

1929.

NEW ZEALAND

THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

REPORT OF THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE DOMINION OF NEW ZEALAND ON THE NINTH ASSEMBLY OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS, HELD AT GENEVA IN THE YEAR 1928.

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

NINTH ASSEMBLY OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

New Zealand Government Offices,
415 Strand, London W.C. 2, January, 1929.

SIR,—

OPENING OF PROCEEDINGS AND ELECTION OF PRESIDENT.

I have the honour to inform you that the Ninth Assembly of the League of Nations was declared open by His Excellency M. Procope (Finnish Minister of Foreign Affairs and the representative of his country on the Council of the League), at the end of a speech which he made to the assembled delegates on the morning of Monday, the 3rd September.

After transacting certain formal business the Assembly proceeded to elect its President. Its choice fell upon M. Herluf Zahle, a Danish delegate who has been prominently connected with the Assembly since the year 1920. He received forty-four votes of the fifty which were cast.

ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE CONDUCT OF BUSINESS.

The proceedings followed the normal course. It was decided to refer the items of the agenda (Document A. 21) to the following six committees, composed of delegates or their substitutes, for discussion and report to the Assembly itself:—

- Committee No. 1 : Legal and constitutional questions.
- Committee No. 2 : Technical organizations of the League.
- Committee No. 3 : Reduction of armaments.
- Committee No. 4 : Budget and financial questions.
- Committee No. 5 : Social and general questions.
- Committee No. 6 : Political questions.

An Agenda Committee was appointed to consider and report on any supplementary items proposed.

REPRESENTATION OF NEW ZEALAND.

As three committees are usually sitting at one time, it is necessary to appoint substitutes when three full delegates are not available. As sole delegate for New Zealand, I nominated myself for the six committees in order that I might attend any meeting at which the business was of such importance as to necessitate my presence. This year I had the advantage of the help of Major-General Sir George Richardson, whom I nominated as substitute to serve on Committees Nos. 1 and 3; and my Private Secretary, Mr. C. Knowles, was nominated to act as substitute on Committees Nos. 2 and 4, with the work of which he is familiar.

GENERAL COMMITTEE OF THE ASSEMBLY.

The General Committee of the Assembly comprises the President, the Chairmen of the six committees, six Vice-Presidents, and the Chairman of the Agenda Committee (M. Caballero). There was a short adjournment to enable the six committees to elect their Chairmen. Their choice was—Committee No. 1, M. Scialoja (Italy); Committee No. 2, M. Motta (Switzerland); Committee No. 3, M. Carton de Wiart (Belgium); Committee No. 4, M. de Vasconcellos (Portugal); Committee No. 5, M. Matos (Guatemala); Committee No. 6, M. Marinkovitch (Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes).

The six Vice-Presidents elected by the Assembly were—M. Adatci (Japan), M. Briand (France), M. Müller (Germany), Lord Cushendun (British Empire), Mr. Mackenzie King (Canada), Mgr. Seipel (Austria).

DEBATE ON THE REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL.

In the course of this debate any subject dealt with by the League may be raised, and generally full advantage is taken by delegates to express their country's or their own opinions on various matters. The report comprises two documents, A. 6 and A. 6 (a).

The debate, which began on the 5th September, may be followed in the *Journal*. It was of a general character, and did not give rise to any arresting speeches, as did last year's motion regarding the Protocol of Geneva of 1924. There were references to the Paris Peace Pact, which some speakers contended deprived war of its legality. M. Politis, delegate for Greece, to whom the Assembly always listens with marked attention, maintained that the Pact strengthened the League and completed the Covenant, particularly those provisions directed to the maintenance of peace. He contended that it filled the gap in Article 15 of the Covenant, and embodied the essential principles of the Protocol of Geneva outlawing wars of aggression, although it was true it did not render arbitration compulsory. The Lithuanian delegate, however, maintained that the Peace Pact made it incumbent on the members of the League to amend the Covenant, or, in his words, "to adapt the Covenant to the present conditions of positive international law." To this end he introduced the following motion, consideration of which was postponed to the next Assembly:—

"The Assembly—learning with deep emotion that the United States of America and several States members of the League of Nations signed a Pact for the renunciation of war on August 27th, 1928, in Paris; noting that several other States members or non-members of the League of Nations have already acceded to the said Pact; recognizing that the acceptance of the Pact for the renunciation of war by the members of the League of Nations goes further than their obligations in this respect contained in the Covenant of the League of Nations and supplements them, thus necessitating changes in the fundamental provisions of the Covenant of the League of Nations; recalling the Assembly resolution of September 24th, 1927, condemning wars of aggression—requests the Council to initiate an inquiry into the amendments which should be introduced into the Covenant of the League of Nations on the above-mentioned lines, and to submit these amendments to the Assembly at its next ordinary session."

