

THE LEAGUE AND ABYSSINIA

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IT is the purpose of this article to attempt a brief analysis of the origins and course of the Italo-Abyssinian conflict; and in particular to examine the failure of the League to resolve it in the initial stages and later to arrest or restrain hostilities. Since our only hope of rendering the League Covenant effective in future is to discover where and how it failed in the past, this problem is far from being merely academic. It really is, what so many topics are said to be, a matter of life and death.

It is agreed that the Covenant aims at achieving three distinct though not separate objects; first, the enforcement of the Peace Treaties of 1919; second, the promotion of international cooperation; and third, the prevention of war. The second of these does not concern us here; something is being done, though far from enough. International cooperation in vital matters such as control of aviation, tariffs and emigration, waits upon the prevention of war, and more than that, the prevention of the fear and anticipation of war. It is on the first of these aims that all the emphasis of post war diplomacy has been laid: the enforcement of the peace treaties, or the maintenance of the *status quo post bellum*. And though there have been modifications of the 1919 treaties—such as the cessation of reparation payments, the supersession of the Treaty of Sevres by the Treaty of Lausanne, the Locarno treaties which marked Germany's reintroduction into the comity of nations, and latterly the military occupation of the Rhineland by Germany—many of the main lines of settlement remain unchanged. The third objective, which most nearly concerns us here, has not been attained at all. There have been wars almost continuously since 1920, in Europe, Asia, America and now Africa. And this was inevitable, since the very aims of the Covenant—preservation of the *status quo* and prevention of war—are incompatible.

If the states defeated in 1918 were willing to acquiesce in the present disposition of Europe and Asia, we could have peace, but they are not. If the victorious states were sufficiently strong to intimidate them, we could still have peace—at a price, the price of justice and freedom and content. In fact as we all know, neither

condition is fulfilled. Consequently there is war whenever a defeated state sees the opportunity to strike effectively at its conquerors.

The general aim of the Covenant is peace, and by their signature of the Covenant, members of the League are pledged to the following specific tasks: to guarantee territorial integrity of their members; to provide means of conciliation and arbitration between members having complaints against each other; to restrain aggression by collective action and thereby to ensure "collective security". They further envisage the reconsideration of "conditions whose continuance might endanger the peace of the world." Finally, they declare that these Covenant pledges take precedence over all other treaty obligations.

Even from such a brief outline it is obvious that the Covenant provides for a system of international diplomacy which is entirely new. Just how novel it is can be gauged by comparing it with pre-war diplomacy, the old system of balance of power, or power politics system, whereby each state tries to be stronger than any other, or rather, since that has long ceased to be practicable, to build up a stronger alliance of armed powers than any which would be likely to attack it and its allies. The profound difference between these two types of international policy was recognized in part at least by the covenanting states, and in Article 20 they provided for any conflict that might arise between the two types.

This Article abrogates "*all obligations or understandings which are inconsistent with the terms (of the Covenant)*"; members of the League "*solemnly undertake*" not to contract such obligations; and in paragraph two, they declare it to be "*the duty*" of members to procure immediate release from such obligations. In short, the Covenant takes legal and moral precedence over any and all other treaty engagements of League members. If such treaties conflict with the Covenant, they must go. The principle is clear; the intention of the article is plain to anyone who takes the trouble to read it; all signatories to the Covenant are bound by it. Italy is bound by it; Great Britain is bound by it; we in Canada are bound by it: yet there is not a great power in Europe that has respected it consistently at all times and all places. This is not due to any innate wickedness, or to any desire for war; it is simply due to the fact that no first rate power has had the ability to pursue the new Covenant policy of collective negotiation and collective action *to the exclusion of the old policy of individualism and balance of power*. Instead there has been an attempt to combine the two systems, and—if possible, worse than this—to use the Covenant

itself as an implement in a balance of power system. We shall observe this ill conceived and ill fated attempt recurring constantly in the course of the Italo-Abyssinian conflict.

The most salient feature of the conflict was the dilatoriness of League members in coming to grips with it in the early stages. When action was imperative, they were inert; when action became both ineffective and dangerous, they were officiously and pathetically busy. Why was this? The facts are that England, France and Italy were bound by treaties among themselves to support each other's ambitions in Abyssinia, and they were all unwilling to admit that their obligations under the Covenant transcended these obligations.

