

1926.  
NEW ZEALAND.

# THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

REPORT OF THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE DOMINION OF NEW ZEALAND ON THE SIXTH ASSEMBLY OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS, HELD AT GENEVA IN THE YEAR 1925.

*Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.*

## SIXTH ASSEMBLY OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

SIR,—

New Zealand Government Offices,  
Strand, London W.C. 2, 28th October, 1925.

I have the honour to state that on Friday, 4th September, I left London in order to attend the Sixth Assembly of the League of Nations at Geneva. On this occasion I had the advantage of the presence and help of Mr. J. D. Gray, Secretary, External Affairs and Cook Islands Departments, and I also took with me the two members of my personal staff, Mr. C. Knowles and Miss E. M. Hannam, who have accompanied me on previous occasions.

### OPENING OF PROCEEDINGS AND ELECTION OF PRESIDENT.

The Assembly was opened on Monday, 7th September, by M. Painlevé, the Prime Minister of France, who was acting as Chairman of the Council then in session. His speech, in the original French and in an English translation, will be found in No. 2 of the Journal.

The proceedings followed the normal course.

A small committee was appointed to examine the credentials of the delegates.

It was expected that Senator Dandurand, first delegate of Canada, would be elected President of the Assembly, and this expectation was fulfilled. The choice was a good one, for Senator Dandurand has the advantage of being a bi-linguist, speaking both English and French, and it is gratifying to note that the first British Empire representative to be chosen as President was a delegate from one of the Dominions.

### ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE CONDUCT OF BUSINESS.

The arrangements for transacting business were similar to those made at previous Assemblies. The delegates were asked to form themselves into the following six committees:—

- No. 1. Juridical Questions.
- No. 2. Technical Organizations.
- No. 3. Security and Disarmament.
- No. 4. Finance of the League.
- No. 5. Humanitarian Questions.
- No. 6. Political Questions, including Mandates and Slavery.

### REPRESENTATION OF NEW ZEALAND.

With the additional help secured this year I was able to make better arrangements for the representation of New Zealand. I nominated myself for all committees, but at the same time arranged for Mr. Gray to represent New Zealand on Committee No. 6, and to take my place on Committee No. 3 or No. 4 as circumstances required, whilst my Private Secretary, Mr. Knowles, was nominated to act for me on Committees Nos. 2 and 5.

### ELECTION OF OFFICERS OF ASSEMBLY.

On the 8th instant the committees met to elect their Chairmen. The delegates had already made their choice, and the elections were in accordance with the agreement arrived at. The following were elected: No. 1—M. Scialoja (Italy); No. 2—Jonkheer van Eysinga (Netherlands); No. 3—Dr. Nintchitch (Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes); No. 4—Dr. Augusto Costa (Portugal); No. 5—M. Mowinkel (Norwegian Prime Minister); No. 6—Dr. Guerrero (Salvador).

The Assembly then proceeded to elect its six Vice-Presidents in accordance with the Rules of Procedure, and the following, likewise a prior choice, were elected: Viscount Ishii (Japan); M. Briand (France); M. Zumeta (Venezuela); Mr. Austen Chamberlain (British Empire); Prince Arfa-ed-Dowleh (Persia); M. Duca (Roumania).

#### DEBATE ON THE REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE COUNCIL.

On the 9th September the Assembly began the debate on the Report on the Work of the Council and the Secretariat and on the Report on the Work of the Permanent Court of International Justice (Documents A. 7, A. 7A, and A. 7B).

The debate was long, several questions being dealt with, but on the whole it lacked interest. Last year's protocol was present in the minds of all, and a few tears were shed over its fate; but the Assembly was faced with the knowledge that to at least one of the great Powers (Great Britain) the protocol was not acceptable, at any rate in its present form, and that many of the smaller Powers disliked the obligations placed upon them in applying sanctions. Mr. Chamberlain remarked in the course of his speech, in which he made a comparison between the Anglo-Saxon and Latin points of view, that the protocol was concerned more with the punishment of the aggressor than with the prevention of aggression; and to the representatives of States who were disappointed with the progress made, M. Motta, representing Switzerland, and speaking with the authority of one who has attended every Assembly, said that the Fifth Assembly had not voted for the protocol, but had merely recommended Governments to give it earnest consideration. This reminder was needed, for it cannot be made too clear that any resolution binding Governments to accept the protocol would have met with the keenest opposition. Interest having shifted from Geneva to London, Paris, and Berlin, the Assembly knew that it could do little but mark time, nevertheless the representatives of several countries, disappointed with results and not content with a "wait and see" policy, introduced resolutions concerned with arbitration, security, and disarmament, which were referred to the proper committees, and will be dealt with more fully later.

The principal Chinese delegate appealed for the reconsideration of existing treaties with various Powers, especially those possessing extra-territorial rights in China, and submitted a resolution, the wording of which was changed again and again, but finally the following one was submitted to the Assembly at its meeting on the 22nd September and passed:—

"The Assembly, having heard with deep interest the Chinese delegate's suggestion regarding the possibility of considering, according to the spirit of the Covenant, the existing international conditions of China, having learned with satisfaction that a Conference of the interested States is soon to take place in China to consider the questions involved, expresses its hope that a satisfactory solution may be reached at an early date." (See Document A. 60 (3).)

A representative of France introduced a resolution providing for preparatory work with a view of convening an International Conference to "examine economic difficulties which stand in the way of the restoration of general prosperity, and to discover the best methods of surmounting these difficulties and of avoiding disputes." This resolution was referred to the Second Committee.

Other resolutions introduced in the course of the debate and referred to the appropriate committees will be dealt with in that part of this report which relates to the work of the committees.

The general debate was concluded on the 16th September, and the members of the Assembly were then able to devote more time to the work of the committees.

As you know, the League has two official languages, English and French, but in practice the languages are of unequal weight. French predominates, and a knowledge of French, if not a necessity, is a desideratum and a great help in following the proceedings. From the first there has been a tendency, and occasionally a deliberate attempt, to relegate English to a back seat. On the 11th September M. Paul Boncour, a representative of France and a most effective speaker, delivered an oration, which was followed with keen interest and enjoyment by a crowded hall. When he finished the hour was late, and the President suggested that, as an immediate interpretation was not possible, an English translation of the speech should be circulated to Delegations. Mr. Chamberlain, in agreeing with the President's proposal as an exceptional procedure not to be regarded as a precedent, emphasized the equality of English and French. I fully endorse Mr. Chamberlain's attitude.

Amongst the resolutions proposed in the course of the debate on the report of the preceding year's work of the League was the following one made by the Chinese delegate:—

"It is desirable that the Assembly in electing the six non-permanent members of the Council should make its choice with due consideration for the main geographical divisions of the world, the great ethnical groups, the different religious divisions, the various types of civilization, and the chief sources of wealth."

This resolution was not referred to a committee, but was brought forward for consideration in the full Assembly at its meeting on the 24th September, and was passed in the form of a recommendation. The debate was a short one. During the course of it reference was made to a resolution of the 1921 Assembly that "non-permanent members of the Council should in future be elected according to a system of rotation for a fixed period." The same year the following amendment to Article 4 of the Covenant was voted: "The Assembly shall fix by a two-thirds majority the rules dealing with the election of the non-permanent members of the Council, and particularly such regulations as relate to their term of office and the conditions of re-eligibility." This amendment has not received ratifications to the number required to bring it into operation.

## COSTA RICA.

Information had been received in Geneva that the Republic of Costa Rica intended to withdraw from the League, and on the 22nd September the French Delegation introduced into the Assembly a resolution which was passed on the 24th September in the following terms :—

“The Assembly, having learnt that the Republic of Costa Rica has expressed its intention of resigning its membership of the League, deeply regrets to note the absence of a member whose participation in the work of the Assembly has been unanimously and highly appreciated; expresses the hope that the Government of the Republic of Costa Rica may again find it possible to afford the League its valuable co-operation.”

## ELECTION OF NON-PERMANENT MEMBERS OF COUNCIL.

One of the items on the Agenda for the closing meeting of the Assembly, held on the afternoon of the 26th September, was the election of the non-permanent members of the Council. Before the ballot was taken the delegate for China made a moving appeal to members to recollect their unanimous approval of two days before, of his motion for the recognition of certain principles when proceeding to the election. The vote was then taken. Forty-nine States voted, with the following result: Brazil, 43 votes; Czecho-slovakia, 35 votes; Belgium, 32 votes; Uruguay, 40 votes; Sweden, 34 votes; Spain, 31 votes. These States will therefore continue for another year to be represented on the Council. China received 26 votes, Persia 9, and the Netherlands 8.

## COMMITTEE No. 1.

## AMENDMENT TO ARTICLE 16 OF THE COVENANT.

The original text of paragraph 1 of Article 16 of the Covenant defines certain steps to be taken by members of the League in the event of a rupture with a Covenant-breaking State. Last year's Assembly voted an amendment to this paragraph, but a proposal to amend the second paragraph of the original text in the event of the amendment to the first meeting with acceptance was not proceeded with. The amendment to paragraph 2 proposed by Great Britain consists in the deletion of the words “in such case,” rendered unnecessary by the redrafting of the first paragraph. A motion to delete such words was accepted by the Assembly at its meeting on the 21st September, and directions given for a protocol embodying the amendment to be drawn up. The New Zealand Government, having given me instructions to sign the protocol embodying the amendment to the first paragraph, which instructions I carried out whilst at Geneva, I assumed that the Government would wish me to sign the protocol drawn up in respect to the amendment to paragraph 2. I have done so, and if ratification is desired, doubtless arrangements will be made (see Document A. 77).

## REPORT OF SPECIAL COMMITTEE OF JURISTS.

The following proposal, introduced by the Netherlands Delegation and passed by the Assembly on the 21st September, needs no comment :—

“The Assembly requests the Council to invite the Governments of States members of the League which find in the report of the Special Committee of Jurists appointed under the resolution of the Council of 28th September, 1923, doubtful points which require elucidation or which may have other comments to make on this report, to forward their observations to the Secretariat of the League of Nations before 1st February, 1926, with a view to a possible examination of the matter by a committee to be appointed by the Council.”

If the New Zealand Government desires to offer any observations, doubtless a communication will be sent to the Secretariat of the League (see Document A. 73).