Mr. Mackenzie King emphasized the good will existing between Canada and the United States, which eliminated fear of aggression, and permitted the common frontier to remain undefended.

In regard to disarmament, on the other hand, many speakers were pessimistic, although the Netherlands delegate thought that the naval understanding between Great Britain and France would facilitate the work of the Preparatory Disarmament Commission.

A tribute was paid to the Economic Committee for the way in which it had approached the consideration of certain tariff questions raised as a result of the Economic Conference: it was clear that the Committee realized that tariffs were a national and not an international matter. In this connection one speaker protested against the attitude on tariffs adopted at the Economic Conference, the principles of which, in his opinion, made no differentiation between a high- and a low-tariff country. He also protested against the outlook which favoured the present geographical distribution of industry, leaving to countries not industrially developed the task of producing food.

As is usual, a number of motions were introduced in the course of the debate: one from the Portuguese delegation, referring to the Sixth Committee the annual reports of the Mandatory Powers and other documents dealing with mandates distributed since the Assembly of 1927; one by the Dutch delegation, referring to the Third Committee that part of the report and of the supplementary report of the work of the Council and of the Secretariat which deals with the question of the reduction of armaments; one (subsequently referred to the First Committee) standing in the names of several delegations, having as its object the revision of the Statute of the Court of International Justice (Document A. 48); one (also referred to the First Committee) introduced by the Swiss delegation, recommending the Council to consider whether it would not be desirable to submit to the Permanent Court of International Justice for an advisory opinion the question whether the Council or the Assembly can by a simple majority request an advisory opinion under Article 14 of the Covenant; and yet another, introduced by the delegation of Salvador, expressing the hope that the Council would exert its influence with States members of the League with a view of facilitating the holding of a Conference in the spring of 1929 regarding the supervision of the private manufacture and publicity of the manufacture of arms and ammunition and of implements of war.

The debate closed on the 11th September with a speech by Lord Cushendun, the British representative, devoted to disarmament. He began with a sympathetic reference to the observations of those who had deplored the slowness of the progress made by the Preparatory Commission for the Disarmament Conference, but pointed out that a resolution of the Assembly could accomplish nothing, for, since there could be no method of disarmament common to all, progress could only be made by a discussion of difficulties and of the efforts for reconciliation on points of difference. Further, he emphasized the point that the Covenant left to the judgment of individual States the level at which national armaments should suffice. In this connection he laid stress on a condition of things which was not appreciated as it should be: with the old implements of warfare one knew where one stood—they were designed for war and for nothing else; but nowadays one had to cope with aircraft and chemicals, both of which played their part in peace, but could, unfortunately, be adapted for fighting purposes. Was it, however, desirable to restrict their production for peace purposes?

Although the Preparatory Commission had not made the progress hoped for, in spite of agreement on many points, it did not follow that disarmament was stationary. In support of this he quoted sets of figures for July, 1914, and the present time, showing very considerable reductions in the personnel and tonnage of the British Navy. He alluded to the efforts to reconcile the British and French points of view regarding the limitation of naval armaments, which had resulted in an agreement. He deplored the attitude of those critics who imputed to countries motives which existed only in the minds of the critics themselves—motives founded on suspicion and distrust—and he asked nations to display greater confidence in one another. He concluded with a happy reference to the Kellogg Peace Pact as being in harmony with the work of the League, and as representing the faith of to-day and the hope of to-morrow. The Pact, in his opinion, opened up a new era of hope, although he felt it necessary to utter a warning that nations should not give way to disappointment if the results of the signing of that Pact were not immediate or spectacular.

ELECTION OF NON-PERMANENT MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL.

