

supervision, it would, perhaps, be too favourable a view to say even that nothing had been done. He quoted from the minutes of the last session of the Preparatory Commission on Disarmament the remarks of the Chairman of that Commission, which stated, "The first point which appears indisputable is that the Commission is unanimous in expressing a desire that there should be a limitation and a reduction of war material." Yet, from the report on the work of the League, he found that the Commission ultimately carried the following resolution:—

"The Preparatory Commission for the Disarmament Conference, having rejected the systems of direct limitation of material in service and in stock, having noted that the system of indirect limitation (limitation of the expenditure on material) did not meet with general assent, decides that the limitation and reduction of material must be sought by means of publicity of expenditure."

"This, surely," said Lord Cecil, "is a very disappointing result."

Point (d) of the British resolution dealt with a matter which had not yet been considered by the Preparatory Commission. In this connection Viscount Cecil remarked that to establish a Disarmament Treaty and not to provide for adequate supervision would be to offer a very incomplete solution.

Finally, he wished to state that it was obvious that no organ of the League could impose on any single Power or set of Powers anything it (or they) refused to voluntarily accept. If Great Powers refused to reduce their armaments it might mean the end of the disarmament ideal of the League, and even of the League itself. But they could only submit. He felt convinced, however, that it was impossible to believe that the Great Powers would adopt such an attitude. He appealed in particular to France, which had taken such a part in the Treaty of Locarno and the Pact of Paris, to give a sympathetic lead in this most important matter. If nothing more were done the hungry peoples of the world would feel that, instead of the bread for which they asked, they were being offered a stone.

M. Loudon (Holland), President of the Preparatory Commission on Disarmament, thought that the implied criticism of the work of that Commission contained in the British proposal was hardly justified. He believed the Commission had cleared the ground to a considerable extent, and many points had been decided. He would point out that the Commission was preparing for a first Disarmament Conference, and there would probably need to be others at a later date. Their principal concern was to obtain results which were immediately possible, though they might hope for greater ones in the future. The agreement between the Naval Powers, which they all trusted to see consummated shortly, would undoubtedly facilitate the whole work of the Preparatory Commission. He did not quite understand paragraph (a) of the British resolution. The Preparatory Commission *had* adopted the same principles with regard to the reduction and limitation of land and air forces, and had only reserved its decision in regard to the principles to be applied in the case of naval forces pending an agreement between the Naval Powers. As regards material, the difference in character between the three branches of material (air, land, and sea) made application of the same principles to all very difficult. With regard to the resolution referred to by Viscount Cecil, that reduction of material must be sought by means of publishing annual expenditure, he pointed out that this was a compromise between two entirely conflicting points of view, and considered that it would only spell delay. As regards supervision, the Preparatory Commission had already arranged to deal with this question at its next and final session before the meeting of the General Disarmament Conference. He did not share Viscount Cecil's uneasiness with regard to the limited results achieved. The Preparatory Commission now felt that it had the support of the Powers most interested.

The French delegate said that, in the interests of speedy and rapid conclusion of their task, the French Government considered that they should not ask the Preparatory Commission to reopen discussion on points already settled. Everybody on the Preparatory Commission wished to conclude its work as early as possible, and they recognized and shared the impatience of the peoples of the world for practical results. Insufficient progress with regard to solving the problem of security was one of the principal reasons for delay with regard to disarmament. Further, the naval question had been one of the main reasons for marking time. The meeting of the Preparatory Commission held earlier this year did, in his opinion, achieve considerable progress, unanimous conclusions having been reached on various points, and he thought it would be a great mistake to ask the Commission to reopen matters already decided upon. As Viscount Cecil had made a special appeal to France, he would remind the Committee that it was France herself who had most strongly urged at the Preparatory Commission the necessity for an agreement with regard to reduction in war material. Because one Government had changed its mind since the sitting of the Preparatory Commission was not, in his opinion, sufficient reason for reopening the discussion. Governments were not eternal, and if the situation was to be reopened each time a Government fell they would never reach finality. It might be true that the Preparatory Commission had not made great progress, but the beginning was often the most difficult step, and a work begun was half done. A further difficulty about reopening the question was that all the countries represented on the Preparatory Commission were not represented on the League; and it was largely on account of the attitude of one of these countries outside the League that the compromise referred to had been agreed upon. The Preparatory Commission would meet again as soon as the naval problem was out of the way. There was no doubt about France's good will, but the question was whether to aim at an ideal or to accept what was practically possible at the moment.

Count Bernstorff (Germany) supported Viscount Cecil's proposal. He agreed that disarmament was the most important question the League had to deal with. He did not think that anywhere there could be satisfaction with regard to the decisions reached by the Preparatory Commission, particularly with reference to the limitation of war material and the exclusion from calculation of trained reservists. Germany had made clear before the Preparatory Commission her entire dissatisfaction with the decisions reached. A treaty drawn up on the basis of the work of the Preparatory Commission at the