work that Lord Robert Cecil has done at Geneva. As the representative of one of the Dominions for a number of years, and now the representative of the British Government, I think he has rendered invaluable service, not only to the world at large, but also to the British Empire, in the stand he has made for League principles and for the position of the League. I nominated him as the South African representative, not because he was necessary from the South African point of view or to defend South African interests, but in order to give him, as the great protagonist in this country for the League, a platform from which he might continue effectively to support that movement. He has done so in a way which I think is above praise. The moral stock of the British Empire, so far as I am informed, is very high in Geneva. I was very much struck by what one of the South African representatives told me on his return from Geneva the other day. He said the most remarkable thing at Geneva is the confidence, the faith, the reliance, which all the small peoples of the world represented there have in the British Empire, and in the stand that we are making for justice, fair play, and international honesty. That is a matter of very great importance to us, and I think it is very largely due to the ethical tone which Lord Robert Cecil has been able to give to the discussions there, and to the message of good will that he has been able to bring from this country and from the other young nations of the British Empire to the nations of the world.

Restoration of Austria.

Lord Robert has told us this morning in his very full statement what the League has done and the successes the League has achieved, and he has in particular referred to the successful restoration of Austria. The success of the Austrian experiment is valuable and significant not only in itself, but because it points a way to a similar treatment to any other country that may require our help in the future. I was discussing with some financial men in the city what might be done in case Germany were to break down completely financially, and there was a consensus of opinion that the Austrian experiment had been so successful and formed so good a precedent that, if we had to take action, our treatment of Austria might serve as a very valuable precedent. And let me say this : that in the case of Austria also South Africa has been able to be helpful. We happen to have as one of our South African representatives a gentleman of Austrian origin and of very great financial ability who has been able to make a very notable, if not the main, contribution towards the rehabilitation of Austria.

Support of British Empire for the League.

I would press very strongly that the British Empire, the British Government and the Governments represented here at this Conference, should use all their power in order to keep their hands clean and support the League, and support the smaller powers where their interests clash against the larger Powers. I agree thoroughly with Lord Robert when he said that the position of the League is not one of force ; it does not rest on the sanction of force, but on public opinion, the moral enlightened opinion of mankind. The more we can marshal that opinion—and we can play a large part in doing so—the more we can marshal the support of public opinion and the feeling of the world on the side of the League, the better for the future of the League. The League is inevitable. The League ideal seems to be the only hope of the world, and if in practice the League has not realized the great anticipations of those who originated it, it is because of its youth and inexperience, and because of the difficulties of the time through which we are passing—times of reaction, times of disillusion, times when it is almost impossible to keep any good cause afloat. We recognize that we are passing through an era of great difficulty ; all we can do is to keep the flag of the League flying, and not to put burdens on it which it cannot carry. In the end it must triumph : that is inevitable. There is nothing else if there is to be a reign of law and justice in this world. In the meantime we can do our best to marshal public opinion behind it, and to see that it stands for the high principles for which it was originally founded. I was very glad to hear the speech of Mr. Bruce, the Prime Minister of Australia. It shows how all the young countries of the British Empire are now falling into line in real whole-hearted support of the League. To my mind there is no doubt that the League is not only a great world interest, it is a British interest too. I thoroughly endorse what Mr. Bruce has said. The more we can make the League a real living force, the less armaments we as an Empire shall require. We cannot rest merely on a military or a naval basis. Something far greater than armaments will be wanted in an Empire as great as ours, and the League seems to me to be a real, substantial, moral reinforcement of our whole position. The more we can strengthen it, the more we can make it a reality, the more secure our position will be, which is not one of military or naval ambitions, but one of peace and social progress in the world. I therefore hope that whatever we can do to strengthen the position of the League we shall do.

Value of League to Empire.

Let the world know that behind the League and behind the action it has occasion to take is the whole force and weight of the British Empire. I am sure the League is adding a new bond of cohesion to the Empire. I am sure that the time is coming when the young nations of the British