It will be remembered that political considerations arising out of the German application for admission to the League made it advisable in 1926 to increase the number of non-permanent members of the Council to nine. Also in that year election rules to meet the new circumstances were approved and applied in the election of nine non-permanent members, divided into groups of three, with mandates of three, two, and one years respectively. This year the seats held by Columbia, the Netherlands, and China fell vacant.

Early in 1926 Spain aspired to retain as permanent the Council seat which she had occupied since the creation of the League. Her aspirations were, however, not realized, and she gave two years' notice of her intention to withdraw from the League. But Spain changed her mind, and in response to an appeal by the Council she has decided to continue membership, and was represented in this year's Assembly by a full delegation. In connection with this retention of membership should be read the item (24 of the agenda) proposed by the British, French, and German Governments:—

“Maintenance in force, as an exceptional measure, for the 1928 elections to the Council of the temporary provisions (Article 4, paragraph 2) attached to the rules adopted by the Assembly on 15th September, 1926, for the election of a non-permanent member of the Council.”

This item was referred to the General Committee of the Assembly, and its report (Document A. 44) came before the Assembly on the 7th September, when the following resolution was passed:—

“The Assembly, having in mind the discussions which took place at the session of 1926 resulting in the unanimous adoption of the rules of procedure for the election of non-permanent members of the Council, decides, in virtue of its powers under Article 4, paragraph 2 *bis* of the Covenant, that the temporary provisions for the elections of 1926, contained in Article 4, paragraph 2, of the resolution of the Assembly of 15th September, 1926, shall also apply to the elections of 1928. In application of Article 14, paragraph 2, of the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly, this resolution is adopted without reference to a Commission.”

There were four dissentients, amongst whom were the Swedish and Norwegian delegations, who protested against the application this year of election rules which they contended had been made only for the purpose of overcoming exceptional difficulties in 1926. One speaker referred to the system of proportional representation known as the “single transferable vote”—a subject which was introduced in the Assembly of 1926.

Paragraph 2 of Article 4 of the rules referred to in the resolution reads as follows:—

“Of the nine members thus elected in 1926 a maximum of three may be immediately declared re-eligible by a decision of the Assembly taken by a special vote by secret ballot, a separate ballot being held for each member and adopted by a majority of two-thirds of the number of votes cast. Immediately after the announcement of the results of the election the Assembly shall decide upon the requests for re-eligibility which have been presented. Should the Assembly have before it more than three requests for re-eligibility, the three candidates having received the largest number of votes in excess of two-thirds of the votes shall alone be declared re-eligible.”

In the light of the foregoing it is interesting to note what has now taken place.

China, which was elected in 1926 to a seat on the Council, with a mandate for two years, put forward a request for re-eligibility under the first part of Article 2 of the rules passed by the Assembly on the 15th September of that year. This request was put to the vote on the morning of the 10th September. Fifty States took part in the voting. China obtained twenty-seven votes, but as these did not constitute a two-thirds majority she did not succeed in her request.

On the afternoon of the 10th September the Assembly proceeded to elect three non-permanent members of the Council to fill the seats vacated by China, Columbia, and the Netherlands. The countries elected were—Spain, which received forty-six votes; Persia, which received forty votes; Venezuela, which received thirty-five votes. Immediately after the election Spain put forward a request to be declared re-eligible under the rule referred to above, and the Assembly at once voted on this point, with the result that Spain was declared re-eligible, thirty-seven of the forty-seven votes cast being in her favour.

VACANT JUDGESHIP OF THE PERMANENT COURT OF INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE.

Owing to the resignation of Mr. J. B. Moore it was necessary for the Council and the Assembly to proceed to the election of his successor. A list of the candidates nominated by the various national groups is given in Document A. 32, and it will be observed that the Hon. Charles Evans Hughes, formerly Secretary of State of the United States, was nominated by no less than thirty national groups. The election by the Council and the Assembly took place on the afternoon of the 8th September. Mr. Hughes received in the Assembly forty-one votes, whilst the Council voted unanimously in his favour. He was consequently declared to have been elected.

Early in the session the Assembly was informed of a further vacancy, due to the death of M. Andre Weiss, Vice-President of the Court.