The report referred to in the resolution will be found in Document A. 8 of 1924 (pages 8, 9, and 10).

## PERMANENT COURT OF INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE.

Several of the States who signed the optional clause of the Statute of the Permanent Court of International Justice (see paragraph 2 of Article 36 of the statute) gave their adherence for a specified number of years, and, as in some cases the period will shortly terminate, the Swiss Delegation introduced into the Assembly a motion designed to renew the undertakings. This motion was referred to Committee No. 1, which brought up to the Assembly a resolution framed as follows :—

“The Assembly, noting with satisfaction the fact that fifteen States have accepted up to the present the optional clause of the Statute of the Permanent Court of International Justice concerning the compulsory jurisdiction of the Court, noting also that some of those States have assumed this obligation for a period which will shortly terminate, requests the Secretary-General of the League of Nations to draw the attention of such States to the measures to be taken, if they consider it proper, in order to renew in due course their undertakings.”

This resolution was passed by the Assembly on the 22nd September (see Document A. 76).

## PROPOSED ESTABLISHMENT OF A CONCILIATION COMMISSION.

It was the Danish Government which suggested that the Assembly should consider the establishment of a Conciliation Commission attached to the Permanent Court of International Justice, in the hope that disputes between States might be referred to such Commission without recourse to the Court itself. The suggestion was examined at considerable length by the First Committee, and after taking account of all points of view it was decided that the question should be adjourned to a subsequent session. This proposal was accepted by the Danish Delegation, and a resolution to this effect was passed by the Assembly at its meeting on the 22nd September.

Whether a Conciliation Commission on the lines suggested by the Danish Government is practicable is open to question, but the attachment of a Conciliation Commission to the Permanent Court of International Justice, a judiciary body, seems to me very undesirable (see Document A. 85).

#### ARBITRATION, SECURITY, AND DISARMAMENT.

Two resolutions, one introduced by the Swedish Delegation concerning compulsory arbitration, requesting the Council to submit for re-examination to a committee of experts the provisions contained in the protocol recommended by the Fifth Assembly) and the other by the Spanish Delegation concerning efforts which are now being made to arrive at understandings between nations (Documents A. 47 and A. 53 (1)), together with a third resolution (Document A. 59), introduced by the Uruguayan Delegation, asking for an examination of the Statute of the Permanent Court of International Justice with a view to the jurisdiction of the Court being more widely accepted, were referred to the First Committee. In committee the Uruguayan delegate accepted the adjournment of the discussion on his proposal till next year. It was recognized that the Swedish and Uruguayan proposals had been presented with the idea of developing the principle of compulsory arbitration; but that of Sweden had reference to the provisions of the protocol, and, in the words of the First Committee (Document A. 115), "it was important to avoid anything which seemed necessarily to imply reopening discussion upon an isolated part of the protocol; and, on the other hand, it appeared unwise to decide in advance that the best way of encouraging the development of compulsory arbitration was to draw up and submit for acceptance by the various nations a general and uniform system of procedure," for "it is impossible, moreover, to ignore the fact that a very large number of conventions for arbitration or judicial settlement have in recent years been concluded between various members of the League of Nations, and it seemed indispensable that it should be possible to study these conventions as a whole without prejudging the conclusions to which such study might lead."

In the course of discussion in committee the Japanese delegate introduced a proposal in more general terms, the spirit of which met with more ready acceptance, whilst a proposal from the Belgian Delegation called the attention of States to the desirability, from the point of view of security, of concluding particular conventions for arbitration or for the judicial settlement of disputes. These two proposals were adopted in the following form by the Assembly at its meeting on the 25th September (Document A. 115).

"I. The Assembly—in view of the importance of making a thorough study of the views which have been expressed in the Assembly and the Council on the subject of pacific settlement of international disputes; convinced that such study will contribute to the development of a system of pacific settlement of international disputes—requests the Council to submit to careful examination the proposals, declarations, and suggestions made at the Assembly and the Council with a view to pacific settlement of international disputes, and to report to the Seventh Assembly upon the progress which can be made in this matter.

"II. The Assembly—reserving the question whether it is at present desirable to embody in a new general convention the provisions concerning compulsory arbitration contained in the Protocol for the Pacific Settlement of International Disputes; recalling the guarantees provided in the Covenant of the League of Nations—calls the attention of States members of the League to the desirability, from the point of view of their security, of concluding particular conventions for arbitration or for the judicial settlement of disputes."

The Swedish and Spanish proposals, together with others submitted by the Netherlands and Hungarian Delegations, deal with questions which concerned both No. 1 and No. 3 Committees. The Swedish and Spanish proposals, with the exception of the last paragraph of the latter referring to the reduction of armaments, were considered by No. 1 Committee, while the last paragraph of the Spanish proposal and those of the Netherlands and Hungarian Delegations were dealt with by No. 3 Committee.

The proposals of the Spanish, Netherlands, and Hungarian Delegations as submitted to the Assembly are set out in full in this report under No. 3 Committee.

After consideration by the two committees concerned a final draft resolution was submitted to the Assembly and adopted on the 25th September (Document A. 133). The resolution reads:—

"The Assembly—taking note of the declarations submitted to the Council and the Assembly of the League of Nations in respect of the Protocol for the Pacific Settlement of International Disputes and of the fact that the said protocol has not up to the present received the ratifications necessary for putting it into operation immediately; convinced that the most urgent need of the present time is the re-establishment of mutual confidence between nations; declaring afresh that a war of aggression should be regarded as an international crime—regards favourably the effort made by certain nations to attain those objects by concluding arbitration conventions and treaties of mutual security conceived in the spirit of the Covenant of the League of Nations and in harmony with the principles of the protocol (arbitration, security, disarmament); records the fact that such agreements need not be restricted to a limited area, but may be applied to the whole world; recommends that, after these conventions and treaties have been deposited with the League of Nations, the Council should examine them in order to report to the Seventh Assembly on the progress in general security brought about by such agreements; undertakes again to work for the establishment of peace by the sure method of arbitration, security, and disarmament; and, in conformity with the spirit of Article 8 of the Covenant, requests the Council to make a preparatory study with a view to a conference for the reduction and limitation of armaments in order that, as soon as satisfactory conditions have been assured from the point of view of general security as provided for in Resolution XIV of the Third Assembly, the said conference may be convened and a general reduction and limitation of armaments may be realized."

## COMMITTEE No. 2.

## RECONSTRUCTION OF AUSTRIA.

The arrangement for a loan to Austria and for control by the League of Nations was made during the course of the Third Assembly in 1922. The progress of events has been watched with great interest during the succeeding three years, and the most recent reports issued by the League show a sufficiently satisfactory state of affairs. M. Zimmerman, the Commissioner-General for Austria, made a statement on the position to the Second Committee, and mentioned that as a result of the policy that had been adopted not only had the equilibrium of the Budget been established, but part of the current revenue was being devoted to meet certain capital expenditure of the State. It has been decided that, unless unforeseen circumstances arise, control will cease completely in the summer of next year; but the Council has reserved to itself the right to reimpose it should necessity arise.

The committee was much interested to learn that Vienna is again becoming the commercial and banking centre not only of the territory of which it is the capital, but of territory which formerly formed part of the old Austro-Hungarian Empire, and of other countries of eastern Europe. It is true that there is still grave depression, and consequently much unemployment; nevertheless, the change wrought in three years has exceeded all expectations, and, whatever may be the future of the League, the world has reason to be grateful for the action taken in 1922, which prevented a misery, already acute, becoming one of the tragedies of history.

Documents on the subject are C. 411, C. 440, M. 162 (an interesting account of the economic situation of Austria), and C. 455.

The Assembly approved the committee's resolution at its meeting on the 21st September (see Document A. 78). The prospect of the elimination of control by the League gave an opportunity to the delegates of neighbouring States to congratulate those responsible for the work accomplished in the financial reconstruction of Austria, and to define to an extent their attitude. The principal delegate of Austria expressed thanks on behalf of his Government for all that had been done for that country.

## HUNGARY.

The scheme for the reconstruction of Hungary had been in existence for only a few months when I made my report last year, but it was already meeting with success. Not only has the success been maintained, but the results have far exceeded those anticipated by the experts who brought the scheme into operation. The Second Committee had the good fortune to listen to a statement by Mr. Jeremiah Smith, the Commissioner-General for the League of Nations in Hungary, who stated that an anticipated deficit in the Budget of one hundred million gold crowns for the year ended 30th June last had been turned into a surplus of sixty-three million gold crowns; nor was this due to conditions of a temporary character, for the harvest (Hungary is essentially an agricultural country) was considerably below pre-war average. It has, of course, not been necessary to use any of the International Loan, which was part of the reconstruction scheme, to cover a deficit, and consequently it has not been drawn upon since the 1st July, 1924. Of the total amount of two hundred and fifty-three million gold crowns raised, one hundred and eighty-five million gold crowns are in hand, and the Council of the League has decided to act on a suggestion of the Hungarian Government and authorize the expenditure of thirty million gold crowns, together with the surplus referred to above, for capital investment purposes.

The reconstruction scheme as applied to Hungary has from the outset been even more successful than in the case of Austria, but doubtless the Economic Committee of the League had benefited from the experience obtained from the working of the Austrian scheme. The documents are C. 398, C. 428, and A. 80, the last-mentioned concluding with a resolution passed by the Assembly at its meeting on the 21st September.

## HEALTH ORGANIZATION.

It is necessary to keep close watch on the activities of this organization, lest with the growth of work the expenditure should be out of all proportion to the demands made by other permanent organizations.

Owing to the creation of precedents it is difficult to resist further demands; for instance, the establishment at Singapore of the Far East Bureau of Epidemiological Intelligence suggested to the organization the establishment of a similar bureau on the west coast of Africa, and reference is made to this in its report (Document A. 15), which was before the Second Committee; indeed, the French Delegation introduced a resolution to pave the way.

When the Budget of the organization was before the Council in June last Mr. Chamberlain drew attention to the growth of expenditure, and asked whether the organization could not set limits to its work (Document A. 12). His criticism provoked a spirited reply from Dr. Madsen, President of the organization (Document A. 17). A perusal of these papers makes it clear that if a great Power with its huge resources asks the organization to investigate one particular aspect of public health other Powers with less resources will not be behindhand in making similar requests.