In the scramble for African colonies in the 80's and 90's of last century, Italy was left far behind. She picked on Abyssinia as the only remaining territory which was not already under the domination of some other great power, and tried to take it by force. After being beaten at Adowa in 1896 she resorted to a policy of more or less peaceful penetration in accordance with classic British policy, and in 1906 she secured a Tripartite Agreement with England and France. This agreement began, rather humourously, by declaring the maintenance of the political and territorial *status quo* in Ethiopia, as determined by certain prior agreements. This did not mean, of course, that the three powers guaranteed the territorial *status quo* of Abyssinia, from the Abyssinian point of view; it meant in effect that the powers recognized Abyssinia as being predominantly a sphere of Italian influence. It aimed at maintaining the *status quo* as among the three great powers in their relations to Abyssinia. It recognized their respective interests in Abyssinia: Britain's concern for the headwaters of the Nile, Italy's concern for the hinterland of Eritrea and Somaliland, France's concern for the hinterland of French Somaliland, and the railway zone from Djibouti to Addis Ababa, and it agreed that the powers should cooperate to extract concessions from Abyssinia. It was in fact a typical pre-war balance of power, anti-Covenant treaty.

Again, before Italy joined the Allies in 1915, she signed the Treaty of London which promised her generous colonial concessions in Asia Minor and East Africa.

In 1925 an Exchange of Notes was effected between Great Britain and Italy, only two years after Abyssinia itself had been admitted to membership of the League. These notes revived an offer made in 1919 by Italy to Britain, whereby Italy declared herself ready to support Britain's demand—from Abyssinia—for

a barrage on Lake Tana and a motor road from there to the Soudan, provided Great Britain would support her demand for an exclusive economic interest in West Ethiopia. The Emperor of Abyssinia very naturally protested to the Secretary-General of the League. Italy and Britain hastened to assure the League and Abyssinia that they had not intended to apply force when making their requests, nor to partition Abyssinia economically. The Emperor properly retorted that "in our view, under Article 20 of the Covenant, they (Italy and Great Britain) had no right to contract such an agreement". The situation was smoothed over, and in 1928 Italy and Abyssinia concluded a Treaty of Amity and Conciliation by which they agreed to submit disputes not settled by diplomatic means to conciliation and arbitration; not to use force; and not to endanger each other's independence.

All these treaties except the last were contrary in spirit and often in the letter to the Covenant. The states involved should either never have entered into them, or should have taken immediate steps to secure their release from them. In fact they continued to feel bound by them; they had put on lamb's clothing, but there was no physical or spiritual metamorphosis. And Italy pushed on her policy of aggression, confident in the assumption that England and France, however prettily they might bleat on occasion, were none the less wolves at heart.

In fact, the governments of both England and France could not make up their minds to admit that Italy was threatening a breach of the Covenant and that it was their duty to consolidate the Covenant states against her. They could not rid themselves of the old, ingrained habit of regarding her activities as merely an imperialistic deal at the expense of a minor state. Because they regarded the League as an instrument for preserving the *status quo*, they wanted to retain Italy as an amicable member of it, since her support in Europe was essential to that balance of power aimed at offsetting the menace of German aggression in the East of Europe. France particularly, whose nightmare is German aggression, was anxious for this, because though she has a guarantee for the Western front in the Locarno treaties of 1927, she has no effective guarantee for the East, and by conversations between Laval and Mussolini in 1934 she had secured an understanding with Italy that that country would support her in maintaining the *status quo* against German aggression.

One would expect such a conflict of views to produce paralysis, and so it did. The handling of the Italo-Abyssinian dispute was dilatory in the extreme. The Walwal incident occurred in December

1934 and it was not "settled" until September of 1935. It was merely a clash of Abyssinian and Italian troops near the frontier between Abyssinia and Italian Somaliland. The Abyssinian Government requested procedure under the 1928 treaty, but the Italian government failed to see any question to submit to arbitration. Accordingly in January Abyssinia took advantage of her "friendly right" accorded under Article 11 of the Covenant to bring to the Assembly's attention the circumstances which were "*threatening to disturb international peace.*" This article further declares *any threat of war...is...a matter of concern to the whole League, and the League shall take any action...deemed wise and effectual to safeguard the peace of nations.* Italy countered by declaring that negotiations under the 1928 Treaty were in process, and she and Abyssinia agreed to try to arrive at a settlement in conformity with that Treaty. This was in January.

