

devoted mostly to two topics, Arbitration and International Law, and in each of these directions sufficient was accomplished to make the meeting one of the great landmarks in the history of mankind, and one of the events which will make the century illustrious.

International Arbitration has not heretofore been a judicial proceeding, and the findings of arbitrators have oftentimes carried but little weight. The reason is plain. The arbitrators were chosen by the disagreeing powers as attorneys rather than judges. Each arbitrator strove to obtain all possible advantages for the nation that he represented.

Under the method of procedure fixed by the Conference each nation may appoint four of its citizens as permanent judges of the High Court of Arbitration, and the appointments will be made from among its most eminent men. From these judges the litigant nations will select such number as may be agreed upon to hear and determine the questions at issue. This tribunal will be the most august in the history of the nations; from its entire impartiality its decisions will command universal respect and no sympathy could be expected toward any nation ignoring its awards.

International Law, a much used term, prior to the assembling of the Hague Conference had in reality been nothing more than "a miscellaneous collection of moral precepts and rules of intercourse." From Grotius to our own time many able writers have expounded it, but in time of war any nation felt itself free to disregard such precepts as seemed to conflict with its own immediate interests. By the action of the Conference the chief principles of International Law have been embodied in a treaty which has since been ratified by and between the twenty-six nations represented, and thus is the most widely approved and binding statute enacted in the history of the world. As the author states it, this action is the Magna Charta of International Law. It will be the starting point for all development and commentary hereafter.

The proceedings of diplomatic conferences are usually secret, but in the readable story as told by Dr. Holls, the curtain is lifted and many interesting debates are opened to the reader. The proceedings were at all times conducted with dignity and decorum as became the gravity of the occasion and of the subjects discussed: subjects having a momentous bearing upon the progress and even the life of civilization. No more striking contrast could

THE PEACE CONFERENCE AT THE HAGUE.*

One of the most able and influential of the delegates to the Peace Conference at the Hague, Dr. Frederick W. Holls, has just published an interesting and valuable history of the proceedings of the Conference. Twenty-six nations sent delegates and each nation sent as its representatives its ablest diplomats, statesmen, and publicists. The questions debated were weighty and momentous. A foundation was laid, as never before, for the adjustment of differences between nations by peaceful arbitration; and in case war came, it was sought to deprive it of some of its horrors and to safeguard the life and property of neutrals and property not contraband of war upon the high seas.

The rescript of the Emperor of Russia calling for the assembling of delegates from all the civilized nations, mentioned especially the limiting of the increase of armies and of the use of new and improved machines for the destruction of human life. It soon became evident, however, from positions taken by various delegates of the larger powers, that nothing could be effected in the direction of disarmament—the matter which evidently the Emperor of Russia had especially in mind. The date for this radical departure has not come. The time of the Conference was therefore

*THE PEACE CONFERENCE AT THE HAGUE, and its Bearings on International Law and Policy. By Frederick W. Holls, D.C.L. New York: The Macmillan Co.

be named than that between the wrangling and hurly-burly of an ordinary Parliamentary debate and the finished orations on this occasion of the diplomats whose every word was weighed and considered before it was uttered, — the lofty and serene courtesy in the bearing of the delegates, each to the other, and the stately and gracious method of conducting all proceedings, as became an assemblage of gentlemen.

Among the eminent diplomats, members of the Conference, may be named Prince Münster Derneburg and Privy Councillor Zorn of Germany; Andrew D. White, Seth Low, and Frederick W. Holls of the United States; Heinrich Lammasch of Austria; Chevalier Deschamps of Belgium; Leon Bourgeois and Baron d'Estournelles de Constant of France; Sir Julian Pauncefote of England; Baron de Stael and Privy Councillor de Martens of Russia; and Baron de Bildt of Sweden and Norway.

Dr. Holls's volume will be a necessity to all who would keep in touch with one of the loftiest achievements since the meeting of the Barons with King John, and an achievement which it is hoped through its High Arbitration Tribunal may be a factor in the settlement of the "tremendous problem in the Far East which is darkening the horizon of all commercial nations."

FRANKLIN H. HEAD.