

CHAPTER XIII

FEBRUARY—MARCH 1926

Sweden's opposition to increased number of Council of League of Nations—German delegates leave for Geneva—Poland and the League of Nations—Failure at Geneva—Stresemann's dislike of Geneva—Echoes of Rapallo.

THROUGHOUT the proceedings of the special session of the League Assembly the British Press, without distinction of party, had been unanimous in opposing the extension of the League Council by the granting of permanent seats to secondary Powers like Spain, Brazil, and Poland. On the other hand, they had praised the Swedish Government and its delegate at Geneva—Dr. Undén—for their unrelenting stand against the grant of a new permanent seat to any Power but Germany. British feeling in support of Dr. Undén was crystallised rather acidly in the phrase ascribed to Professor Gilbert Murray that “England expects every Swede to do her duty.”

BERLIN, *February 22, 1926.*—Received a letter to-day from London saying that the opposition of Sweden to the increase in the number of the members of the Council of the League of Nations is such that there is little chance of there being unanimity on the Council in March. Indeed, it is thought that even if the Council were unanimous, the necessary two-thirds majority in the League would not be available for the election of Poland. Thus the admission of further members cannot be taken in March, since unanimity is required.

THE conclusion is drawn at the Foreign Office that the Germans have foolishly put themselves forward as antagonists of Poland, when adequate resistance would have been afforded by others. But I doubt whether—if Germany had not protested so strongly against the extension of the Council—there would have been any effective check to that proposal.

FRENCH influence at Geneva and elsewhere would have

CHAP.
XIII
February
1926

CHAP.
XIII
February
1926

been sufficient to carry the measure through. Even the strong Press opposition which has developed in England, supported by all the leading authorities on the League of Nations problem, would hardly have found expression, unless Germany had taken the lead. Sweden's voice would either not have been raised or no heed would have been given.

As regards the position here, even if Luther and Stresemann had not been hostile, there would be a unanimous vote against Germany entering the League without ensuring her permanent position as a Great Power on a non-watered Council. To be on a Council with increased members would not give Germany that status among the Great Powers which is one of her main objects in joining the League.

THE argument that Germany and Poland are more likely to compose their differences if they are colleagues as permanent members of the League Council is superficial in the extreme, and shows little knowledge of human nature in general and Polish nature in particular.

THE more I hear of what goes on at Geneva, the more inclined I am to believe that French influence and Catholic influence there are the dominant forces. England only gets her way when public opinion at home awakes to the danger and returns a dogged "No!" The fundamental good sense of the English people was never shown to better advantage than in regard to this matter of the dilution of the League Council. It was also strangely right when refusing the Protocol. In each case our delegates had been talked over abroad: it remained for insular instinct to pull them back.

A CURIOUS effect of the controversy has been to make public opinion—particularly German National opinion—alive to the advantage of Germany being a member of the League. As France and Poland dislike Germany's admission to the League so much, her presence on the Council,

it is thought, must obviously be to Germany's benefit. A simple form of argument.

THE result of this feeling is that German National opinion, which had been strongly hostile to joining the League, is now more inclined to consider that step as political. It is quite possible that the German National Party will, before long, be suing for readmittance to the Cabinet on the basis of a belated conversion to Locarno and Geneva.

CHAP.
XIII
February
1926

BERLIN, *March 5, 1926.*—Stresemann starts for Geneva full of confidence and spirits. I constantly tell him that he will have great difficulties there, but he replies cheerfully, "Obstacles are made to be overcome."

I DOUBT if there is any statesman in Europe who enjoys office more or who worries less over difficulties and attacks. TALKING of Bismarck, who declared he had had only one happy day in his life since he came into high office, Stresemann said: "That was his own fault. He went away for three months every year to Varzin, and, except for quarrels with his head forester, there is no reason why he should not have enjoyed himself thoroughly. Besides which, all these people who write memoirs make out they have enjoyed things much less than they have in reality—there is a good deal of pose in these confessions."

STRESEMANN is still an enthusiast about the Crown Prince: he declares that on several occasions lately he has shown great wisdom and moderation. At some regimental dinner the other day he forbade criticism of the present German Army, and even of the German Government in his presence—particularly of "Uncle Gustav," as he called Stresemann.

I ASKED if the Crown Prince took a considerable interest in politics and exercised any big influence. Stresemann said "Yes." He regards the Crown Prince as sensible politically, and attaches no importance to his supposed vagaries with women. "Even if these are true," he said, "what political importance have they?"