I am doubtful whether the benefit secured from the system of interchanges of Public Health officials is a proper charge on the League's funds. The generous assistance afforded by the Rockefeller Foundation has no doubt prompted the League to render financial aid, and New Zealand, having sent her principal Health Officer to Europe under the scheme, criticism from me would have been ill-timed.

The French resolution referred to above was not the only one; there were several others, and most members of the Second Committee were torn between their desire for economy and their dislike for voting against the acceptance of the resolutions. The Rapporteur's task was not an easy one. At length a compromise was reached, the Second Committee deciding to recommend the Assembly

to refer the proposals for new work to the Health Organization for consideration on the assumption that they would not involve any expenditure supplementary to the estimates already submitted for 1926. It was stated in committee that the officers of the organization had reason to believe that there would not be a call for more money, and there for the time being the question must be allowed to rest.

The report to the Assembly is Document A. 79, and the resolutions with which it concludes were passed on the 21st September. See also pages 86 and 87 of Document A. 7 for an account of the way in which the Health Organization has endeavoured to comply with the Fifth Assembly's resolution, that the Health Report should have attached to it the comments of the Office International d'Hygiène Publique in its capacity as Advisory Health Council.

#### COMMUNICATIONS AND TRANSIT.

The report of the Advisory and Technical Committee for Communications and Transit on the work of the Organization for Communications and Transit between the Fifth and Sixth Assemblies will be found in Document A. 7, and a supplementary report appears in A. 7A. These documents, together with that numbered A. 42, were before the Second Committee. The work is of general interest, though very largely concerned with Europe, and it is one of the functions imposed on the League by Article 23 of the Covenant.

There was a desire, almost general in the committee, to pass a strong resolution designed to secure the complete abolition of passports, but, in deference to the representations of a few States, the resolution was modified to express the hope that the Passport Conference to be held in 1926 would at least take a step towards the abolition, in the widest possible scale, of the passport system.

Further documents are A. 81, the report to the Assembly, and containing the resolutions passed by that body on the 21st September, and reports on the navigation of the Rhine and the Danube, numbered respectively C. 444 and C. 444A.

The Rapporteur, in introducing his report to the Assembly, referred to the centenary of the opening of the first railway in England, which was celebrated this year. He gave expression to the view that it was not Great Britain alone that owed so much to George Stephenson, but the whole world, and he took the occasion to express thanks to Great Britain for the hospitality afforded to the delegates from the various countries which assembled in London during the summer of this year for the Railway Conference.

#### FINANCIAL AND ECONOMIC ORGANIZATIONS.

##### *Financial Committee.*

In addition to the work involved in the financial reconstruction of Austria and Hungary the Financial Committee undertakes other work which falls within the competence of the League. It is interested in the expenditure of the loan of ten million pounds raised for the purpose of settling Greek refugees, which work is in the hands of a special Commission. At the request of the Esthonian Government it has inquired into certain aspects of the financial problems of that country, and has given advice thereon. Amongst other matters which have received its attention I desire to single out for special mention the inquiry made under its auspices by a small body of experts into double taxation and tax-evasion, the report of which (Document F. 212) accompanies this report, although I understand copies have already been sent to New Zealand. I recommend a close study of this report, the outcome of work undertaken in accordance with a resolution of the Brussels Finance Conference of 1920. The conclusions reached by the committee have justified the Council calling together a conference of experts to make a wider study of the problem, and certain States have been invited to send representatives. The meeting will, in all probability, take place next year. An account of the Financial Committee's activities for the period under review will be found in Documents A. 7 and A. 67, whilst the committee's report to the Assembly, including the resolutions passed on the 22nd September, will be found in Document A. 84.

The Financial Committee, which is one of the oldest organizations of the League, has performed some sound work, and it is not surprising that its help should be sought by Governments in elucidating financial problems.

##### *Economic Committee.*

The Second Committee's report to the Assembly is Document A. 92, and the Assembly passed the resolutions submitted to it by the Second Committee on the 24th September. Other relative documents are A. 7, A. 7A, and A. 46. The Economic Committee is pursuing its inquiries into the possibility of suppressing import and export prohibitions and restrictions in accordance with a resolution of last year's Assembly, and is continuing its examination on other questions which have engaged its attention in preceding years. I am awaiting an indication of the Government's attitude towards the Protocol on Commercial Arbitration which was opened for signature in 1923.

##### *Committee on Intellectual Co-operation.*

This committee has become a permanent organization of the League. In my report on the Fifth Assembly I dealt at length with the rapid development of this organization, culminating last year in the offer by the French Government of a permanent institution in Paris and an annual subsidy of one million francs, which offer was accepted by the Fifth Assembly on conditions designed to safeguard the international nature of the Institute. A building in Paris has been provided, and the Institute will begin to function on the 1st November. Documents A. 7 and A. 7A furnish information; Document A. 24 is the report of the Committee on Intellectual Co-operation, and gives particulars of staff appointments; and Document C. 432 contains the internal regulations and the staff regulations of the International Institute for Intellectual Co-operation. It will be noted that

the staff has been drawn from many countries. It was made clear in the discussion in the Second Committee that the Institute has not the initiative which rests with the Committee on Intellectual Co-operation itself. Document A. 44, an extract from the minutes of the meeting of the Council at which the Intellectual Co-operation Committee's report was considered, should be read in conjunction with the documents enumerated above.

As I have indicated on more than one occasion, I think it a pity that the Committee on Intellectual Co-operation should have been created. However, it is now a permanent one, and has to be accepted. Within certain limits it should do good work, but it is very much hoped that the caution which it has displayed in one direction should guide it in all its deliberations. Certainly no encouragement should be given to schemes such as that providing for a loan for mutual intellectual aid for the use of States desiring money for such a purpose. It is necessary in the present parlous economic conditions of large areas of the world to keep one's head well below the clouds. Nor should any encouragement be given to those who desire the committee to make recommendations in respect to primary education. The authority of the League will be judged by results—by its ability to adjust national differences and to improve the lot of mankind as a whole; and these results, if good, will soon make their influence felt. As a consequence, the teaching of those who have the privilege of instructing the young will not fail to be imbued with the high principles of the League. To me it seems that for the present an occasional article written in simple language, such as those which have appeared in the *New Zealand School Journal*, is better calculated to inspire the rising generation with love of peace and sympathy with human suffering than provision in the curriculum for lessons which must in time lose their vitality by constant repetition in well-worn phrases. The need to tread warily was recognized in the Second Committee, and a proposal to ask the Committee on Intellectual Co-operation "to invite all teachers and professors to collaborate in the work of the League by preparing and distributing to all scholastic institutions literature instructing the young in the aims of the League" was very properly rejected for one "to consider the best methods of co-ordinating all official and non-official efforts designed to familiarize young people throughout the world with the principles and work of the League of Nations, and to train the younger generation to regard international co-operation as the normal method of conducting world affairs." (See also Documents A. 10, A. 10A, C. 445, and the Second Committee's report to the Assembly, A. 83.)

#### *Ciraolo Scheme.*

The Ciraolo scheme is now known as the International Relief Union. It was first brought under the notice of the Assembly in 1923, and last year was in the hands of the Fifth Committee. This year, however, the work was transferred to the Second Committee. It will be recollected that last year's Assembly decided to set up a Preparatory Committee to study the scheme proposed by Senator Ciraolo. The committee was duly set up, and the results of its labours is embodied in Document A. 20. This document not only deals with the matter in a general way, but has appended the draft statutes of an International Relief Union. I may note in passing that one member of the Preparatory Committee was unable to associate himself with all the conclusions arrived at, and I think that his reservations were wisely made, for the committee appears to have been largely composed of people who had little or no knowledge of finance or insurance. When the report referred to above was before the Second Committee it became clear that there were two camps—one which would like to see the rejection of the scheme but, for the sake of appearances, was quite content that a resolution should be passed sending the document to the various Governments for study; the other, which was enamoured of the scheme, and prepared at all costs to do its best to advise the Governments to put it into execution. I will mention one point which will show what difficulties beset any international union for mutual assistance. When the definition of the term "disaster" was under discussion a representative of one State went so far as to suggest that the term should include the ravages of war caused by aggression of a neighbouring State, on condition of the payment of an additional contribution. The Italian Delegation, whose sympathy for the scheme was quite natural, seeing that its promoter is an Italian, introduced a resolution which committed the Assembly to the approval of the scheme. This was resisted, and ultimately a compromise was effected by the passing of a resolution which was approved by the Assembly at its meeting on the 24th September, providing for reference back to the Preparatory Committee of the draft statutes which it had prepared, submission of the revised statutes to Governments, members of the League or not, and containing a recommendation to Governments to communicate their views by a date to be fixed by the Council, in order that the Council may, if necessary, proceed to the convocation of a meeting of the duly authorized technical representatives of the aforesaid Governments with a view to the conclusion of the necessary arrangements for the definite establishment of the proposed union, if the Council considers that the replies received are such as to permit the conclusion of an agreement to this effect.

The committee's report to the Assembly is Document A. 110. (See also Documents A. 20A and A. 33.)

#### PROPOSED ECONOMIC CONFERENCE.

"The Assembly—being resolved to examine every method of promoting peace throughout the world; being convinced that economic peace will contribute largely to ensuring the security of peoples—invites the Council to set up on the widest basis a preparatory Committee for the purpose of preparing for the work of an International Economic Conference, with the help of the technical organizations of the League and of the International Labour Office. A decision regarding the convening of this Conference under the auspices of the League of Nations should be taken later by the Council. The purpose of this Conference should be to examine the economic difficulties which stand in the way of the restoration of general prosperity and to discover the best methods of surmounting these difficulties and of avoiding disputes."

This is the resolution which was proposed by the French Delegation in the Assembly on the 15th September and referred to the Second Committee. For an account of the reasons underlying its introduction, which I gather was unexpected, I would refer you to the Journal of the Assembly for the 20th, 23rd, and 24th September, and particularly to the speech delivered by M. Loucheur at the last sitting of the committee. Perhaps, however, it would be as well to summarize the position here.

Although the resolution speaks of the constitution of a Preparatory Committee, there is no question of a preliminary inquiry; the material, or most of it, is available, and the work of the committee would be that of preparation for a general conference.

