

## THE LOCARNO PACT.

Two questions present themselves for answer in taking up the consideration of this latest scheme for the establishment of peaceful relations between the European nations. (1). What is the Locarno Pact? (2). Is it entitled to be called a Pact of Peace? We will consider first what are its provisions?

This Pact consists of several parts. The first part is a treaty between Great Britain, Germany, Belgium, France, Italy, Poland, and Czecho-Slovakia, by which these countries agree that all disputes which may arise between them shall be settled by peaceful means, and that they will on no account resort to war.

The second part is the "Security Pact," which assumes the inviolability of the frontiers of Germany on the one side, and Belgium and France on the other, these three countries undertaking that they will in no case attack or invade each others territory or resort to war against each other, but that all disputes which may arise between them shall be settled by peaceful means, and if in any case this shall be impossible by normal methods of diplomacy, they shall be submitted, either to a judicial decision or to a conciliation commission, or to the Council of the League of Nations. If any violation should take place, it must be brought before the Council, and if the Council is satisfied that there has been such violation, each signatory Power agrees to come to the assistance of the Power that is threatened. In case of the refusal of any power to submit a dispute to peaceful settlement, the matter must in like manner be brought before the Council, who must decide what steps shall be taken.

The third part consists of Arbitration Treaties between (1) Germany and Belgium, (2) Germany and France, (3) Germany and Poland, (4) Germany and Czecho-Slovakia, these being practically identical, and describing a process varying according to the nature of the dispute. Justiciable disputes, that is, those having to do with their respective rights, are referred to a Permanent Conciliation Commission composed of five members, one appointed by the German Government, one by the Bel-

gian, and three by common agreement from the three other nations, the German and Belgian Governments appointing the President of the Commission. If no agreement is reached, the dispute shall be referred to the Permanent Court of International Justice, or to a body of arbitrators appointed according to the Hague Convention of 1907. The decision of either of these bodies is final. If the dispute is of a character that cannot be settled by reference to a Court of Justice, it must be brought before the Permanent Conciliation Commission, and if this fails to find a solution, before the Council of the League of Nations. If the League Council is not unanimous there is nothing to prevent the parties from fighting after a three months interval, so that the loophole for war still exists, except that under the Security Pact, Germany, France, and Belgium have undertaken not to fight.

Then there is fourthly, the Allies' Note to Germany with regard to Article 16 of the Covenant, which lays down that "each State member of the League is bound to co-operate loyally and effectively in support of the Covenant, and in resistance to any act of aggression, to an extent which is compatible with its military situation and takes its geographical position into account." This formula, taken from the Geneva Protocol almost word for word, removed Germany's difficulties about Article 16, which she maintained could not be carried out with regard to a nation practically disarmed.

There are two other treaties to refer to—the Conventions between France and Czecho-Slovakia, and between France and Poland, whereby these countries undertake to lend each other immediate assistance in case either of them is made the object of unprovoked attack. Or if the Council fails to reach unanimity with regard to any dispute under Article 15, and war results, the two countries undertake to support one another.

The question of Disarmament is referred to in the Final Protocol of the Locarno Agreements as follows: "The representatives of the Governments represented here declare their firm conviction that the entry into force of these treaties and conven-

tions will continue greatly to bring about a moral relaxation of the tension of many political or economic problems in accordance with the interests and sentiments of peoples, and that in strengthening peace and security in Europe, it will hasten on effectively the disarmament provided for in Article 8 of the Covenant of the League of Nations. They undertake to give their sincere co-operation to the work relating to disarmament already undertaken by the League of Nations and to seek the realisation thereof in a general agreement. Thus we see the gradual advance towards Disarmament through the several stages represented by the Treaty of Mutual Guarantee the Geneva Protocol, and the Locarno Pacts, all of which were directed towards the strengthening of the Covenant and the solution of the cardinal problem of Disarmament.

We see therefore from what has been said that the Locarno Agreement is entitled to be called a Pact of Peace, inasmuch as it brings Europe under the Law of Arbitration, brings Germany into the League of Nations, renders it less likely for war to break out amongst civilised nations, establishes the principle that moral force is stronger and more effective than physical, and that therefore war is not the best method of settling differences, and makes more possible the reduction of armaments. It has been registered with the League of Nations, and a copy placed in the Archives of the League at Geneva, copies being also sent to each of the Signatory Nations. There are, however, certain points which have given rise to comment, and which might possibly prove a source of danger to the maintenance of peaceful relations between the European nations; and it is only right to notice such points and their possible effects, and to see how far they may be counteracted.

First, there is the fact that the Pact is not universal. The nations subscribing to it are Britain, Germany, France, Italy, Czecho-Slovakia, Belgium, and Poland; that is to say, it comprises only half the European nations, leaving outside two of the most difficult to deal with and the most likely to create disturbance—Russia and Turkey. This very fact, as pointed out by more