

SECOND COMMITTEE.

HEALTH ORGANIZATION.

This branch of the League's work not only commands respect and confidence, but can be accepted without reserve, for it is so catholic in scope that every State benefits in one or another direction. By an exchange of ideas, a comparison of methods, a frank discussion of difficulties, a personal contact with health officers, results of international importance have been achieved without the slightest suspicion of interference with national health administrations. The work appeals to all, even to those sceptics who adversely criticize the League for supineness and a too tender regard for the existing state of things.

The annual report of the Health Organization for the year 1927 is Document A. 10. Some additional information is given in Documents A. 6 and A. 6 (a). In some branches—such, for instance, as the inquiry into cancer—the organization has been working for years. Among new developments are a study of problems of rural hygiene, also of the welfare of blind persons and the prevention of blindness.

Arising out of the International Pacific Conference held at Melbourne in December, 1926, the Health Committee felt that a survey of the health conditions in Papua, New Guinea, the New Hebrides, New Caledonia, the Solomon Islands, and Fiji would yield results of international interest and importance, and requested its Director to consider the possibility of arranging for a survey. As a result, arrangements were made for two experts to leave for the Pacific in November in order to carry out a preliminary investigation into the present health conditions in the countries mentioned above. Such an investigation should make for co-ordination of effort and research.

The Rapporteur is to be commended for having presented in a brief compass a lucid and readable account of the work of the Health Organization. His report (Document A. 57) concludes with a resolution expressing the Assembly's approval and appreciation of all that has been accomplished in the past year, and this resolution was passed by the Assembly on the 18th September.

SETTLEMENT OF GREEK REFUGEES AND THE GREEK STABILIZATION LOAN.

It will be remembered that last year the League authorized the raising of a loan of £9,000,000 for the purpose of covering certain Budget deficits of Greece, and of setting up a new bank of issue, to be known as the Bank of Greece, the balance to be applied towards the settlement of Greek refugees, about a million and a half in number, who arrived in Greece a few years ago, mostly from Asia Minor. That portion of the loan intended for financial reform was floated early in 1928, and has been successfully applied for the purpose for which it was intended. A sum of about £2,500,000 to be used for refugee-settlement has, however, still to be raised.

As to the progress of the settlement scheme, the account given to the Second Committee was most encouraging. For detailed information I would refer you to Documents A. 53 and A. 58. The economic results are most encouraging. In a few years the output of tobacco in Greece has been increased by more than 100 per cent., and the output of wheat by 50 per cent. From the political point of view, Greece benefits, for Macedonia has now a far more homogeneous population than she possessed before the Great War.

The Assembly, at its meeting on the 18th September, passed the following resolution:—

“The Assembly congratulates the Refugee Settlement Commission on the excellent results so far obtained, and trusts that the work which remains to be done may be carried out in the same satisfactory manner; expresses its satisfaction at the success of financial stabilization in Greece and the work of the Financial Committee in this connection.”

FINANCIAL COMMITTEE.

Particulars of the work of the Financial Committee are given in Documents A. 6 and A. 6 (a). The committee is concerned with such matters as the financial aspects of the Greek and Bulgarian settlement schemes, and with reconstruction schemes undertaken under the auspices of the League. The committee's preparatory work in connection with double taxation and fiscal evasion had sufficiently advanced to permit the calling of a conference of Government experts at the end of October, 1928. At the request of the Council, the committee has undertaken an inquiry into problems connected with undue fluctuations in the purchasing-power of gold.

The Rapporteur's report is Document A. 65, and the Assembly passed the following resolution at its meeting on the 20th September:—

“The Assembly takes note of and expresses its satisfaction with the work of the Financial Committee.”

SETTLEMENT OF BULGARIAN REFUGEES, AND BULGARIAN STABILIZATION LOAN.

The task of settling in Bulgaria refugees of Bulgarian origin, some 50 per cent. of whom arrived in Bulgaria during the Balkan wars, was begun under the auspices of the League in 1926. The work has made excellent progress. The League's Commissioner, M. Charron, mentioned, in the course of a long statement to the Second Committee (reported in the *Journal* of the 6th September), that at the end of 1928 90 per cent. of the refugees would have been permanently settled on the land, whilst the remaining 10 per cent., for whom temporary arrangements had been made, would receive an allotment of land so soon as reclamation schemes had been carried out. The system of settlement provides for repayment by the refugees of any money advanced, and it was interesting to learn that, although the first instalment was not payable until the third year after the granting of the loan, many refugees had begun to repay during the second year. It is in the field of reconstruction that the League has had its greatest successes, and it is true to say that the settlement of Bulgarian refugees may be considered as one of these.