It is claimed that economic conflicts are one of the principal causes of war; and that the present suffering is due not only to the war, but to economic disorganization prevalent before the war. From this it is argued—and I call particular attention to this—"that absence of any control of general methods of production may plunge us into further conflict." The French proposal aims not at State control, for enterprise is still to be left to an extent to individual effort, but at the application by the State of a check on excessive individual enterprise—that is, State regulation of production considered from an international point of view. A statement to this effect, made by M. Loucheur, sounded strange, coming as it did from a noted French industrialist. He proceeded to quote instances of the effect of the unfettered working of economic laws—that a surplus production of 15,000,000 tons of coal in Europe was the cause of the crisis in the coal trade; that the quantity of wheat imported into France (one-ninth of the total supply) fixed the price of the home product. He then drew attention to the paradox that stabilization of the currency was followed by an economic crisis. At this stage I cannot help comparing the great unemployment in England, which has returned to the gold standard, with the prosperity of France, which, since the war, has been able to absorb thousands of foreigners, and where there is no unemployment, although externally the franc is about one-fourth of its pre-war value.

Although M. Loucheur ventured into the regions of high finance he did not feel that a conference, if called, should consider matters of doctrine, such as the gold standard; but he claimed that it ought to be able to find a means of stabilizing the currency without creating an economic crisis. Finally, he compared the competition in Customs tariffs with the competition in armaments before the war.

In short, the aim of the eminent French speaker is individual effort tempered by State control in the interests of internationalism.

I ought to add that it was made clear by M. Loucheur in the debate that Allied debts and migration should be excluded from the terms of reference of the conference. I fail to see how an International Economic Conference could do effective work without taking into consideration "Allied debts."

The Second Committee's report is Document A. 112, and the following resolution was passed by the Assembly on the 24th September:—

"The Assembly—firmly resolved to seek all possible means of establishing peace throughout the world; convinced that economic peace will largely contribute to security among the nations; persuaded of the necessity of investigating the economic difficulties which stand in the way of the revival of general prosperity and of ascertaining the best means of overcoming these difficulties and of preventing disputes—invites the Council to consider at the earliest possible moment the expediency of constituting on a wide basis a Preparatory Committee which, with the assistance of the technical organizations of the League and the International Labour Office, will prepare the work for an International Economic Conference. The convening of this conference under the auspices of the League of Nations shall be a matter for subsequent decision by the Council."

### COMMITTEE No. 3.

#### ARMS, MUNITIONS, AND IMPLEMENTS OF WAR.

Two aspects of this subject, which is complementary and also closely related to the vital problem of disarmament, received the attention of the Third Committee and the Sixth Assembly—namely, international traffic in arms, munitions, and implements of war, and their manufacture. The resolutions submitted by the delegate of Salvador were adopted without discussion, and do not call for special comment. The relative documents are A. 13, A. 16, A. 38, A. 57 and 57 (1), A. 62, A. 82, and A. 109.

A report and resolution with respect to the Military Year-book, submitted by the same Delegation, was also accepted by the Assembly (see Document A. 108).

#### ARBITRATION, SECURITY, AND DISARMAMENT.

We are all aware that the high hopes which were raised in so many quarters last year by what was regarded as the crowning achievement of the League—I refer, of course, to the Protocol for the Pacific Settlement of International Disputes (A. 25)—were not realized. It was only natural that the profound disappointment which was occasioned by the failure of the labours of the preceding Assembly to solve the most pressing problem confronting mankind should have found almost universal expression during the debate on the report of the Council. These regrets were, in most instances, accompanied by a sincere and fervent desire that the goal of universal peace, based on arbitration, security, and disarmament, might be reached by some other means, and that every path leading to this end might be explored. It was evident from the speeches that many of the delegates



felt strongly that the prestige and influence of the League as a world-power would be seriously impaired if some further attempt, even though it were only a beginning, were not made to prepare for the day when a conference on disarmament might be convened.

In an impressive speech, which was followed in the Assembly with the utmost attention, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and first delegate for Great Britain, explained the attitude of the British Government towards the protocol. Mr. Chamberlain said that the British Government felt that the greatest contribution it could make to the cause of peace was to seek a guarantee for peace in that region with which it was most intimately associated, and to secure guarantees for peace by mutual agreement among all those whose interests were immediately affected, and he concluded by quoting the following passage from his speech to the Council at its sitting in Rome :—

“ Our object is to supplement the Covenant by making special arrangements in order to meet special needs. That these arrangements should be purely defensive in character, that they should be framed in the spirit of the Covenant, working in close harmony with the League and under its guidance, is manifest. And in the opinion of His Majesty’s Government these objects can best be attained by knitting together the nations most immediately concerned, and whose differences might lead to a renewal of strife, by means of treaties framed with a sole object of maintaining as between themselves an unbroken peace.”

The value of these regional pacts—and, of course, that proposed with Germany was in most minds—was freely acknowledged by delegates, but at the same time they were strongly of opinion that the League of Nations should not rest content with playing a passive part, and should not leave the entire initiative to individual States to conclude special arbitration treaties, even though such treaties would secure a partial adoption of the principles contained in the Geneva Protocol. It was pointed out that there was a vast amount of preliminary and exploratory work to be undertaken in respect to all phases of disarmament—the technical, industrial, economic, and psychological were among some mentioned—before even a conference could be summoned to consider any basis of disarmament. This was a work which the Council of the League might most usefully pursue in order to be ready to convene the conference and submit concrete proposals for its consideration as soon as the precedent and essential condition of security had been attained. Without exception, all the speakers in the most interesting debates which occurred in the Assembly and in the Third Committee were definite in stating that they could only support any proposition which contained the three inseparable elements of arbitration, security, and disarmament.

Three resolutions were submitted to the Assembly. I quote them in full as follows :—

- (a.) “ Considering the importance of proceeding without delay with the preparation of a general programme covering the whole question of the reduction and limitation of armaments with a view to convening, at an opportune moment, a general International Conference, the Assembly begs the Council to study this problem, particularly with the object of setting up a special organism entrusted with the duty of preparing a draft for the above-mentioned programme.” (Presented by the Netherlands Delegation, Document A. 51.)
- (b.) “ The Assembly—profoundly attached to the cause of peace and convinced that the most urgent need of the present time is the re-establishment of mutual confidence between nations ; declaring afresh that a war of aggression constitutes an international crime ; taking note of the declaration submitted to the Council and the Assembly of the League of Nations in respect of the Protocol for the Peaceful Settlement of International Disputes and of the fact that the said protocol has not up to the present received the ratifications necessary for putting it into operation immediately—regards favourably the effort made by certain nations to advance these questions by concluding treaties of mutual security conceived in the spirit of the Covenant of the League of Nations and in harmony with the principles of the protocol (arbitration, security, disarmament) ; records the fact that such agreements need not be restricted to a limited area, but may be applied to the whole world ; recommends that, after these agreements have been deposited with the League of Nations, the Council should examine them in order to report to the Seventh Assembly on the progress in general security brought about by such agreements ; undertakes again to work for the establishment of peace by the sure method of arbitration, security, and disarmament ; and requests the Council to make preparatory arrangements for a conference on the reduction of armaments, as soon as, in its opinion, satisfactory conditions have been achieved from the point of view of general security as provided for in Resolution XIV of the Third Assembly.” (Presented by the Spanish Delegation, Document A. 53 (1).) And
- (c.) Replace the last paragraph of the Spanish proposal by the following : “ And invites the Council to consider forthwith plans for a general reduction of armaments in accordance with Article 8 of the Covenant, and at the same time to make preparatory arrangements for a conference on the reduction of armaments, such conference to meet and to begin its work without delay, as soon as, in the opinion of the Council or of the Assembly, those conditions of security are fulfilled on which the success of the conference must depend. The Council is invited to report to the Seventh Assembly on the progress of the work undertaken in execution of the present resolution.” (Presented by the Hungarian Delegation, Document A. 63.)

The committee's examination, which was careful and exhaustive, revealed a considerable divergence of opinion on the part of the delegates as to the best road to be pursued to reach the end desired by all. The debate throughout was of a high character, and may be read and studied with profit by all. A considerable body of opinion, which represented the view that the League must do something to satisfy the universal desire for peace, regarded the Spanish resolution as somewhat negative in character, and they naturally favoured the more positive wording of the Netherlands draft. On the other hand, many delegates, including the representatives of Great Britain and Italy, emphasized the extreme delicacy and complexity of the problem, and the need for proceeding with the utmost circumspection in order to avoid a repetition of the failures which had attended all previous efforts. They urged that the Netherlands and Hungarian resolutions gave insufficient latitude to the Council, and that it would be preferable to leave to that body the decision as to the most favourable moment for commencing this preliminary work without necessarily requiring it to wait for the actual realization of the conditions of security defined in the Spanish resolution.

A sub-committee was appointed with a view to reconciling these viewpoints and framing a single text from the three drafts, and, as it conducted its investigation in a most conciliatory spirit, no difficulty was experienced in adopting a text in substitution for the last paragraph of the Spanish resolution, which met with unanimous acceptance.

This text reads as follows :—

“And, in conformity with the spirit of Article 8 of the Covenant, requests the Council to make a preparatory study with a view to a conference on the reduction and limitation of armaments in order that, as soon as satisfactory conditions have been assured from the point of view of general security as provided for in Resolution XIV of the Third Assembly, the said conference may be convened and a general reduction and limitation of armaments may be realized.”

The Rapporteur of the Third Committee, in his report to the Assembly (A. 99), gave an exact interpretation of this text, which is the result of a compromise, and the gravity and importance of the subject justify me in quoting it as follows :—

“(1.) The paragraph in question, in the first place, fixes the present field of activity of the Council in respect of reduction and limitation of armaments, inviting it to make a preparatory study with a view to a conference on the reduction and limitation of armaments as understood in Resolution XIV.

“(2.) In regard to the programme of these preparatory studies, the committee refrained from discussing them, in agreement with the point of view expressed by the British, French, and Italian delegates, that this was a matter for the Council to decide. It rests with the Council to examine very carefully any studies already made, as well as proposals which may be laid before it by States members of the League.