When the session was well advanced the question of the Armenian refugees and the Republic of Erivan was raised and referred to the Sixth Committee.

Towards the end of the Assembly it was announced that Spain had accepted the compulsory jurisdiction of the Permanent Court of International Justice for ten years, and that Costa Rica would return to the League, subject to Congress voting the necessary credit.

A proposal of the Venezuelan delegation recommending the Council to consider appropriate measures to celebrate the tenth anniversary of the Assembly next year was subsequently withdrawn.

The Assembly held its last sitting on the 26th September. Necessarily much of its time must usually be given to matters of routine, but often one or more subjects give rise to interesting debates.

This year, however, the proceedings were distinctly dull. With the exception of the General Act for the Pacific Settlement of International Disputes, Non-aggression, and Mutual Assistance (described in the section of this report dealing with the work of the Third Committee), no proposal of importance was made. But the last sitting supplied an incident which created a somewhat tense atmosphere. The Indian delegate on the Fourth Committee had fought strenuously for economy, but his efforts had been of little avail. Immediately after the report of that committee had been laid before the Assembly by the Rapporteur, the principal delegate for India mounted the platform. Having mentioned the grave anxiety with which the Indian delegation viewed the progressive increases in the Budget, he proceeded to criticize the lack of control of expenditure, and in effect charged the Assembly itself with remissness in scrutinizing carefully the various items of the Budget. With most of the points of his speech the Assembly was already familiar, but I do not think it was prepared for the warning he uttered. Speaking with earnestness, the Indian delegate declared that should his protest be ignored when future Budgets were being framed it might be necessary for the Indian delegation to refuse its vote, thus preventing the unanimity which is required for the passing of the Budget. My own impression is that a tightening-up of control and the giving of wider powers to the Supervisory Committee, or to another body which would take its place, would do much to secure less expenditure; but, after all, the practice of economy must proceed from the Assembly itself.

FIRST COMMITTEE.

QUESTION OF THE REVISION OF THE STATUTE OF THE PERMANENT COURT OF INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE.

This question, which was raised by several delegations during the early days of the Assembly, was referred to the First Committee for consideration. The committee, after examining the suggestion, contented itself with presenting to the Assembly a draft resolution, and this the Assembly passed at its meeting on the 20th September. It reads as follows:—

“The Assembly, considering the ever-growing number of matters referred to the Permanent Court of International Justice, deeming it advisable that before the renewal of the terms of office of the members of the Court in 1930 the present provisions of the statute of the Court should be examined with a view to the introduction of any amendments which experience may show to be necessary, draws the Council’s attention to the advisability of proceeding, before the renewal of the terms of office of the members of the Permanent Court of International Justice, to the examination of the statute of the Court with a view to the introduction of such amendments as may be judged desirable, and to submitting the necessary proposals to the next ordinary session of the Assembly.”

CODIFICATION OF INTERNATIONAL LAW.

The documents before the First Committee were A. 15 (the second report of the Committee of Experts) and A. 16, which is the report of the Committee of Experts on the resolution of last year’s Assembly regarding the proposal made by the delegate of Paraguay concerning a general and comprehensive plan of codification of international law.

It is more than possible that a Conference on Codification will be held in 1929, when three questions will be considered—*i.e.*, nationality, territorial waters, and the responsibility of States for damage done in their territory to the personal property of foreigners. Questionnaires have been sent to the Government by the Secretariat, and doubtless these are receiving attention.

The Committee of Experts considers that two further questions are suitable for international regulation—the legal position and functions of Consuls, and the competence of the Courts in regard to foreign States; but as the Conference, if it is called for next year, will already have its hands full, it is proposed that these two subjects should be referred to a future Conference. In the meantime the Committee of Experts is not to be called together, but further consideration will be given to the position by next year’s Assembly. A resolution on these lines was passed by the Assembly at its meeting on the 24th September.

On the question of a general plan of codification the First Committee was cautionary in attitude, as will be seen by the resolution which it submitted to the Assembly, and to which that body gave its approval on the 24th September. (See Document A. 56.)

ADVISORY OPINIONS OF THE PERMANENT COURT OF INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE.