Nine months elapsed, the rainy season in Abyssinia, and Italy's time for advancing the military preparation that she had contemplated at least as early as July 1934, when Mussolini sent a Military Commission to Abyssinia to report on the prospect and nature of a campaign. The League states were of necessity aware of these preparations, if only for the reason that Italian transports had to pass through the Suez Canal; yet no joint action was taken. A large section of the British navy appeared in the danger zone, but since it was not supported by the navies of other League powers, it savoured rather of a British threat than a League warning, and served only to exacerbate Italian public opinion against Britain.¹ Further, at so late a date even a democratic government would have had grave difficulty in withdrawing from the position in which Italy had placed herself, and for the dictator of a totalitarian Fascist state, for whom prestige is a paramount necessity, it was impossible. In brief, for eight months Italy used the Treaty of 1928 as a means of evading the Covenant of 1919, and was permitted to do so by the League powers.

On September 3rd. the arbitration committee made a unanimous award,² which exonerated both Italy and Abyssinia from any responsibility for the Walwal incident. The pretext was dismissed, and reality emerged. The following day the Council met and opened its official eye to the situation. It proceeded to apply Article 15.

1. A committee appointed by the Council in 1927 suggested certain measures that might usefully be taken in case of a "threat of war"; that the Council recommend the parties involved to refrain from movements of troops or similar operations, and if they proved recalcitrant, "further warning measures...be taken, such as a naval demonstration." These recommendations were adopted by the Council and the Assembly.

2. Their terms of reference did not permit the arbitrators to consider whether the Walwal affray took place on Italian or Abyssinian territory.

Abyssinia had applied to the League under this Article as early as March, but as we have seen, no action was taken. The Article provided for arbitration or judicial settlement in case of dispute between League members. Failing settlement, the Council shall make a report and "*Members . . . will not go to war with any party to the dispute which complies with the recommendations of the report.*" There followed a somewhat bewildering series of committees to do the work called for by the Article. First the Council of Five tried and failed to settle the dispute, because Italy rejected the basis of conciliation. The Committee of Thirteen succeeded it, and was in the very midst of a report, when hostilities actually broke out in Abyssinia. The Council hurriedly adopted the report, but the recommendations were put on one side undone, thus leaving the Council itself responsible for making recommendations.

A Committee of Six very easily decided that Italy "had had recourse to war contrary to its engagements under . . . the Covenant;" all Council members agreed with the Committee's report, and when submitted to the Assembly, 50 out of the 54 states gave it their assent. The dissenting four were Italy, Austria, Hungary and Albania. Italy's dissent is not remarkable. The interesting thing is the reasons the other three had for dissenting. Albania frankly said that she had an alliance with Italy and she put that before her obligations under the Covenant. The other two were more tactful, but meant the same thing. Like other League states already considered, they were unable to give up the old power politics system.

The Assembly accepted the findings of the Committee of Six and Article 16, the now famous "sanctions" article, came automatically into play. This article requires "*the (immediate) severance of all trade or financial relations . . . and the prevention of all financial, commercial or personal intercourse.*" Further, the Council "*shall . . . recommend to the several Governments concerned what effective military naval or air force the members shall contribute to the armed forces to be used to protect the Covenants of the League.*" That, particularly for the language of diplomats, is perfectly clear: it means that the League states shall apply sanctions immediately, unanimously and completely. Actually sanctions were applied gradually; they were by no means complete, and they have never received unanimous support. The following table indicates what was achieved. Fifty-six states were involved:

Arms embargo	Financial sanctions	Rejection of Italian imports	Stoppage of exports to Italy
51	51	49	49

Only 41 supported measures for distributing the financial loss involved. The first three measures were almost completed, but neither the export of non-war materials nor the sale of oil was arrested.

Under this article, Italy might also have been "*declared to be no longer a member of the League*" by a vote of the Council because of her violation of the Covenant. This was not done; owing again to considerations of the balance of power. It was thought that territorial integrity in Europe could best be served by breaking it down in Africa—the kind of theory which, as someone happily remarked, "combines the lofty idealism of Machiavelli with the iron logic of Mrs. Baker Eddy."