“(3.) In regard to the time at which the preparatory studies might and should be begun by the Council, the resolution confirms the opinion of the majority of the delegations that it is highly desirable not to delay for one moment the realization of the efforts made by the League in this direction. Although it is not expressly said that these preparatory studies should be entered upon at once or ‘immediately,’ the text makes it clear that any inactivity of the Council in this respect, apart from not being in conformity with Article 8 of the Covenant, would fail to meet the ideas of the Sixth Assembly with regard to the problem of the reduction and the limitation of armaments.

“But it is for the Council to choose the moment which it may deem opportune for initiating each of the preparatory studies in order that these studies may be completed and the conference immediately summoned as soon as the general political situation is favourable for the holding of such a conference.”

The Spanish resolution as amended by the First Committee (first seven paragraphs) and by the Third Committee (last paragraph) will be found in Document A. 113. The amended resolution was submitted to the Assembly (Document A. 133) and approved, and is set out in full in that part of the report dealing with the First Committee.

The concluding debate in the Assembly, which was followed with the closest attention, reflected the universal desire for the early approach of that great day when security and disarmament will have been attained, and when conciliation and arbitration will take the place of force in the settlement of all international disputes. I am sure that Lord Cecil, in a moving speech which he delivered in support of the motion, echoed the prayer of all when he wished the work of this Assembly in the cause of peace “God Speed.”

#### COMMITTEE No. 4.

Dr. Augusto Costa (Portugal) was elected Chairman of the committee, Mr. MacWhite (Irish Free State) Vice-Chairman, and M. Cavazzoni (Italy) General Rapporteur.

Three sub-committees were appointed to consider and report on—(1) Contributions in arrears (2) construction of a conference hall; (3) allocation of expenses.

The constitution of these committees may be found in Document A. 124.

The duties of No. IV Committee are rendered less onerous than they used to be owing to the care taken by the Supervisory Commission in compiling its reports for submission to the committee, and by the work done in previous sessions in adopting regulations dealing with the staff, finance, and the Provident Fund.

The Supervisory Commission submitted six reports, the main one dealing with the work of the 14th and 15th sessions. The relevant documents are A. 5, A. IV 2, A. IV 3, A. IV 5, A. IV 6, and A. IV 12.

The audited accounts for 1924 (Document A. 3) as submitted were approved by the committee and subsequently endorsed by the Assembly (Document A. 124).

The financial position of the League as at the 31st August, 1925, will be found in Document A. 36.

A report on new work imposing additional financial charges on the League (Document A. 30) was approved by the committee at its second meeting.

The Budgets of the Secretariat, the Labour Office, and International Court of Justice, as submitted, were adopted, subject to supplementary estimates. During the course of the discussion several questions were raised including—

- (1.) The additional cost to the League if meetings of the Council or other organizations are held away from Geneva, and it was decided to draw the attention of the interested organizations to the resolution adopted last year (Document A. 124, page 4).
- (2.) Equitable proportion to be established between the nationals of the various countries on the services of the Secretariat. The Secretary-General intimated that it was his intention to appoint, as far as possible, nationals of States not represented, or inadequately represented, on the Secretariat to new or vacant posts, and the committee assured the Secretary-General of its sympathy and confidence (Document A. 124, page 4).
- (3.) The Budget of the Health Organization. There was a lengthy discussion on this Budget, and it was only adopted on the understanding that a certain proportion should be maintained both between the Budgets of the various organizations themselves and between the Budget of each organization and the Budget of the League as a whole; otherwise Budget-equilibrium might be disturbed and the usefulness of the League's work seriously impaired (Document A. 124, page 2).

#### CONTRIBUTIONS IN ARREARS.

The committee adopted the recommendations of its sub-committee to approve the settlement of the Argentine Republic's debt, to request the Secretary-General to make further urgent representations to members who have not yet paid, and to invite the Secretary-General to report the results of his appeal to the Council at its session in June, 1926, in order that the Council may report to the Seventh Assembly (Document A. 131).

#### ALLOCATION OF EXPENSES.

The committee adopted the proposals of its sub-committee, subject to reservation by some of the delegates. The sub-committee submitted a scale of allocation for the years 1926, 1927, and 1928, with a request that the Committee on the Allocation of Expenses should submit a revised scale in 1928 (Document A. 125).

It will be noted that in the scale submitted the total units are increased from 932 to 937, but the contribution by New Zealand remains at 10 units.

The delegate for Panama raised a question concerning the contributions from his country, but it was decided to adjourn any decision on the point to next session.

#### CONSTRUCTION OF A CONFERENCE HALL.

The committee adopted the recommendation of its sub-committee for the erection of an assembly hall and annexes to the Secretariat at an estimated cost of 11,700,000 francs, including 2,000,000 francs for the purchase of a site; subject, however, to the report of a committee, to be appointed, to deal with possible change in site if the present buildings should be sold within a defined period (Document A. 116).

The offer of the Government of New Zealand to provide panellings in native timber for one of the committee-rooms of the proposed conference hall was greatly appreciated by members of the League.

The surplus funds which had accumulated at the end of the year 1924 were largely instrumental in influencing the recommendation for a new assembly hall and annexes. The surplus was, in great part, due to factors that will not recur in the future, such as the receipt of large sums on account of arrears and profit on exchange. For particulars as to the appropriation of the surplus and the erection of the conference hall reference should be made to Document A. 124, page 3.

Amendments to the Regulations of the Staff Provident Fund, new arrangements for intermediate grades of the staff, report on the organization of the staff of the Secretariat, and several miscellaneous questions are set forth in Document A. 124, pages 3, 4, and 5.

#### BUDGET WITH SUPPLEMENTARY ITEMS AS ADOPTED.

The Budget as approved by the Supervisory Commission and communicated to the committee and States members of the League is recorded in Document A. 4 (1).

As the result of further reports from the Supervisory Commission and deliberation by the committee amendments were made in the Budget as originally submitted. These include, in the Secretariat Budget, a decrease in the Disarmament Section (Schedule Q, item 25) from 1,105,099 to 839,099 francs. Amongst the increases may be noted 1,375,000 francs as terminable annuity on account of building operations of the League; 200,000 francs to defray the expenses of preparing for the Economic Conference; 303,000 francs as a credit for refugees; 50,000 francs for Armenian relief; 150,000 francs for a contemplated inquiry in Persia concerning opium-production and to study the existing situation with regard to the cultivation of the poppy; and 30,000 francs for a committee of experts, representing the Press of different continents, to consider methods of contributing towards the organization of peace.

The main alteration in the International Labour Office Budget was the insertion of 200,000 francs for exterior and interior work, to furnish and equip the building, together with 50,000 francs for the construction of a sewer. Should these estimates prove sufficient and be expended, the total cost of the new building and its equipment will amount to 3,250,000 francs.

There had been considerable opposition in the committee to the proposed vote of 150,000 francs for the inquiry into poppy-cultivation in Persia, and I was amongst those who opposed the vote. It was only carried in committee by 13 votes to 12, and in the Assembly the vote was reduced to 100,000 francs.

The total appropriations for the year 1926 amount to 22,930,633 francs, as compared with 22,658,138 for 1925.

#### FIFTH COMMITTEE.

##### TRAFFIC IN WOMEN AND PROTECTION OF CHILDREN.

If you will refer to my report of the Fifth Assembly you will see that it was decided that the Advisory Committee on Traffic in Women and Children should be reconstituted in such a way as to provide for the consideration of questions arising out of the new obligations which the Council last year decided to take over from the International Association for the Protection of Children and Child Welfare. The Advisory Committee has been reconstituted, and will in future be known as the "Advisory Commission for the Protection and Welfare of Children and Young People." This Commission will be divided into two committees, the first to be called "The Traffic in Women and Children Committee," and the second "The Child Welfare Committee." Both committees will meet at the same period of the year, and consequently will work in unison.

The Fifth Committee had before it Document A. 22, being the report on the fourth session of the Advisory Commission held in May last. The debate turned on what could be considered international as opposed to purely national questions, and a resolution designed to secure the consideration of only international questions was introduced by the British Delegation, without, however, laying down any clear line of demarcation. On the other hand, the Norwegian Delegation was anxious that the programme of work outlined in the report referred to above should receive the approval of the Assembly. The Netherland Delegation brought up a resolution designed to secure to the Health Committee the right of seeking co-operation of specialists on child hygiene. Ultimately it was decided that representatives of all three Delegations should meet and agree on a draft which would, as far as possible, meet the three points of view, and the following is the text of the resolution which received the approval of the Fifth Committee for submission to the Assembly:—

"1. The Assembly expresses its approval of the work accomplished by the Advisory Commission for the Protection and Welfare of Children and Young People. It desires at the same time to emphasize the view expressed in the resolution of the Fifth Assembly in regard to child welfare, that the League can most usefully concern itself with the study of those problems on which the comparison of the methods and experience of different countries, consultation and interchange of views between the officials and experts of different countries, and international co-operation may be likely to assist the Governments in dealing with such problems. The Assembly therefore hopes that the Commission will not lose sight of the limits of its competence as thus defined.

"The Assembly is also of the opinion that it is desirable that when collaborating with other organizations of the League of Nations the Advisory Commission should conform to Resolution 4 of the Fifth Assembly on the subject of duplication of work.

"2. The Assembly recommends that 50,000 gold francs, as already proposed in the Budget, be allocated to the new work connected with child welfare."

It will be seen that, in effect, the programme of work to be undertaken is left to the Advisory Commission, for the resolution does no more than emphasize the limits within which the Commission was last year instructed to confine its work. As a matter of fact, the Council had already given its approval to the programme which the Advisory Commission had set itself in Report A. 22.

Two resolutions, one introduced by the Swiss Delegation, providing for the transmission to the Advisory Commission of the recommendations and resolutions of the First General Congress on Child Welfare, and the other introduced by the Netherland Delegation, referred to above, requesting the Council to consider the advisability of securing for the Health Committee the co-operation of specialists on child hygiene, were still awaiting final consideration. In the course of the discussion an amendment was proposed by the Belgian delegate to the second resolution, providing for the investigation by the Health Organization of infant mortality. There was considerable discussion on the point of overlapping by the two organizations, but ultimately the resolution and the amendment were combined, and the result was the following resolution submitted to the Assembly and passed on the 25th September:—

"The Assembly—considering that the Council, in accordance with a resolution of the Fifth Assembly, invited the Health Organization of the League to consider any measures within its competence which it would be desirable and practicable to undertake for the protection of children from the hygienic point of view; and convinced of the importance of this form of child-welfare work—decides to request the Health Organization to investigate infant mortality from the point of view of feeding in infancy; requests the Council to instruct the Health Committee to undertake this investigation, and to inquire into the advisability of constituting a sub-committee which would be able to call upon the co-operation of specialists in various countries in questions concerning child hygiene and which would be requested to initiate the investigation of this and of any other questions connected with child hygiene the consideration of which might be deemed expedient." (See Documents C. 382, M. 126, and A. 98.)

