

It was suggested in the Assembly that the proposed Commission of three impartial persons which is to visit Albania should be accompanied by one representative each of the Greek, Serbian, and Albanian Governments; but the motion was withdrawn in deference to the view, to which very decided expression was given, that Government representatives would hinder rather than assist the labours of the Commission.

The practice which was inaugurated last year, of having meetings of members of the various British Empire Delegations in order to discuss matters of common policy, was also followed this year, and a number of meetings took place. This proved extremely valuable in enabling one to get an insight into the feelings of those representing different parts of the Empire, and also in co-ordinating action. At the same time I wish it to be clearly understood that suggestions as to united action were not blindly followed, and frequently in committee all parts of the Empire did not vote in the same way.

Great Britain's Delegation, with one exception, was the same as last year. On this occasion Mr. Barnes was replaced by Sir Reynold Rodd, formerly Ambassador in Rome. Mr. Balfour's personality and grasp of the subjects with which he had had to deal in Council were of considerable advantage, and Mr. Fisher's historical learning was of value in helping to come to conclusions on matters connected with foreign countries.

Some of those who were concerned with the drafting of the Covenant, and some of the members who were present at last year's Assembly, apparently conceived that the League would be a sort of super-State, managing the world generally in the interests of peace. Whatever may have been these early conceptions, it is clear, as a result of the meeting just ended, that the idea of the super-State has disappeared, and that the sovereign rights of the individual States will be fully respected.

As already indicated, when dealing with the work of the Third Committee (Disarmament and Economic Blockade), the members of the League have now come to the conclusion that the chief weapon in their hands to secure peaceful relations among the nations of the world is the conscience of the world.

Last year I referred to the dangers to the League through the organization of cliques for purposes of self-interest. This danger has not disappeared. The South American States still hold together, and by their influence they have induced the Assembly to make provision for the establishment of a branch office of the League in South America, the amount set aside for this purpose being shown in the Budget. I felt it to be my duty to oppose the establishment of this branch office, as it seemed to me that it might lead to claims for similar offices elsewhere. I also deemed it right to oppose the vote of 50,000 gold francs for certain liaison bureaux in London, Paris, and Rome. The sitting of the committee at which this vote was considered was held in private, and the information was submitted that within the last few months gentlemen had been appointed in London, Paris, and Rome for publicity work and to secure the assistance of newspapers for the propaganda of the League.

Last year I ventured to say that there was every prospect of the League continuing to exist, and my experience of this year's Assembly confirms that view.

From what you know, you will realize that many of the ideals of the League cannot be carried out; but its work is now developing on more practical lines, represented largely by the technical organizations.

I have, &c.,

J. ALLEN.

The Right Hon. the Prime Minister, Wellington, New Zealand.

THIRD ASSEMBLY OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

New Zealand Government Offices,
Strand, London W.C. 2, 12th October, 1922.

SIR,—

Third Assembly of the League of Nations.

In accordance with the Rules of Procedure, which provide that the Assembly of the League of Nations should meet every year on the first Monday in September, the Third Assembly began its sittings on the 4th September.

Representation of New Zealand.—Sir James Allen, who had been New Zealand's sole delegate to the First and Second Assemblies, again represented the Dominion, which, for the first time, exercised the right which she, in common with every State member of the League, possesses of sending three delegates to the Assembly. Advantage was taken by you of the presence in England of the Hon. Sir Francis Bell, K.C.M.G., K.C., Attorney-General of New Zealand, of appointing him a delegate, and the third delegate was the Right Hon. Sir Arthur Steel-Maitland, Bart., M.P., who had kindly offered to assist in a voluntary capacity. Each delegate was accompanied by his Private Secretary.

Opening of Proceedings and Election of President.—In accordance with the Rules of Procedure the Third Assembly was opened by the Acting President of the Council, then in session, His Excellency M. Domicio da Gama, the Ambassador in London of the Republic of Brazil, and that country's representative on the Council. In the course of a brief speech of welcome he stressed the general opinion, based on a knowledge of the work of previous Assemblies, that there was no danger of the League of Nations becoming a super-State.