This reversion to the old balance of power system which we have been considering attained its zenith in the notorious Hoare-Laval "peace" plan of December 1935: a bit of political gangster stuff whereby Abyssinia was to be bumped off the map, Italy to take the swag and France (and any other racketeers who would come in on it) to get a rake-off in the form of Italian support against Germany. We all know what happened: Sir Samuel Hoare was dropped by his Government like a hot potato, and Laval soon followed him into a merciful oblivion. The Samuel of the Bible, we read, listened faithfully to the voice of the Lord, and we are sometimes told that the voice of the people is the voice of God; our twentieth century Samuel seems to have heard neither. And he was disowned because the people of Great Britain—who had just taken the trouble to vote for peace, the Covenant, disarmament and collective security in the Peace Ballot of 1934 to the number of some eleven millions—raised their voices and condemned his policy in unequivocal terms. This event is significant, for it betrays a dangerous gap between government policy and popular will, and suggests interesting and important speculations as to the efficiency of the technique of democratic representation in parliament. The popular will did prevail, but it prevailed too late to materialize in successful action. Irreparable damage had already been done by the pursuit of a non-Covenant—indeed an anti-Covenant policy.

This distinction between government and people should be remembered also in connection with the traditional charge of hypocrisy which was again laid at Britain's door, especially in Italy. "Who is Britain," the argument runs, "to make such an uproar over a trifle of imperial expansion on Italy's part, when she herself has extended her sovereignty over a quarter of the globe?" Such criticism is mis-placed. It is true that British in-

terests in Egypt and in the route to India cause Britain to prefer an independent Abyssinian kingdom to an Abyssinia under Italian domination. But it is also true, as we have seen, that the full force of British public opinion is in favour of the Covenant and the enforcement of its articles against an aggressor. Because British interests and British principles happen to coincide, are we then to give up the principles? This is indeed a novel argument, distinguished by nothing so much as its illogicality. Further, "times" have changed. Political action is judged to-day by far higher and stricter criteria than in the 19th century. Colony snatching and racial subjugation are no longer approved; war has been solemnly renounced as "an instrument of national policy".¹ Because Britain has erred in the past constitutes no reason for Italy to sin to-day.

The same distinction between government and people should be made in the case of France. There was admittedly an Italo-French "entente", and the Laval government was in effect pro-Italian, but Laval was maintained in office on sufferance, only so long as the Front Populaire—or Left party—chose to combine with the Right to keep him there, which was until shortly before the Spring elections when (after a brief interval of Sarraut's government) they themselves gained a majority in the French House of Deputies.

Before leaving the Hoare-Laval plan, mention must be made of the incalculable damage it did in the U. S. A. As the English "Observer" stated: "Sir Samuel Hoare's great achievement was that he killed the oil embargo;" he extinguished, that is, the last probability of the projected embargo on oil exports to Italy being imposed by the U. S. A. in the event of Britain deciding herself to impose an embargo, and asking for American cooperation—an event which never occurred. America could not be expected to be enthusiastic about this embargo in any case (since *Standard Oil* is in constant competition with *Anglo-Persian Oil*, in which the British Government holds the majority of shares), and it must be apparent that if the European League powers desire her cooperation in such self-denying ordinances they must be prepared themselves to give a strong, unequivocal lead in the imposition of full and immediate sanctions, instead of discouraging American pro-League opinion by wavering, half-hearted and almost treacherous policies.

While discussion of the oil embargo was at its height, the Neutrality bill was passing through Congress, to emerge in February in emasculated form. The existing law was merely extended

1. By the signatories of the Kellogg-Briand Pact of Paris, August 27, 1928. Argentine and Brazil were the only important abstentions.

until May 1937 (viz. after the Presidential elections); the vital section, which enabled the President to impose an embargo on certain materials if he thought wise, was cut out, and this despite the remarkably strong feeling in U. S. A. in its favour. It is too early to say which was cause and which effect; whether the vacillation of Europe over the embargo killed the Neutrality bill, or whether the bill undermined the embargo, but interaction can hardly be denied.

