

## SETTLEMENT OF BULGARIAN REFUGEES.

Many months ago the Bulgarian Government appealed to the League for help in settling Bulgarian refugees and in raising a loan for the purpose of such settlement. This appeal was in due course considered by the Financial Committee of the League, and, after negotiations, an arrangement was entered into and a protocol signed at Geneva on the 8th September. A document giving full particulars, and numbered C. 522, M. 204, was before the Second Committee of the Assembly.

Comparisons have been made between the scheme to be applied to Bulgaria and that in operation in Greece. Although in some respects there are points of contact, there are several differences. For instance, whilst the Greek refugees came principally from Asia Minor, those who entered Bulgaria came from the surrounding countries, and consequently there are political considerations which did not enter into the Greek arrangement. Neighbouring States require guarantees, and the Bulgarian Government has agreed that the refugees shall not be settled within a certain distance of frontiers. Any one acquainted with Balkan conditions will understand the reasons requiring the guarantees. The Bulgarian refugees do not amount to more than about 220,000, and for their settlement an amount of £2,250,000 will be required. A sum of £400,000 has been advanced, and it is hoped that the total amount required will be raised, probably by means of an international loan. As Bulgaria has to pay reparations, the sanction of the Reparations Commission had to be obtained in connection with the securities which will have to be provided to guarantee principal and interest. Unfortunately, unlike Greece, Bulgaria has little spare land and no vacant houses. Consequently, waste land will have to be reclaimed and houses built for all the refugees who are to be settled.

It should be noted that many of these refugees have been in Bulgaria since the Balkan wars, whilst others cannot be called refugees in the strict sense of the word, since they have entered Bulgaria under treaty arrangements with neighbouring countries.

The Second Committee's report, which is Document A. 84, and the resolution contained therein, were passed by the Assembly at its meeting on the 24th September.

## FINANCIAL RECONSTRUCTION OF AUSTRIA.

The work of the League in the reconstruction of Austria is accomplished. The Commissioner-General was withdrawn on the 30th June, 1926, and the Austrian Government has assumed complete control of the nation's affairs. Both the League and Austria are to be congratulated on the results obtained. The scheme, which was in the nature of an experiment, was put into operation with much diffidence, and during the progress of the work many people were sceptical of the final result, owing to a recurrence of economic difficulties, due not so much to Austria herself as to exterior conditions and the policy of neighbouring countries—a policy which is undergoing a complete change. Austria is still suffering, and her Government realizes that the removal of control does not mean an end of reform or of economy in the public services. It is of interest to note that the work of reform occupied a period of about three and a half years.

The Second Committee's report, which is Document A. 82, and its resolution were passed by the Assembly at its meeting on the 24th September.

## FINANCIAL RECONSTRUCTION OF HUNGARY.

The financial reconstruction of Hungary is likewise accomplished. The League's control was brought to an end on the 30th June, when the Commissioner-General was withdrawn. The work connected with Hungary has occupied a much less time and is, in a sense, even more successful than that done in connection with Austria; but it has to be remembered that, whilst the Austrian scheme was an experiment, those who drew up the scheme for Hungary had the advantage of experience in the Austrian field.

An interesting report by the Italian delegate was drawn up for submission to the Assembly. It is Document A. 81, and gives in a brief form some details of the work accomplished. The resolution with which it concludes was passed by the Assembly at its meeting on the 24th September.

## FINANCIAL COMMITTEE OF THE LEAGUE.

The report of the Financial Committee is Document A. 30, and during the course of the Assembly a further document (A. 58) was issued. Much of the work of the Financial Committee has received notice under separate headings, but it remains to give a brief account of the other work which has been done in the course of the twelve months preceding the Seventh Assembly. This includes negotiations with the Free City of Danzig with a view to the balancing of the Budget, and with Poland in order to assure to the Free City a minimum amount of Customs duties due to Danzig, which forms a portion of the Polish Customs territory, and negotiations entered into with the object of paying the way for a loan to enable the Free City to improve its financial and economic situation. Danzig is the port for Poland. As is known, its population is overwhelmingly German, and it was created into an autonomous Free City by the Treaty of Versailles. It has, however, very close relations with Poland, and there is little doubt that, with the development of that country, the Free City will have an importance greater than that which it enjoyed when it formed a part of the German Empire. Indeed, the Polish delegates stated that the city's trade had developed by 100 per cent.

Other work of the Financial Committee consists of an inquiry into the suppression of counterfeiting and an inquiry into double taxation and fiscal evasion.

All these matters are dealt with in the documents referred to above and in the report (Document A. 85) submitted by the Second Committee to the Assembly, which passed on the 24th September the resolution with which it concludes.