The Swiss resolution was modified in such a manner as to instruct the Secretary of the Fifth Committee to forward the resolutions of the Congress unofficially to the members of the Advisory Commission for their information, together with the minutes of the meeting at which the draft resolution was discussed. The Congress resolutions will be found amongst the documents sent under cover of this report, and I advise that they be transmitted to the Department in Wellington competent to deal with them (see Document A. 72 and enclosure).

#### PROTECTION OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN IN THE NEAR EAST.

This work, which has been supported by the League of Nations for several years, is undertaken by Dr. Kennedy in Constantinople and by Miss K. Jeppe in Aleppo. It consists in providing a house in each of those cities for the reception of women and children who, during the Armenian deportations, were forcibly kept by people of nationalities other than their own. There is no compulsion on such women and children to seek refuge in either house; but it is generally known that the houses are in existence, and that, being maintained with the help of money derived from the League, they are proper houses to which unfortunate women and children who are able to escape from the bondage which is their lot are able to go to be cared for until information of the location of their own relatives can be obtained, or until they can be received in a village inhabited by their own folk where they can lead peaceful lives. In addition to the upkeep of these houses, which may be looked upon as the main work, Miss Jeppe has provided a village colony in Syria for the reception of such women and children, but the Power exercising the mandate over Syria is of opinion, and justly so, that schemes of colonization are a Government concern, and in future Miss Jeppe will not pursue this part of her work. The documents are A. 32 and A. 111, the last being the report to the Assembly, from which it will be noted that provision is made during the next financial year of the League for the sum of 75,000 francs, 45,000 to be allotted for the work in Aleppo, and 30,000 for that in Constantinople. There was a suggestion that perhaps the League could find this year sufficient money to cover the work for a period of three years, but this suggestion was not accepted, and the wisdom of this decision was confirmed by the French representative, who stated in committee that he thought the need was a diminishing one.

#### ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON TRAFFIC IN OPIUM AND OTHER DANGEROUS DRUGS.

It will be convenient to take together the report of the Advisory Committee (Document A. 28) and Document A. 34 concerning the proposed Commission of Inquiry in certain opium-producing countries, for although they were considered separately by the Fifth Committee, they are, in fact, interdependent.

The First and Second Opium Conferences occupied a place of importance in the discussions of the Fifth Committee, and particularly the Convention drawn up by the Second Conference. In the report of the Advisory Committee two countries are singled out for special mention, China and Persia. The Chinese delegate protested against the references to his country, and stated that figures relating to the production of opium in China were largely exaggerated. As a matter of fact, there are no reliable figures, for there is no official publication giving any, and those on which the Advisory Committee has relied are based on estimates supplied by a non-official organization.

The delegate from Persia, whilst not denying that there might be illicit trading in opium in the Persian Gulf, took his stand on the fact that his country has not yet ratified the Opium Convention, or adopted the import-certificate system, and stated that it was quite impossible for Persia to put an end at once to the production of opium, for such a proceeding would mean the starvation of a very large number of peasants whose lives depended on the cultivation of the poppy. He failed to realize, and this was pointed out to him, that there was no question of Persia's right to produce opium; the charge against Persia was that no precautions were taken to prevent illicit trading. The Persian delegate, in the course of his speech, had alluded to the proposed Commission of Inquiry in certain opium-producing countries, and stated that his Government would welcome such an inquiry. This proposal was made during the course of the Second Opium Conference, and was in due course submitted to the Council, which, according to Document A. 34, took no definite decision, preferring to send the proposal to the Sixth Assembly for consideration, especially as expenditure of money was involved. Up to date only one country has asked that the Commission, if set up, should be sent to it, and that country is Persia. The question before the Fifth Committee was, Would such a Commission, if sent to Persia, have good results? If so, the money involved would be well spent. If, on the other hand, good was unlikely to result, then it would be better not to set up a Commission. An appeal was made to the Persian delegate to say whether his country was prepared to adopt the regulations put in force by other countries for controlling the illicit traffic in opium, and if he could not answer that question in the affirmative, would he recommend his Government to frame and put into force the necessary regulations? The Persian delegate was unable to give an affirmative reply to the first question, but he promised to make the recommendation asked for; and, in these circumstances, the Fifth Committee, after further deliberation, resolved to recommend that a Commission of Inquiry be set up. The sum recommended to be set aside for the purpose of the inquiry was 200,000 gold francs. The Commission of Control, which considers all financial matters, whilst recommending that the Fourth Committee should give effect to the request on account of the efforts being made by the League to check the abusive trade in opium, thought that the amount should be reduced to 150,000 francs, and that the Council should endeavour to obtain the balance from sources outside the League, suggesting that the Persian Government should make a grant-in-aid, seeing that one of the tasks of the Commission of Inquiry would be consideration of the substitution of a proportion of the poppy-cultivation by other crops, a matter domestic to Persia. The Fourth Committee was almost equally divided on the question, the voting resulting in a majority of one in favour of the Commission of Inquiry, involving an expenditure of 150,000 francs.

When the report came before the Assembly on the 26th September a proposal was put forward that the vote should be reduced to 100,000 francs. This proposal was accepted and the money voted (see Documents A. 123 and A. 127). If as a result of the inquiry Persia's production of opium is effectively limited to meet legitimate inquiries, and the illicit traffic in the Persian Gulf is controlled, the money will have been well spent, but it would be unwise to underrate the difficulties.

I make passing reference to a suggestion by the Irish delegate, that, pending the constitution of the Permanent Central Board, to be set up under Article 19 of the Convention of 1925, the Advisory Committee should be strengthened by the inclusion of representatives of countries who were merely consuming and not manufacturing countries. No resolution on this point was taken, but the suggestion is available for consideration should occasion arise.

According to instructions, the Convention alluded to above was signed by me on behalf of New Zealand, and arrangements for ratification are being made (see also Document A. 45).

#### INTER-MUNICIPALITY.

This question was considered by last year's Assembly on a proposal to the effect that the maintenance of direct relations between the important municipalities of the various countries is a form of co-operation between peoples, which will contribute largely to diffuse the ideals which led to the creation of the League of Nations and which guide its work. The Fifth Assembly requested the Secretary-General of the League to draw up a report on inter-municipality co-operation for consideration this year. The report (Document A. 9) was before the Fifth Committee. It is a paper of some interest, as it shows the extent of co-operation that is already taking place. There was a desire in many quarters that this report should be the end of the matter so far as the League was concerned, and the report drawn up for presentation to the Assembly concluded, and still concludes, with a resolution which, after mentioning the report, draws attention to the advantage of closer co-operation between municipalities of different countries as a necessary condition to the progress of international municipal co-operation, and requests the Council to authorize the technical organizations of the League to give favourable consideration, so far as they may find it workable to do so, to requests for assistance or co-operation addressed to them by the various non-official international organizations which deal with municipal questions.

There was an attempt to widen the scope of the resolution, and a suggestion was made in the committee to keep the Assembly informed of the progress of inter-municipality; but these points were not pressed.

The report to the Assembly is Document A. 122, and the resolution with which it concludes was passed on 25th September.

#### WORK FOR THE REFUGEES.

In my report on last year's Assembly I gave a fairly lengthy summary of the proceedings in the Fourth and Fifth Committees on the transfer of work connected with Russian refugees from the Secretariat to the International Labour Office. The Fifth Assembly granted a credit of 203,000 Swiss francs for the placing and employment of Russian refugees as "exceptional and temporary expenditure," and agreed with the statement of the Fourth Committee that the credit should be regarded as temporary, and joined in the expression of hope that it would be possible for the item to disappear from the Budget of the International Labour Office at the earliest possible moment. So far as the 1926 Budget of the League is concerned, that hope will not be realized. On the other hand, the credit has been increased from 203,000 to 303,000 Swiss francs, the extra 100,000 being voted for the establishment in South America of two agencies in connection with the work of transferring suitable Russian refugees from Europe to Latin American States. The work done by the International Labour Office last year forms the subject of a paper, unnumbered, entitled "Report on the Work for the Refugees." It is an interesting account of what has been accomplished, furnishes a good deal of statistical information, and says that in the first seven months of 1925 about eighteen thousand refugees have been found employment. The result of the visit to South America of a mission which went out with the object of making arrangements for the settlement of Russian refugees in the Latin American States will be found on page 8 of the document, and apparently the opportunities of settlement there are such as to warrant those who are capable of forming an opinion asking for the League's assistance, though I am, myself, very doubtful about the success of this scheme.

At the beginning of the discussion in the Fifth Committee this complex question was made more difficult by an ill-timed suggestion that the League should concern itself with the emigration not only of Russian refugees but of unemployed in central Europe. Half an hour's discussion showed that the reaching of an agreement would be a long and difficult task, and the Chairman made the wise proposal to set up a small sub-committee to thresh the matter out. Ultimately the sub-committee presented a report (Document A. 128) which, in the main, was adopted by the Fifth Committee. It will be seen that the suggestion that the League should take under its wing the emigration of unemployed has, fortunately, not met with any support; and that the sub-committee has recorded its opinion that the question of finding employment for persons other than unemployed refugees is solely the concern of individual Governments themselves, and not of the League.

In addition to the resolution providing for a credit of 303,000 Swiss francs, the Fifth Committee resolved that a revolving fund, eventually to stand at £100,000 sterling, should be formed for the purpose of providing passages, &c., of refugees, and suggested that the money be advanced by the

League from its working Capital Fund. The Supervisory Commission would not approve of this suggestion, and this view was upheld by the Fourth Committee. The Fifth Committee, realizing that unless such a fund were made available the efforts to expedite a solution of the refugee problem would be seriously jeopardized, and that an immediate possibility of placing three thousand refugees in South America might even be lost, requested the Assembly to urge the Council to arrange for the convocation of an inter-governmental conference as soon as possible for the purpose of examining the suggestions put forward for the creation and administration of a revolving fund of not less than £100,000.