On this matter of sanctions, again, an obvious question arises: why did Italy expose herself to hostility and national loss by flouting the Covenant when she could have applied to the League Assembly for redress of her grievances under Article 19? Certainly not for any lack of grievances. They were extensive, but may be summarized as follows. She had been promised expansion in Abyssinia. She could not guarantee the security of her other African colonies while they were threatened from attack by an independent and hostile Abyssinian empire. She needed the area as an outlet for her surplus population; as a market for her own products; as a source of raw materials and as a site for new investment. The promise of military prestige and the glamour of East African Empire illumined these more humdrum considerations. It is impossible to discuss the Italian claims in detail, but a few relevant facts may be noted. Italy chose to ensure the security of her colonies by a war of conquest, followed by a period of guerilla warfare which promises to be protracted. Not until this is over will she be able to do much in the way of consolidating her position in Abyssinia or of "securing" her other colonial possessions. She might have elected to put pressure on Abyssinia through the League to effect reforms, which could have included the rigorous supervision of Abyssinian borders. It is an open question whether this would not have proved a quicker and more effective way of protecting Italian adjacent territory. As for the population argument, two points are of interest. First, that since the depression there has been a world wide movement, in which Canada has participated, to restrict immigration, which has hit Italy in a tender spot. Second—by way of counterpoint, no country has made more strenuous efforts than Italy to increase the birth rate, even to the point of bonuses on matrimony and taxes on bachelors. As to raw materials, Italy can buy them just as easily from an independent Abyssinian kingdom as from an Italian dependency; the only difference is that in the latter case she can exploit the materials on her own terms. Similarly as regards investment: though there are ample other fields for new investment, none is so

profitable and so safe as that in territory owned and controlled by the investing country.

In elaborating the motives actuating and inspiring Italy, her dictator made no mention of prestige. Yet the very words are by this indissolubly wedded in the public mind; as Jiggs to Maggie, as pork to beans, so is dictator to prestige. A nation's prestige may be roughly defined as its reputation for getting what it wants: it carries a sort of "illusion of grandeur" that will compensate a people for the absence of political freedom and economic well being for a surprisingly long period of time—hence its obvious value to a dictatorial ruler, or indeed to any government which is not succeeding in supplying its citizens with more tangible benefits. The assumption may be hazarded with a good deal of confidence that prestige was a real and probably a paramount factor in Mussolini's considerations with regard to the war.¹

This furnishes part of the answer to our question: why did Italy not apply to the League? If you are sold on the idea of a ready-made war, you do not buy at an emporium which sells only peace-goods. But this does not dispose of the question. Why were some of Italy's more "legitimate" economic grievances not brought before the League? Italy herself has furnished the answer. She considered "it would have been useless, and why should the Italians have given the Abyssinians time to arm?" And again, "as the League was functioning at the moment, the Italians certainly did not believe in it." These are quotations from an individual Italian², but they fairly represent the view of his people. They also represent a real and damaging charge against the League, as it is proceeding at the moment.

In 1919 when the Covenant was finally drawn up, it was incorporated in the peace treaties; it constitutes the first 26 articles of the Treaty of Versailles. We are all aware of the importance of environment, and need not therefore be surprised to find that the Covenant has been adversely affected by its unfortunate surroundings. Brought up in the atmosphere of a police court, it has never been permitted to develop its finer qualities. The victorious powers who in their capacity of victors framed the Covenant and guided its operation have persistently employed it as an implement for guaranteeing the 1919 settlement of Europe, the *status quo post bellum*. All the emphasis of their diplomacy has been placed on Article 10. which reads: "*The members of the*

1. In 1934 there were riots in some of the country districts of Italy, and other indications that the popularity of the régime was fading.

2. Signor Daniele Vare in discussion following his address to Chatham House No. 19, 1935, recently retired from the Italian Diplomatic Service, and lately attached to the League of Nations at Geneva.

League undertake to respect and preserve as against external aggression the territorial integrity and existing political independence of all members....." That is to say, the victors made a series of peace treaties which were unacceptable—no doubt inevitably so—to the defeated states, and subsequently tried to enforce them not only by their military preponderance but by invoking the political and moral weight of the Covenant against recalcitrant states. Apparently they have imagined that Germany should remain cut off by the Polish Corridor from East Prussia, and with her Rhine frontier demilitarized; shorn of her army, her navy and merchant marine, her colonies, West Prussia, Alsace Lorraine and Silesia, and for ever detached from Austria and Hungary; that Italy would rest without colonies; Austria without her Hapsburgs, and Hungary without her Magyars—two and three-quarter millions of them outside her territories, though bound to her by language, race and religion. This is a political pipe-dream; delusion on the cosmic scale.