CHAP.
XIII
March
1926

THERE is no doubt in my own mind that Stresemann was originally in favour of the restoration of the monarchy in Germany. Whether he now thinks the time is not yet ripe or whether he has modified his original views, I cannot say. I believe that he considered the Imperial solution as being most consonant with the spirit of the German people.

ON another subject Stresemann was interesting—duelling between students corps is more prevalent now than ever; more prevalent than before the War. He himself is unhappy, because neither of his sons had joined a fighting corps, both preferring to keep their faces unslashed.

THE minor aristocracy are perhaps the strongest supporters of the custom. They send their sons, particularly their second sons, to Bonn, where they join the Bonner Preussen Corps or the Borussia Corps. There they meet and make friends with men of their own class, and there is a marked tinge of snobbishness in the whole business. The head of one of the great families here was asked if he was sending his sons to Bonn. He replied: "That is unnecessary for me."

BERLIN, *March 6, 1926.*—The German Delegation left at ten o'clock last night for Geneva—Luther rather troubled and anxious about the outlook; Stresemann in high spirits, preparing for a long sleep in the train, with a bottle of good wine under his arm.

THIS morning comes news of Briand's resignation—which is a heavy blow to the prospects of the League of Nations and to those who anticipated a beneficial result from Germany's entry therein. But, apart from this unforeseen event, I am not confident that the proceedings at Geneva will run smoothly. The danger is real that the League of Nations will discredit itself. The worst result of the fault Briand and Chamberlain made in admitting the candidature of Poland for a seat on the Council has been to diminish

the prestige of the Great Powers, and to open the field of contention as to their precedence and authority. Once an enlargement of the Council beyond world Powers is considered, several countries have equal or better claims than Poland. The Government of each will be compelled by public opinion to demand similar treatment to that accorded to Poland. Individual representatives at Geneva may realise the danger, but the public opinion of their several countries will be too strong for them. It is quite possible that even on this occasion Brazil and Spain will make difficulties about Germany's entry or Germany's position as a permanent member of the Council.

To contend that to have a standing quarrel with a Great Power on the Council entitles a country to a seat on the same Council is worthy of Alice in Wonderland. Admit this principle, and cats will, in future, scratch duchesses in order to be admitted to their tea-parties.

If there is any difficulty either about Germany's entry or about a permanent seat on the Council without other addition to that body, the German delegates will have no option but to withdraw the question of Germany's entry. However they themselves might regret such a step, there would be no chance of their obtaining the approval of the Reichstag if they entered upon some compromise. THE German papers this morning are full of declarations that no compromise is possible. This will generally be understood as propaganda designed to impress the other side, but it may be genuine, and I believe that the German delegates are powerless in the matter. They will be disavowed if they flinch.

NEGOTIATIONS regarding an Air Convention, which have been going on in Paris for the last two months, have now reached a point where agreement appears possible, except on one question, namely, the number of German military or naval officers who will be allowed to learn flying.

BOTH the Allied and the German Delegations in Paris are

exhausted and irritated owing to the long discussions they have had, and the German Government quite wisely, I think, have now decided to make their new proposals in Geneva and not in Paris.

SOMEHOW or other, negotiations in Paris are apt to go wrong, and agreement is seldom arrived at. The prevailing mentality there is charged with prejudice and suspicion—non-existent dangers are apprehended, and unreasonable conditions imposed. One of the most urgent reforms in Europe is a cessation of the practice of locating Conferences on German affairs in Paris.

NEGOTIATE all matters as far as possible on the spot, and not at a distance. That is one means of avoiding error. The Reparation question would have been settled by 1921 if the Reparation Commission had sat in Germany. Disarmament would have been completed years ago if the Ambassadors' Conference had occasionally visited Berlin. The individual in Paris may seek to be impartial, but the atmosphere overpowers him. The Press knows too much—within forty-eight hours, everything percolates to it, and the comments made, while always clever, are seldom helpful. It requires superhuman determination and constancy to persist in resisting French dialectic and French eloquence in the City of Light.

As far back as September 24, 1924, the German Government—through its diplomatic representatives—had sounded the Governments of the various members of the League Council as to the attitude they were prepared to adopt towards her prospective candidature for a permanent seat on the Council. With the single exception of Brazil, the replies were all clear-cut and satisfactory in character.

