

July 13, 1921.—I have never in my life suffered so from the heat as I have these last few days; although I have frequently known hotter weather in America. It is prostrating and the nights are hideous, for one has to have all the windows open, or suffocate, and the nights are one long horror of trams, taxis, with their shrieking or bellowing horns, motorcycles, people singing, talking, laughing, screaming, sneezing or what not; cats howling and two steeple clocks thundering out the hours, and the half-hours, and the quarter-hours!

Henry L. Stimson¹ called at 12:30 with Admiral Niblack, Captain Reeves, Colonel Thomas, Lieutenant Commander Dunn, Wilson and a number of officers of our fleet to go to the Palace for luncheon with the King.

The King nice, as always. Told me that in London he made fifteen speeches—and said it was all terrible, having to make speeches and to listen to them. He asked me about disarmament, and spoke of Lloyd George's and Briand's going to Washington, as announced in this morning's newspapers. "The Prime Ministers like to travel," he said; "they enjoy it. It enables them to say, when they are interpellated, 'I know nothing about that; I was on a voyage when that occurred.'"

After luncheon, I went to see Jaspar. I was right. He wanted me to make representations at Washington in support of those he has had Cartier make, asking that Belgium be invited, too.² He gave me his reasons, which I asked him to embody in a note for me and this he agreed to do. I found him rather perturbed, and in that serious mood in which he becomes preëminently the Minister of Foreign Affairs, and he addressed me formally as "Monsieur l'Ambassadeur." He said that the conference called by the President was a capital affair for Belgium; he thought it the death of the League of Nations; Belgium, while pretending to no right to be consulted in the regulation of policies to be pursued in the Pacific, where she had no interests, save commercial interests in Asia, nevertheless was vitally interested in the question of terrestrial disarmament. Belgium had played a leading or an important rôle in the war, and had expected recognition and aid afterward; but she had

¹ Secretary of War under President Taft, Secretary of State under President Hoover.

² In the end the invitations to the Washington Conference on naval disarmament and Pacific problems included Belgium, Holland, and Portugal as well as the greater Powers. The Conference was to meet November 12, 1921.

been snubbed and ignored at the Peace Conference, as a result of the machinations of Clemenceau and Lloyd George; her hopes had all been disappointed. He didn't mention the snubbing that President Wilson gave Belgium in the matter of the seat of The League of Nations, nor Lansing's really base betrayal of a friend and ally when he did all that he could to aid Holland and to check Belgium in the revision of the treaties of 1839, but perhaps he had that in mind. However, since March, 1920, Belgium had been represented at the meetings of the Supreme Council—at Spa, where Delacroix had presided—at Boulogne, at Barcelona, at San Remo, at Paris, and at London, and had then made her influence felt and had gained great prestige. He would not like now to have his country lose this prestige because America had ignored her, and because the President had employed that pernicious phrase, "the principal Allied and Associated Powers." He did not claim that Belgium was as big or as important as England or France, or Italy, or America—the biggest and most powerful of them all—but she had played a rôle that entitled her to consideration. He said that Belgium had given proof of a superior political sagacity, and that Belgium was not to be compared to other small nations, like Poland, and so on. . . . He it was, he said, who had prevented the French from occupying the Ruhr; they had been eager to do so, but he had been opposed. . . . By so doing he could claim to have preserved the peace in Europe. This Belgium would do again; in fact, this conference at Washington could not be a success unless Belgium were represented. He had instructed Gaffier at Washington to see Hughes, and he had already done so; would also see him again, for as ideas and arguments occurred to him, he was cabling them to Gaffier. He had also asked Cissier at Paris and Moncheur at London to ask the French and British to support him at Washington; the French would do so but he didn't think the English would. If it should be insisted that the other nations would object if they were not asked, it could be replied that they had not done so when Belgium was admitted to the Supreme Council. He said—which is quite true—that Americans are not informed on European matters, and so on. I told him that I should cable to Washington, and on returning home I dictated a cablegram. He also wished me to ask the President to send a message of some sort to Louvain at the ceremony on the 28th, when the cornerstone of the new university is to be laid.