The Swiss delegation introduced a motion on the 8th September recommending the Council to consider whether it would not be desirable to submit to the Permanent Court of International Justice, for an advisory opinion, the question whether the Council or the Assembly can by a simple majority request an advisory opinion under Article 14 of the Covenant of the League. This motion was referred to the First Committee, which submitted to the Assembly for approval a draft resolution reading as follows:—

“The Assembly, noting the divergences of opinion which exist as regards the requirements for voting in the Council or Assembly a resolution requesting an advisory opinion from the Permanent Court of International Justice, expresses the desire that, when circumstances permit, the Council may have a study made of the question whether the Council or the Assembly may by a simple majority ask for an advisory opinion within the meaning of Article 14 of the Covenant of the League of Nations.”

There were such differences of opinion in the First Committee that it would have been impossible to obtain unanimity on the Swiss motion. It was therefore considered advisable to leave to the Council the task of deciding when the time was ripe for the point to be studied.

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.

Bulgaria, like Greece, has turned to the League for aid in the matter of financial reconstruction. Negotiations are now complete, and it is expected that a loan of £5,000,000 sterling will be shortly issued. The money is to be used for repaying the Government's debt to one of the banks, for strengthening the position of two other banks, for Budget deficits, for railway and road construction, and for repairs necessitated by the earthquake from which Bulgaria suffered early in 1928. Details of the scheme will be found in Documents A. 6 and A. 6 (a).

The Second Committee's report to the Assembly is Document A. 70. It concludes with a resolution expressing satisfaction with the progress of the settlement scheme, and congratulating the Financial Committee of the League and the Bulgarian Government on the success which has so far attended the preparation of the stabilization scheme. This resolution was passed by the Assembly at its meeting on the 20th September.

RELATIONS BETWEEN THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS AND INSTITUTES OR BODIES SET UP UNDER ITS AUTHORITY.

This question was raised during the discussion in the Second Committee in 1927 on the establishment of an Educational Cinematograph Institute in Rome, and the Eighth Assembly invited the Council to have it studied. This was done, and a report (Document A. 12) was submitted to the Council and approved at a meeting in June last. This report found favour with the Second Committee, who approved it, but at the same time suggested modifications providing for periodical meetings of the governing body of any institute, and for appointments to that body or to the superior staff to be made without distinction of sex and corresponding with the international character of the institute. The report to the Assembly (Document A. 71) was passed by that body on the 20th September.

THE ECONOMIC ORGANIZATION.

As a result of the International Economic Conference, the Assembly of 1927 decided that the Permanent Economic Committee should be reconstructed and a new Consultative Committee created. Effect was given by the Council to this decision, and a list of the members of both committees will be found in that part of Documents A. 6 and A. 6 (a) which deal with the work of the League in the economic field. An excellent summary of this work is contained in the report submitted to the Assembly by the Second Committee (Document A. 66).

The terms of reference of the Consultative Committee are, "To follow the application of the recommendations of the Economic Conference"; whilst the Economic Committee concerns itself with the economic relations between States and their economic policies, so far as they have international aspects.

During the long debate in the Second Committee stress was laid on several points, of which three may be mentioned: that the Economic Organization might proceed on the assumption that the present geographical distribution of industry would be permanent: that in dealing with tariffs the regard paid to their international aspects might exclude a sufficient study of their national aspects; and that agriculture might not receive that consideration to which it was entitled. M. Loucheur, the Rapporteur, made an admirable summing-up of the debate, and I would refer you to his speech, printed on pages 233, 234, and 235 of the *Journal* of the 18th September. One passage may be quoted: "There are neither small nor great nations, but nations which have equal rights, and which may all make their wishes known." By way of comment, may I point to the success which attended the International Conference for the Abolition of Import and Export Prohibitions.

I think it may be truthfully said that the International Economic Conference in 1927 gave a great impetus to the work of the League in the sphere of world economics, and the reports of the organization are worthy of careful study. Indeed—and I say it with emphasis—the work should be closely followed by the Government, and all requests for information should receive early attention. In this connection I may mention the International Conference for the Abolition of Import and Export Prohibitions and Restrictions, referred to above. This Conference met on the 17th October, 1927, and lasted three weeks. It drew up an international convention, a protocol thereto, and a Final Act, all of which are printed in Document C. 21, M. 12, copies of which have been forwarded to the Government. The convention is open for signature until the 31st December, 1928, and is subject to ratification. After that date States members of the League may accede to it.