THE Brazilian Government undertook to "examine impartially and in a conciliatory spirit Germany's aspirations," adding, however, that "the German demands ought not to be treated from Government to Government, but should be preferably laid before, and discussed in concert by, the members of the League together at its seat." Germany somewhat hastily interpreted this declaration at the time as an assurance that Brazil would

support her eventual claim to membership of the League and its Council. And it was not until the end of February 1926 that the German Minister to Brazil was informed by the Rio Government that the German attitude was regarded by that Government as obstructing Brazil's claim to a similar seat. Even before this date, however, a grave controversy had been raised, both in the Chancelleries and the Press, on the vexed question whether, were Germany accorded a permanent seat on the League Council, certain Powers would not be entitled to claim an equal privilege. The chief claimants in this respect were Spain and Poland, although China and Persia also displayed no undue modesty. Madrid's demand was based on a rather vague assurance given to Spain some years before, that "in suitable circumstances His Britannic Majesty's Government would support the renewal of her request to a permanent seat on the League Council." King Alfonso's Government held that the "suitable circumstances" had now arisen.

THE Polish claim was naturally to find support in France. Indeed, the question was broached on January 28 in Paris in the course of an informal conversation between Sir Austen Chamberlain and M. Briand. The latter urged acceptance of the Polish claim on various grounds, including the following: (1) Germany and Poland were more likely to settle their differences in a friendly way if they met on a footing of equality at the League Council; (2) in Poland's absence from that body, the advocacy of her case devolved generally upon France—a fact which tended to increase the difficulties in the way of Franco-German harmony; (3) from a French standpoint, Poland's admission to the Council would counteract the withdrawal from it of France's Belgian allies. Sir Austen agreed that he thought a good case might be made out for the Polish claim, but that he was not authorised to pledge the British Government in any way on the subject, although he would gladly report M. Briand's views.

THE news that other Powers besides Germany intended to press their claims to permanent seats on the League Council in a manner which would involve the enlargement of that body—and might even thwart Germany's admission if their own demands were not conceded—created a big stir throughout two continents. Various Powers, according to their political alliances and groupings, took sides for or against the admission to permanent representation on the Council of other Powers than Germany. While British public opinion inclined to the

CHAP.
XIII
March
1926

negative,¹ Sir Austen himself manifested in his speeches to the House of Commons a very different attitude. Sweden, with the approval of the other Scandinavian States, took a definite stand in support of the German contention.

It was in these difficult and dangerous conditions that the League Assembly met early in March 1926. A fortnight was spent by representatives of the League Powers in negotiations of a private character designed to prevent a breakdown of the Assembly on this thorny problem of permanent seats. Spain showed a certain readiness to recede from her former intransigent position, and M. Briand—on France's behalf—sought to secure the withdrawal of the Brazilian as well as of the Spanish candidature, whilst continuing to press that of Poland. Brazil, however, remained adamant, her representative declaring, upon strict instructions from his Government, that, unless Brazil was admitted simultaneously with Germany as a permanent member of the League Council, she would veto Germany's candidature to that position.

FINALLY, on March 17, the Assembly itself was summoned, and expressed vigorous dissent from the Brazilian attitude. Owing, however, to the firm refusal of the Brazilian delegate to budge one inch from his instructions, and despite private appeals addressed by cable to the Brazilian President by the leading delegates of the Entente, the Assembly was unable to proceed with the election of Germany, and adjourned, after passing the following resolution moved by M. Briand :

"THE Assembly regrets that the difficulties encountered have prevented the attainment of the purpose for which it was convened, and expresses the hope that, between now and the September session of 1926, these difficulties may be surmounted so as to make it possible for Germany to enter the League of Nations on that occasion."

THIS resolution was strengthened by the joint declaration of the chief signatories of the Locarno treaties in the following terms :

"THE representatives of Germany, France, Belgium, Great Britain, and Italy met to examine the situation resulting from the difficulties which have arisen and which hinder the accomplishment of their common wishes. They take note of the fact that they have reached agreement and have overcome obstacles which had at one moment arisen between them. If, as there seems reason to fear, the above difficulties persist, representatives of the seven Powers who signed the Protocol of Locarno would regret not to be able at this moment to reach

the goal which they had in view, but they are happy to recognise that the work of peace which they had realised at Locarno and which exists in all its value and all its force remains intact. They remain attached to it to-day as yesterday, and are finally resolved to work together to maintain and develop it. They are convinced that on the occasion of the next session of the Assembly difficulties which exist at this moment will be surmounted, and that the agreement which was reached in regard to conditions 'for the entry of Germany into the League of Nations will be realised.' ”

CHAP.
XIII
March
1926

BERLIN, *March 12, 1926.*—The present position at Geneva is undoubtedly critical. If Brazil maintains her attitude and carries out her threat to vote against the admission of Germany to a permanent seat on the Council, the German delegates must perforce withdraw their application for entry, and the whole negotiation, possibly involving Locarno, may be brought to the ground.

