

bodies, and their work is based, therefore, on first-class information, though, unfortunately, their report (Document No. A. 31) was in the end so hurriedly drafted in the matter of form that it is a difficult document to read.

*Part I.*—A reading of the different subheadings included in the first section of Part I gives the same impression of unreality which is sometimes conveyed by other discussions of the Assembly. For example, (1) the Limitation of National Expenditure on Armaments ends in a pious resolution, which does, apparently, neither good nor harm. But this sort of resolution is really inevitable, and too much account, either favourable or unfavourable, should not be taken of it. The statistical inquiry (2), on the other hand, is a practical piece of work which is necessary for the provision of accurate data on which any reasonable proposals can be based. As regards surplus stocks of munitions, the question is already settled. Sections (4), private manufacture of arms, and (5) arms traffic, show each in a separate way how the League can be of practical utility. The regulation of the manufacture of, and the traffic in, arms has long been recognized to be a matter for international action. The existence of the League makes it possible to speed up the business of summoning and agreeing on international conventions to a degree which was quite impossible formerly. Similarly, it has been found that when a country is asked to give its reasons for any action or for refusal to act, it is very difficult not to comply with the request, and yet compliance exposes any selfish or illegitimate reason, with the result that a country has in fact been induced to take action, on several occasions, which would not have been done otherwise. Section (6) explains itself. Sections (7) and (8) refer to work undertaken, such as the statistical inquiries to provide data on which to base any scheme of disarmament. Sections (9) and (10) are a natural reference to the Washington Conference and to the forthcoming Pan-American Conference at Santiago.

*Part II: Reduction of Naval Armaments.*—The Assembly, on the motion of the committee, recommended that an International Conference should be summoned as soon as possible to consider an extension of the principles of the Washington Conference to States which were not signatories to it. A conference of South American States has already been arranged for January, 1923, at Santiago, and the question will be among those that they will consider. It was understood, therefore, that the general conference would not be called until after that at Santiago had taken place.

An important feature in the discussion was that of the reservations made by the representatives of Brazil and Poland. It was pointed out that the Washington Conference had started with the basis of the *status quo*, and had then proceeded to discuss how far armaments could be reduced below this level. The Polish delegate put the obvious case for Poland. The position of a country which had only just come into existence was different from that of the nations which took part in the Washington Conference. It could not be expected that Poland should engage never to have any Naval Force at all. The Brazilian reservation was similar, pointing to the enormous coast-line of Brazil, and at the same time to the youth of the country from the point of development. Brazil could not be expected to limit her navy in the same way as the Powers at Washington had undertaken to do. It will be seen that resolutions adopted by the Assembly allow for elasticity in giving special consideration to such cases. It is obvious, however, that even if a present agreement can be reached, the growth of certain Powers in contrast with that of others will always be a serious problem in settling the quota of force which each country may maintain.

*Part III: Reduction of Land Armaments.*—In the introductory paragraphs of this report it has been said that any scheme of disarmament to be successful would have to meet both the practical international situation at the moment and also be compatible with any final general system of disarmament.

*Part IV: Treaty of Mutual Guarantee.*—To meet this double need, the suggestion was made of a system of mutual guarantee, to come into force simultaneously with disarmament.

It was recognized that in the present state of the world a country would hesitate to disarm if it were not secured against danger from the aggression of possible enemies. This security could be found in a guarantee by other nations that in the event of such aggression they would come to its aid. Though the Forces of each mutual guarantor would have been reduced, yet they would be more than enough to protect against aggression. It will be seen that even so the degree of disarmament would have to be proportioned to the possible danger of aggression. Hence the importance of as many of the greater Powers as possible joining in the mutual guarantee. The guaranteeing power would be the greater, the possible danger less, and the degree of disarmament could be carried proportionately further.

It was exceedingly interesting to note the attitude of the representatives of different Powers. In 1921 the French had been hostile to any proposal of disarmament. The present proposal, however, might perhaps give them a guarantee—the object which they had long desired from the Peace Conference onwards. At the same time, the dangerous state of French finances clearly makes it desirable to lessen their military expenditure, if possible. The French delegate, therefore, cordially welcomed the proposal, though it became abundantly clear that they were going to satisfy themselves very minutely as to the reliability of the guarantee, and as to its sufficiency, before they disarmed. Mr. Fisher, for Great Britain, gave the proposal a general blessing, saying that Great Britain was not likely to refuse to consider any method of disarmament on which Europe could agree, but he was evidently nervous about doing anything which could be interpreted in England as simply guaranteeing France. He was reluctant, therefore, in his acceptance of a proposal made by M. Jouvenal, the French delegate, that the principles of the scheme should be submitted to respective Governments for their approval before they were worked out in the form of an actual convention.

An interesting feature of the discussion was a difficulty which arose from an unexpected quarter—viz., Norway and Sweden. These countries wished to disarm in any event; they contended that it would be monstrous if in the name of peace they were required, for purposes of guaranteeing other