The resolutions submitted by the Fifth Committee were passed by the Assembly at its meeting on the 26th September.

#### TRANSFER OF ARMENIAN REFUGEES TO THE CAUCASUS.

The Fifth Assembly voted a sum of 50,000 francs for the purpose of setting up an inquiry into the possibility of settling in the Caucasus or elsewhere a substantial number of Armenian refugees, mostly now in Greece. A Commission, consisting of four persons, including Dr. Nansen as President, was appointed. A report, unnumbered, issued by the International Labour Office, was before the Fifth Committee. This document furnishes information on the present position of Armenian refugees, and describes three schemes of irrigation and drainage which are necessary to render large tracts of land near Erivan suitable for settlement purposes. All three schemes were examined by the Commission on the spot, with the result that Dr. Nansen made a definite proposal in regard to that which seemed to be the most promising.

At the outset it was realized that the Fifth Committee had been set a difficult task. It had before it an interesting and valuable report, and was able to hear statements from not only Dr. Nansen but two other members of the Commission, Mr. G. Carle and Mr. C. E. Dupuis, agricultural and engineering experts respectively. It was seen, however, that these experts had not had sufficient time to go into close detail, and, apart from this, there were political and other considerations which required investigation. Naturally the first question that arose was the suitability of the district for the reception of Armenian refugees. The district is situated in that part of the Caucasus which comprises the Armenian Republic. It was stated in committee that this Republic has an autonomous Government, but that the Government is included in the Union of Soviet Republics, and that certain revenue receipts, including those of the Post Office and the Customs, were sent to Moscow, there to be redistributed in accordance with an agreed formula.

In meeting certain criticisms great stress was laid on a statement to the effect that high British authorities had, so recently as last year, declared that Russian Armenia was a suitable national home for the Armenian people, and that the British Government had sent there seven thousand Armenians who had taken refuge in Mesopotamia.

There was little hope that the Fifth Committee as a whole would reach a quick decision, and the Chairman wisely proposed the formation of a sub-committee to deal with the question. This proposal was accepted. The sub-committee used all the means at its disposal with a view of ascertaining whether the scheme proposed was a sound one and whether the money needed could be raised on the guarantees which were available. It examined the experts, Messrs. Carle and Dupuis, mentioned above, and also experts in finance, but it presented no report. The Fifth Committee sat in private in order to hear a statement from the Chairman of the sub-committee, and a number of questions were asked and answers given. The public was then admitted, and a series of resolutions drawn up by the sub-committee were presented and debated.

It was stated in the course of the final discussion that the Governments of two countries where refugees now are, are growing desperate, and that unless steps are soon taken the refugees will be expelled.

Since 1920 the Assembly has passed resolutions of sympathy, which may or may not have brought hope to the remnants of the Armenian race; and after the action taken by the Fifth Assembly the League cannot abandon those people. There is now an opportunity for settling some twenty-five thousand Armenians, of whom fifteen thousand have still to be repatriated, provided a modest scheme of irrigation and drainage is undertaken, and settlement can begin in about a year from the commencement of the work. But there are difficulties, not only political but financial, for the money needed cannot be raised in Armenia, and guarantees are required. Uncertainties can be cleared up only after further investigation. Ultimately the Fifth Committee accepted its sub-committee's resolutions with small modifications, and these resolutions as set out below were passed by the Assembly on the 26th September (see Document A. 126).

“The Sixth Assembly—in view of the resolution adopted by the Fifth Assembly at its meeting on 25th September, 1924, inviting ‘the International Labour Office, in collaboration with Dr. Nansen, to institute an inquiry with a view to studying the possibility of settling a substantial number of Armenian refugees in the Caucasus and elsewhere’; in view of the reports by Dr. Fridtjof Nansen and by the experts who were sent with him to Armenia; in view of the fact that these reports are unanimous as to the possibility of carrying out irrigation works which would allow of the settlement in Armenia under good conditions of at least 15,000 Armenian refugees, now in Greece and Constantinople, as also of 10,000 refugees already repatriated, on condition that the sum of 9,000,000 gold roubles (900,000 pounds sterling) is forthcoming for the execution of the necessary work; desirous of availing itself of every practical opportunity of giving effect to the resolution so often renewed by former Assemblies regarding the return of Armenian refugees to a national home—invites

the Council to appoint at once not more than five Commissioners whom it would empower : (a) To ascertain finally the technical possibility of the proposed undertaking ; (b) to exchange views, as may be necessary, with the organs of the League of Nations, the Government of the Armenian Republic, and the other Governments, the associations and private individuals whose help would appear useful for the realization of the scheme ; (c) if their findings are favourable, to propose to the Council the constitution of a body of trustees to whom its statutes would give especially the following powers—(1) To conclude with all authorities, public and private, all necessary contracts for the execution of the plan for settling the refugees ; to accept, if necessary, from the Armenian Government a concession of the areas to be irrigated ; (2) to negotiate, if necessary, the issue of a loan, and in that case to act as trustees of the funds, and to assure the financial service. The Assembly invites the Council to place at the disposal of the Commissioners the sum required in 1925 for the execution of the above resolution, this sum to be entered in the Budget under unforeseen expenditure. It decides to enter an item of 50,000 francs in the 1926 Budget for the same purpose."

#### COMMITTEE No. 6.

##### PROTECTION OF MINORITIES.

This question came before the Assembly in the form of an extract from a most interesting report submitted to the Council by the representative from Brazil, outlining the procedure adopted for dealing with any petition or communication regarding an infraction, or danger of infraction, of one of the clauses of the Treaties for the Protection of Racial, Linguistic, or Religious Minorities (Documents A. 7 and A. 7A). This led the Lithuanian Delegation to submit a resolution (Document A. 65) inviting the Assembly to set up a special committee to prepare a draft general convention to include all the States members of the League, and setting forth their common rights and duties in regard to these minorities. At present these Treaties for the Protection of Minorities are only the concern of certain States which have signed them, whereas other States are exempt from the legal obligations imposed by such Treaties.

While the subject is not one of direct concern to New Zealand, it is evident from the keen discussion which the proposal of Lithuania evoked in the Sixth Committee that it is a matter of vital interest to many European States, and particularly to those which have been reconstituted by the Treaties of Peace. The committee found no difficulty in arriving at a resolution which proved acceptable to the delegate of Lithuania and to the representatives of the other States supporting his view. This resolution was adopted by the Assembly at its meeting on the 21st September, and will be found in Documents A. 88 and A. 104.

##### MANDATES.

The report on the work of the Sixth Session of the Permanent Mandates Commission (Document A. 14) contains no reference to Western Samoa, because it was not possible, owing to our geographical situation, for the annual report on the administration of the mandated territory for the financial year ended 31st March, 1925, to reach Geneva in time for consideration at the ordinary summer session of the Commission. This session invariably commences in the last week in June and lasts about a fortnight. The Commission, in paragraph 5 of its observations, draws attention to the delay in the receipt of the annual reports on the mandated territories, and when this question was before the Council of the League I again explained the reasons why it was not possible for New Zealand to get its report to Geneva by the 20th May of each year. The representatives of Australia and Japan also pointed out that the same reasons applied to the reports on the mandated territories of New Guinea, Nauru, and the Marshall, Caroline, and Marianne Islands respectively. The Council fully appreciated the peculiar circumstances of these Groups, and adopted the observation of the Permanent Mandates Commission on this point, subject to the reservation that the reports of the Mandatory Powers of New Zealand, Australia, and Japan, owing to the geographical situation of their territories, and the fact that their financial years did not close until the 31st March, or later, in each year, could not reach the Secretariat of the League within the period fixed by the Commission for the receipt of the annual reports.

During its summer session the Permanent Mandates Commission considered the replies which had been received from the various Mandatory Powers with respect to matters of considerable interest to mandated territories—namely, (1) Loans, advances, and investments of public and private capital in mandated territories ; and (2) the extension of special International Conventions to mandated territories, and submitted final proposals for action by the Council with respect to them. These will be found in paragraphs I and II of the general observations in Document A. 14.

I have explained in earlier reports how these questions came before the Commission for consideration. That relating to loans, advances, and investments of public and private capital arose owing to the hesitation of financiers to invest in the mandated territories under a regime which was entirely novel and which did not appear to them to offer sufficient guarantees of security. It was felt that a mandated territory was likely to suffer in respect of its commercial enterprises, public works, and general economic development by very reason of its peculiar constitution and status. The Permanent Mandates Commission therefore sought to remove these doubts and hesitations. Similarly, the examination of the question of the extension of special International Conventions entered into by a Mandatory Power to its mandated territory was undertaken with a view to ensuring that the inhabitants of the latter should enjoy, equally with the people of the mandatory, all the benefits and privileges arising out of these conventions.



The declarations with respect to these two questions as finally approved by the Council of the League are as follows:—

“As regards the Commission’s general observations on,—

“*I. Loans, Advances, and Investments of Public and Private Capital in Mandated Territories.*

“The Council, in view of the discussion of the Permanent Mandates Commission, in the course of its sixth session, on the subject of loans, advances, and investments of public and private capital in mandated territories, and in view of the earlier discussions and inquiries and of the statements of the Mandatory Powers on this subject—

“1. Declares that the validity of financial obligations assumed by a Mandatory Power on behalf of a mandated territory in conformity with the provisions of the mandate and all rights regularly acquired under the mandatory regime are in no way impaired by the fact that the territory is administered under mandate.

“2. Agrees on the following principles: (a) That the cessation or transfer of a mandate cannot take place unless the Council has been assured in advance that the financial obligations regularly assumed by the former Mandatory Power will be carried out, and that all rights regularly acquired under the administration of the former Mandatory Power shall be respected; and (b) that when this change has been effected the Council will continue to use all its influence to ensure the fulfilment of these obligations.

“*II. Extension of Special International Conventions to Mandated Territories.*

“The Council approves the proposal of the Commission.

“The Council therefore,—

“1. Recommends that the Mandatory Powers, and also all States, whether members or not of the League of Nations, which have concluded special treaties or conventions with the Mandatory Powers should agree to extend the benefits of such treaties or conventions to mandated territories, if circumstances render such extension possible and expedient and if the provisions of these international agreements are consistent with the stipulations of the Covenant and the mandate.