I do not believe this will occur. The loss of prestige to everyone would be too great. Chamberlain's admirable work at Locarno would be annihilated, Briand's dream of a pacified Europe would evaporate, and the immense advantages which Germany undoubtedly derives from the Western Pact would be abrogated. Superhuman efforts will therefore be made to save the situation, and even if Geneva fails to reach an agreement, Locarno will subsist in fact if not in form. If the crisis ended fatally for Germany's entry, a new meeting would have to be called to re-sign Locarno without the clause which makes its coming into force dependent upon Germany's joining the League.

THE French Ambassador, who takes, as usual, a moderate and sensible view, says that everybody is right. Examined individually, the claim made by each Power is sound, but if each insists on full attainment, no agreement is possible. He would like to stand at the door of the Council Chamber, and ask each delegate, "Have you fixed instructions which will prevent your making any concession as a result of

CHAP.
XIII
March
1926

discussion? If you have, kindly do not enter. There is no reason for your presence in the Council Chamber." This is just the opposite of Bismarck's dictum that an International Conference must never be called without previous agreement between the principal parties on major points.

THE German delegates at Geneva seem to have kept cool, adopting the attitude that the quarrel does not really concern Germany, but is rather one between the old members of the League. While it is, of course, possible to maintain this view, it is by no means absolutely true. If Germany had not insisted upon her immediate election as a permanent member of the Council, and had not made it a condition that no other appointment should be made at the same time, none of the present controversy would have occurred. I do not mean by this that Germany was not tactically right. I merely traverse the statement that Germany can claim to be an innocent bystander and a *tertius gaudens*.

THE more doubt there is about Germany's entry, the keener the desire here to enter.

BERLIN, *March* 16, 1926.—At 6.30 to-night the Wilhelmstrasse rang me up to say that they had just received a telegram from Geneva from the Secretary of State, saying, "Alles ist kaput" (There has been a complete breakdown). The cause of the collapse of the negotiations is the persistence of Brazil in her intention to vote against the admission of Germany to the Council. Kopke added that the German Delegation will leave Geneva to-night or to-morrow morning, and will pay a visit of ceremony to the President of the Swiss Republic at Berne on the way here. The Locarno Powers are engaged in drawing up a joint communiqué which will be signed by them. The policy of these Powers is apparently to reaffirm the Locarno grouping. It may well be that if the

collapse of the negotiations at Geneva leads to the tightening of the Locarno bond, the result will be even more favourable than would have been Germany's entry into the League. THE tacit admission of the claim of minor Powers to rank with Great Powers, the outburst of intrigue, of bargaining, and of recrimination which followed, have revealed the inherent defects of the League constitution. It was always unwise to attribute to small Powers an equal vote and an equal influence with the great world Powers. The inexpediency of this theoretical equality was to some extent veiled, or perhaps corrected, by the establishment of the Council. But the moment the right of Poland to a permanent seat was supported by France and by Chamberlain, the disproportion between real and attributed weight was bound to blaze forth. Briand showed much skill in endeavouring to solve the crisis at Geneva. Apart from Poland, it is clear that he promised at one time or another France's support to Brazil in putting forward her claim to a permanent seat. There can be no doubt that the Minister of Foreign Affairs in Brazil about March 3 was convinced that he would be supported by France's influence at Geneva, and that he derived great encouragement from Chamberlain's Birmingham utterance and from Chamberlain's favour of an increase in the Council. THE belief here is that Italy also promised her support to Brazil, and it may be the case that this Italian support has at the last moment led to Brazil's reasserting her demands and deciding to vote against Germany on the Council. For it is hardly possible that Brazil would have acted thus, knowing the grave crisis in the League which it must bring about, unless she had received a large amount of secret support from one side or other of the Atlantic.