And this policy of "Leave ill alone" has resulted in the formation and consolidation of two antagonistic blocs within the very framework of the League itself. On one side the victorious states, the *status quo* powers, the protagonists of immobility—Great Britain, France, Russia, the Little Entente (Czecho-Slovakia, Jugoslavia, Roumania) Belgium, Holland... On the other side, the Revisionist bloc whose policies are bent towards the modification or destruction of the *status quo*, some of them defeated states, some not—Germany, Japan, Italy, Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria, Albania. These latter states do not want "territorial integrity" as it stands at present. They all want political or economic change. The deadlock between the two groups is obvious and complete. The *status quo* powers, grieved and frightened by their own past failures to prevent breaches of the Peace Treaties and the outbreak of war, have tried to bolster up the League by alliances on the pre-war model. The Revisionist states, despairing of concession at Geneva, have done the same. Consequently Europe is divided into two armed camps, precisely as before the war of 1914. France has gathered around her as satellite powers the Little Entente who have alliances among themselves; she has an understanding with Italy, and has latterly plucked up courage to make an alliance with Soviet Russia, the big bad bear of Eastern Europe. Great Britain is working in sympathy with France. Germany is rumoured to have a Japanese alliance, and has arrived at what is at least a temporary understanding with Austria and Italy. Italy just as before the war has a foot in both camps, and Poland in the East

continues to play the political mugwump, sitting on the fence between Germany and France. Both sides have their alliances almost complete; both sides are arming as fast as public opinion will permit, Article 8 of the Covenant notwithstanding.¹ And the pattern of these alliances is alarmingly like that of the two vast armed alliances of 1914 when the Triple Alliance of Germany, Italy and Austria-Hungary was opposed by the Triple Entente of Britain, France and Russia. If the process described is allowed to continue, we all know where it will end. It is only the foolish or the wilfully blind that cannot see the future in the instant. And we have come to this pass, despite the existence of the Covenant—indeed largely as a result of the use to which we have put it.

It must be plain that Italy would prefer war to the Covenant, since she had little hope for consideration of her claims, legitimate or illegitimate, by the League.

But her action transcends the Italian and the Ethiopian scene; it involves a consideration of the future of the League and of the fate of Europe itself. Our original dilemma reappears more plainly on examination: how to combine the preservation of the *status quo* and the prevention of war? To students of international affairs generally there has appeared to be only one rebuttal: namely, a policy of peaceful change—it might well be added, a policy of continued peaceful change. Article 19 of the Covenant adumbrates just such a policy, but this article has unhappily been until now the Cinderella of the Covenant, languishing at home while its sister articles gaddled about to committee and conference. It suggests that "*the Assembly may from time to time advise the reconsideration by members of treaties which have become inapplicable and the consideration of international conditions whose continuance might endanger the peace of the world.*"

It is beyond the scope of this article to discuss the possibilities of such a policy, but one or two lines of action may be indicated. The severity of our immigration laws ought to be mitigated; the restrictions on imports and exports drastically reduced; a sincere and bold effort made to reduce armaments; an international bank established (or the Bank of International Settlements utilized) for the easier and more effective diffusion of credit. If war is a disease, these matters are the germs. And disease is not eradicated by isolating the sick and burying the dead, but by eliminating the

1. Article 8. para. 2. "The Council shall formulate plans for such reduction (i.e. of national armaments) to the lowest possible point consistent with national safety."

causes of disease. Until the same procedure is applied in the international sphere, we cannot expect health in the body politic.

Since the Covenant's last débâcle we hear much criticism of the Covenant itself. Its machinery is inadequate; it needs repair. The most willing statesmen cannot drive to the temple of Peace in a vehicle of defective parts. But bad workmen always blame their tools. These statesmen cannot say whether the Covenant is good or bad. They have never used it. They have never, that is, put into operation continually and unanimously all its provisions; instead they have picked out certain gadgets that appealed to them—mostly the brakes and the horn—and then marvelled to find themselves stationary in the garage, the scorn of all beholders. They have no right to the opinion that the Covenant is a defective machine; it is they who have a horse-and-buggy mentality.

This is not to deny that the Covenant might with advantage be modified or supplemented. It might well be detached from the Peace Treaties. Detailed schemes of economic and military sanctions might be worked out. A more precise programme of League operation certainly ought to be drawn up to guide the League in the early stages of a dispute. And this work is being everywhere undertaken by serious students and sincere supporters of the League.

As matters stand to-day, the Covenant states have betrayed one of their own members, failed to prevent a bloody and expensive war, and reduced the authority of the League to a shadow. It may be that the Italo-Abyssinian conflict furnished Europe's last opportunity to embrace a newer and saner policy. It may be that we shall be offered yet another chance—a chance to operate the Covenant as it was obviously intended to operate, in a spirit not of repression and disregard, but of continual arbitration and concession. If so, we shall do well to take it.