“2. Requests the Mandatory Powers, subject to the above reservations, to insert in any special treaties or conventions they may conclude hereafter a clause providing for the possibility of their application to mandated territories.

“3. Requests the Mandatory Powers to indicate in their annual reports, if possible and expedient, the reasons and circumstances which have prevented the application to mandated territories of the special treaties or conventions which they may have concluded with other Powers during the period under review.”

The minutes of the sixth session of the Permanent Mandates Commission are contained in Document C. 386, while comments by the representatives of France, Great Britain, and the Union of South Africa on certain of the Commission’s observations in regard to their respective territories will be found in Document A. 21.

The Commission, having referred to the fact that the extension of the Australian Navigation Act to New Guinea, and the consequent restriction of the shipping of this territory to Australian bottoms, would appear to hamper the economic development of the territory, the representative of the Commonwealth advised the Secretariat, during the sitting of the Sixth Assembly, that the territory of New Guinea had, by an Order in Council, been exempted from the operation of the coastal trade provisions of the Act (Document A. 64).

The position with respect to the frontier between Angola and south-west Africa is referred to in Documents A. 61 and A. 97.

All questions relating to mandates were, as usual, referred for the consideration of the Sixth Committee by a resolution submitted by Dr. Nansen of the Norwegian Delegation (Document A. 56), and the reports of the committee, which were approved by the Assembly on the 21st September, will be found in Documents A. 68, A. 89, and A. 105.

Both in the committee and Assembly debates on mandates one topic to which special reference was made was the liquor traffic and the evil effect on the Native peoples resulting therefrom. All the speakers emphasized the urgent need for stamping out this scourge. The delegate of Sweden, who is also a member of the Permanent Mandates Commission, said this was perhaps the most pressing problem confronting the Commission, and that one of its most prominent members had agreed to write a special memorandum on the subject for discussion at the next session of the Commission.

SLAVERY.

It will be remembered that the question of slavery was raised by the New Zealand Delegation to the Third Assembly, which carried a resolution inviting the Council to investigate the subject with a view to the adoption by States members of the League, and all civilized nations, of measures for the abolition of slavery in all its varied forms, and of other practices restrictive of the liberty of the person. In my report last year I briefly referred to the appointment of a Temporary Slavery Commission, which was the first step taken by the Council to give effect to the resolution of 1922, and of the programme of work which it proposed to carry out. The report of this Commission was laid before the Assembly this year, and it is a most interesting and instructive document (A. 19). It was very rightly described by Viscount Cecil, speaking on behalf of the British Government during the discussion in the Sixth Committee, as constituting a landmark in the history of slavery. I think it will come as a shock to many people to learn that this scourge of humanity still exists in one form or another in many countries, and some of them subscribers to the Covenant of the League.

The thanks of the Council to the members of the Commission for their very valuable report will be found in Document A. 39. The minutes of the Commission are contained in Document A. 18. Supplementary memoranda were also communicated to the Assembly from the British Government on the subject of the "Mui Tsai" system in Hong Kong (Document A. 40); from the India Office, London, regarding slavery in the Hukawng Valley in Upper Burma (Document A. 50); and from the Governor-General of the Sudan (Document A. 69) and the Director of Labour of the Government of the Philippine Islands (Document A. 70) on the subject of slavery in their respective territories.

In order that the suggestions outlined in the Commission's report should not be left as mere suggestions, the British Government submitted a draft resolution and protocol containing certain general principles which Lord Cecil considered might be adopted usefully by all civilized nations as a minimum code in the matter of slavery. These proposals were subjected to a very close examination in the Sixth Committee and sub-committee, and it was very evident that some of the articles of the draft Convention, and particularly those relating to forced labour, were, to put it mildly, not viewed with enthusiasm by several of the Delegations whose countries have colonial possessions. It was in order to meet these susceptibilities, and to ensure the widest acceptance for the Convention, that the original British draft laid down only the barest minimum code consistent with the high principles of the League Covenant, but even so it was considerably modified in the committee stages, and the British delegate, for the reasons set forth in his report as Rapporteur, also agreed not to press for the conclusion and signing of the agreement during that session of the Assembly. The report and draft Convention as finally approved by the committee and accepted by the Assembly will be found in Document A. 130.

I will only draw special attention to Article 6, because for the first time it proposes to embody in an international convention the opinion of the civilized world on compulsory or forced labour.

In its original form it read as follows:—

"The signatory States, recognizing the grave evils that may result from the employment of forced labour, except for essential public services, engage that where it is necessary for special reasons to admit the employment of forced labour they will take all necessary precautions, particularly where the labourers belong to the less advanced races, to prevent conditions analogous to those of slavery from resulting from such employment."

As it emerged from the sub-committee it read:—

*"Article 6.*

"The High Contracting Parties recognize that recourse to compulsory or forced labour may have grave consequences, and agree, each in respect of the territories placed under its sovereignty, jurisdiction, protectorate, or tutelage, to take all necessary measures to prevent conditions analogous to those of slavery resulting from compulsory or forced labour.

"It is agreed that,—

"(1.) In principle compulsory or forced labour may only be exacted for public purposes.

"(2.) In territories in which compulsory or forced labour for other than public purposes still survives, the High Contracting Parties shall endeavour progressively to put an end to the practice. So long as such forced or compulsory labour exists, this labour shall invariably be of an exceptional character, and shall not involve the removal of the labourers from their usual place of residence.

"(3.) In any case, the responsibility for any recourse to compulsory or forced labour shall rest with the central authorities of the territory, colony, protectorate, or mandated area in question."

When the article was under consideration in the plenary meeting of the committee Mr. J. D. Gray, who acted as substitute delegate, said he wished, on behalf of New Zealand, to dissociate himself entirely from the sanction given, in subclause 2 of this article, to compulsory or forced labour for private profit and gain, as the system was wrong and could not be justified in any circumstances. If, however, the committee felt that it was necessary to face the facts as they existed in some territories and to retain the clause, then he would move to insert, after the words "of an exceptional character," the words "shall be adequately remunerated." This amendment was carried on a division.

I believe Lord Cecil correctly summed up the work of the Temporary Slavery Commission and of the Assembly when he said it would bring immediate relief to hundreds and thousands of unhappy human beings who are now living under conditions closely resembling slavery.

COLLABORATION OF THE PRESS IN THE WORK OF DISARMAMENT.

A very interesting proposal for the convening of a conference of international Press experts, in order to devise methods by which the acknowledged power and influence of the Press in moulding public opinion might be used to the utmost in bringing about better relations and a complete understanding between nations, was contained in a resolution presented to the Assembly by the Chilean Delegation (Document A. 75). The purpose of the motion is to give the Press of the world, if it so desires, the collaboration of the League of Nations and the help of its machinery, and in this way extend its usefulness, particularly in the direction of disseminating international views and opinions among all peoples. The discussion in the Sixth Committee, whilst of a most sympathetic and favourable nature, emphasized the need for extreme caution on the part of the Council in any steps it might take in this matter, so as to guard against any action which might appear to be a dictation to or direction of the Press. The Rapporteur of the committee (M. Hymans of the Belgian Delegation) aptly voiced the general feeling of the delegates when he said that the Press, like any other great power, is jealous of its sovereign independence. The decision of the committee, which was adopted by the Assembly, is contained in Document A. 114.

## CONCLUSIONS.

The work of the Sixth Assembly was not by any means so exciting as that of the Fifth, although it may ultimately prove to be the fact that more substantial progress has been made towards the peaceful solution of difficulties between nations than would have been possible under the protocol of 1924.

The Assembly this year was largely occupied in devising a means to lay to rest the protocol and in saving its face by keeping alive a demand for the reduction of armaments.

You will have gathered from my report of last year that there was considerable doubt in my mind as to any real good result being likely to arise from the adoption of the protocol; indeed, so convinced was I that New Zealand should not be committed to definite approval of the protocol, as was suggested in the first proposal, that I deemed it essential to move an amendment recommending "to the earnest attention of all members of the League the acceptance of the protocol," and this amendment was carried.

The Sixth Assembly has endeavoured—and rightly so in my opinion—to associate itself as closely as possible with the settlement of international disputes by treaties and agreements, such as those signed at Locarno, but initiated in the first instance by the German proposal of the 9th February, 1925.

The following are the various treaties and conventions arranged between the delegates of the various nations who met at Locarno:—

- (1.) Treaty between Germany, Belgium, France, Great Britain, and Italy.
- (2.) Arbitration Convention between Germany and Belgium.
- (3.) Arbitration Convention between Germany and France.
- (4.) Arbitration Treaty between Germany and Poland.
- (5.) Arbitration Treaty between Germany and Czecho-slovakia.

You will realize how different these proposals are from the protocol of last year. The protocol assumed that there must be an aggressor, and attempted to provide for the punishment of the aggressor. The principles adopted at Locarno placed reliance upon mutual good will, the cultivation of friendly feelings amongst nations, and settlement of their disputes by peaceable means, assuming that by such means the aggressor as defined in the protocol would be eliminated.

It is true that the results of the Locarno Conference have to be submitted to the various Parliaments, and one expresses a very sincere hope that no difficulty will be found in endorsing the splendid work that has been done towards the attainment of peace. Locarno must be looked upon as the first stage in the process of these agreements, and one hopes, as years go by, to see nations making provision for their difficulties by treaties and agreements entered into beforehand.

Although the League has not been associated with the Locarno Conference, except as I have indicated in putting its blessing upon it, I cannot close this report without making reference to the great work which has been done by Mr. Austen Chamberlain, the British Foreign Minister, in bringing about a successful conclusion to the Locarno Conference.

I attach so much importance to what took place at Locarno that I am sending you with this Report a copy of *The Times* of the 20th October, dealing with the Locarno treaties. So far there has not been a White Paper issued, but when one is published I will send you a copy.

I have, &c.,  
J. ALLEN.

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

(NOTE.—Copies of the documents referred to in the foregoing report have been placed in the General Assembly Library for convenience of reference.)

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CONCLUSIONS

The work of the Civil Assembly was not by any means as extensive as that of the other committees. It is clear that the most important progress has been made towards the settlement of the outstanding issues between the two parties.

The Assembly has not yet reached a decision on the question of the settlement of the outstanding issues between the two parties.

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