BERLIN, *March* 19, 1926.—The Geneva Delegation returned yesterday. I had suggested to the French Ambassador that we should meet them at the station, a course

CHAP.
XIII
March
1926

to which he agreed. It appeared to me that this act of courtesy was in harmony with the farewell speeches of Briand and Chamberlain at Geneva, and was of a nature to strengthen the reversion to the Locarno basis. Although Geneva had failed, Locarno was in force. Moreover, as the German delegates had come back after what is termed by their critics a resounding failure, it would be a friendly act to give them moral support; it might assist them in the debate in the Reichstag next week. Luther showed no signs of wear, but I thought Stresemann tired and rather nervous. I only had a few words with him, and he said nothing of interest except that Geneva had been the greatest possible test of patience, that the climate of Geneva was trying, there was no iodine in the air, everyone got headaches and felt good for nothing. Stresemann evidently felt that his whole policy was menaced, and that Geneva had been for the moment, at any rate, a great fiasco, but he asserted that personal relations throughout the discussions had been excellent. Some of the Press here had suggested that the Locarno Powers should re-sign the Locarno Agreement, leaving out those clauses which necessitate recourse to the League of Nations. The idea underlying this suggestion is sound enough, but I doubt if it is possible to modify the text in an appropriate manner. Locarno involved recourse to the League of Nations in too many eventualities, and can hardly be re-signed in anodyne form. The best course appears to be to consider Locarno as morally in force. The papers of the Right have declared in favour of a vote of non-confidence next week, but there does not seem real danger of a Government defeat.

BERLIN, *March 20*, 1926.—Reliable friends just back from Geneva give accounts showing extraordinary confusion there, and revealing the extreme uncertainty as to the result which existed up to the last moment. Half an hour before the final meeting of the assembly on Wednesday, the

German Delegation were told to hold themselves in readiness in case the attitude of Brazil permitted the entry of Germany into the League, together with attribution of a permanent seat on the Council. It appears that at the meeting of the Council, Chamberlain, as Chairman of the Acceptance Sub-Committee, said they found Germany's case in order. When the Brazilian delegate intervened with the statement that he could not agree to Germany being appointed a permanent member, Briand and Chamberlain expressed surprise and indignation, exclaiming, "What do you say?" "What is the meaning of this?" However, surprise and indignation were of no avail. The regulation is absolute, and Germany could not become a permanent member except through unanimity. The most ingenious proposal was that made by the Albanian delegate, who suggested that Brazil was only on the Council as representative of the Assembly, and that as she had ceased to represent the majority of the Assembly, her mandate was at an end.

My informants are unanimous that a large majority of the Assembly favoured the admittance of Germany and the non-increase of the Council except through Germany's membership. They say, "That is certainly the feeling of a large majority to-day. It is doubtful what they will think six months hence." They are not at all clear as to what the Commission appointed to report on the enlarging of the Council will decide; nor confident about agreement. The chances are that difficulties six months hence will be as great, if not greater, than to-day. Schubert said, "We must await the debate here, and the debates in London and Paris. Then perhaps we can decide." Even as to Germany's accepting the invitation to take part in the work of the Commission, there is not any clear opinion. Germany could either abstain altogether on the ground that she had not joined the League or adopt the opposite view and say—"As the feeling of the Assembly was so

much in my favour, I shall act as though I had been duly elected, and co-operate in the work of the Commission to the best of my ability." It is doubtful, however, whether the latter course would be endorsed by public opinion in Germany.

BERLIN, *March 22, 1926.*—The recent negotiations at Geneva have produced this paradoxical result—the bargaining, the intrigues, and the compromises of the last fortnight have convinced the partisans of *Realpolitik* that they cannot afford not to be there. Hitherto, they had regarded Geneva as an assembly of idealogues—now they take the opposite view.

It may be of interest to place on record a broad appreciation of the effect of the Geneva meeting upon the position here, both as regards internal and external politics.

FIRST as regards the former. There is no doubt that the German National Party looked forward with confidence to the entry of Germany into the League of Nations as an event which would enable them to reconsider their position as regards joining the Government. A considerable amount of private conversation is known to have taken place between the Chancellor and the German Nationals; the object of these conversations is alleged to have been to sound the former as to some combination after Geneva, which would eliminate Stresemann from the Government, and substitute for him a German National representative. The event at Geneva has upset these calculations.

FOR some reason which is not yet apparent the German Nationals are for the moment even more hostile to Luther than they are to Stresemann. Their speeches in the Reichstag are evidence of this. Moreover, it is rumoured, with a certain show of authority, that they are engaged in discussing some new combination under which Stresemann would become Chancellor, while Luther would be relegated

to an inferior post. In this event one German National would be appointed to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, and another to the Ministry of the Interior. I do not believe that the combination has any chance of success, but the fact of its being discussed shows how considerably things have changed during the last month.

IN the realm of foreign politics also the recent meeting of the League has brought about considerable confusion. Before Geneva there was a vague intention to give Russia some sort of consolation if she failed to dissuade Germany from entering the League of Nations. The idea was discussed in various forms—one being a Treaty of Neutrality—but nothing very concrete was decided upon. The object in view was to maintain the approximate balance between East and West which is such an essential feature of German policy. Germany being still outside the League, it is now thought that the signature of a Neutrality Treaty with Russia would incline the balance too much to the East, the desire in dominant circles still being to maintain a certain preponderance of the Western inclination without undue alienation of the Eastern counterpoise.

IT is consequently said to be probable that the proposal to conclude some compensation agreement with Russia will be postponed, provided that nothing occurs to render "reinsurance" in that direction specially urgent.

IN this connection one must remember that at Rapallo the German Delegation was stampeded by the Russians, and made to believe in all sorts of dangers, which had no real existence. What happened once may happen again. Directly German circles experience disappointment in the West they are apt to turn to the East for consolation and support.

THE Press has been silent on the subject, but I am convinced that the problem of relations with Russia is exercising Government circles to an unusual degree.

CHAP.
XIII
—
March
1926

BERLIN, *March 22, 1926.*—A long conversation with Stresemann yesterday on his return from Geneva. People generally have thought him depressed, but he seemed lively enough, talking freely and amicably on the basis of two or three glasses of port before luncheon—a régime I find trying, but which is conducive to conversational interchange.

HE said Geneva was an odious climate, he had passed a very disagreeable ten days. The atmosphere was depressing, and he had felt ill all the time. The bright spot in the negotiations was Briand, who was full of vivacity and ready to seek at once a new solution if the first was found impracticable—not in the least obstinate, and extremely ingenious. Briand was badly served by his subordinate colleagues, who made the most absurd proposals with regard to Germany. Paul-Boncour he was suspicious of, believing him to be hostile to Locarno. Stresemann said, "When a Socialist goes wrong, he is worse than anybody." CHAMBERLAIN he found beneath his usual level, too much of a schoolmaster.

CHAMBERLAIN had lectured the Germans, saying, "Whenever we make a concession to you, instead of acknowledging it you ask for more." Briand at once interjected, "By no means a bad system."

STRESEMANN admitted that Chamberlain got on much better with Luther than with himself.

STRESEMANN said he had had great difficulty with his own party on his return from Geneva. They reproached him with having promised them a new spirit after Locarno, a spirit of international goodwill and reconciliation. Instead of that, they found Geneva not a temple of peace, but a market where nations were bought and sold. Stresemann had replied, "That is just the reason why I want to be there. If dealings are going on I want to have a seat as a broker. Moreover, the opportunity of contact with the statesmen of other countries is invaluable."

GERMAN public opinion, after the fiasco of the Geneva meeting, has become not less favourable to the League of Nations than it was, but rather more favourable. The German Nationals now realise that they can only come into the Government after Germany has carried through the step of entering the League. As long as the question of entry is under discussion, they cannot well alter their present policy and favour entry. Once Germany is in the League, they can, after a decent interval, join the Government, and that is what they really want. The current belief here is that Briand anticipated (perhaps desired) a sharp negative from Chamberlain as to Poland's claim to a permanent seat. Such a negative would have enabled Briand to make his excuses to Poland without any desertion of her cause. But contrary to expectation A. C. adopted the proposal, and blessed it with his personal approbation. So Briand found no escape from the old love, and compromised the Geneva meeting through compulsory fidelity. SUCH is the story. I do not vouch for it, but the case is one where either of two explanations may be valid.

CHAP.
XIII
—
March
1926

BERLIN, *March 27, 1926.*—Stresemann declares that the whole spirit of Locarno is now being infringed. Pacts and alliances are reported as under discussion between various countries, Serbia, Italy, and France, the border states of the East, and Poland, all, according to German views, more or less hostile to Germany. I do not know how much truth there may be in these rumours. Stresemann says it is all very well for the seven Powers who were at Locarno to talk of the spirit of that place, but forty-one Powers were not there, and they neither know nor care about the spirit that animated the Locarno discussions.