Article 6 of this convention provides for certain exceptions, and the annex to this Article gives a list of the exceptions agreed to by the Conference. A supplementary agreement relating to this Article was signed by representatives of certain States on the 11th July (Document C. 350, M. 106). In order, however, "to prevent the submission of any reservation under Article 6 of the convention in the case of certain prohibitions concerning, in particular, skins, hides, and bones, which are at present in force in a large number of countries," the Conference recommended that the countries to which these prohibitions were applied should confer with a view of ascertaining whether they could not simultaneously renounce all reservations. Accordingly fourteen States were invited to send representatives to confer at Geneva, and in March last meetings of representatives of twelve of these States took place. Two protocols were drawn up (one regarding the export of hides and skins, and the other regarding the export of bones) with a view to the conclusion of an agreement supplementary to the international convention referred to above. At further meetings held in June, international agreements, with protocols and Final Acts, were drawn up and opened for signature. The agreements have already been sent to the Government (Documents C. 344, M. 104, and C. 349, M. 105). They remained open for signature until the 31st December, 1928, but may be acceded to after that date.

The Final Act of the Conference of October and November, 1927, contains the following :—

“ Recommends the Council of the League of Nations to undertake with as little delay as possible, and in the manner which appears to it most expedient, the necessary investigations, consultations, and inquiries with a view to summoning a Conference or Conferences of experts, with special knowledge of all questions relating to the prevention of diseases of animals and plants, which should be invited to propose to the various Governments joint action that would be effective against the evils that all these Governments desire to combat, and at the same time would have due regard to the sovereign rights of States and the interests of international trade.” This recommendation was referred by the Council to the Economic Organization, which appointed a Sub-committee of Experts.

The Economic Organization has now embarked on an extensive study of the position of the coal and sugar industries, and it continues to make progress on the subject of the unification of Customs nomenclature and other tariff problems. Further, the Council has requested the Financial and Economic Committees to study the tendencies in financial and economic policies as they may affect the problem of peace.

Draft conventions on subjects on which the organization has been working for some years have been submitted to Governments, and International Conferences are in contemplation. Indeed, a Conference of Official Statisticians to discuss the Draft Convention relating to Economic Statistics (Document C. 340, M. 98) was called for November, 1928. The other draft conventions refer to the treatment of foreigners (Document C. 174, M. 53); to bills of exchange and to cheques (Document C. 175, M. 54).

On the 17th September, acting on the instructions of the Government, I signed on behalf of New Zealand and Western Samoa the Convention on the Execution of Foreign Arbitral Awards, which was approved by the Assembly of 1927.

The presentation to the Assembly of the Second Committee's report (Document A. 66) on the 21st September was followed by a debate which occupied the whole sitting. As points of importance were touched upon, I refer you to the account given in the official *Journal* the following day. The report concludes with a number of resolutions which were passed by the Assembly without amendment.

QUESTION OF ALCOHOLISM.

Consideration of measures to be taken on an international scale to prevent smuggling into countries where prohibition is in force appeared on the agenda of the Assembly of 1927. The matter was discussed in the Second Committee, and as a result of the debate the proposal was withdrawn on the understanding that it would be presented in another form. Document A. 34, containing the following draft resolution, was sent to the Second Committee at this Assembly :—

“ Whereas it is desirable to co-ordinate the work which the League of Nations has undertaken or will be called upon to undertake on the question of alcoholism; the Assembly requests the Council (1) to appoint a Committee of Experts on alcoholism; (2) to instruct this committee to study the aspects of the question of alcoholism which come within the competence of the League of Nations, and which might be made the subject of scientific or practical work.”

Before the meeting at which it was down for debate, however, many States affected discussed the question and arrived at a compromise. The debate was therefore short, and, although new suggestions were made in the course of it, the result was the passing of a resolution, proposed by the Finnish delegate, based on such compromise (Document A. 72). This was submitted to and passed by the Assembly at its meeting on the 24th September. It read as follows :—

“ The Assembly, having had a draft resolution on the subject of alcoholism submitted to it by the Finnish, Swedish, and Polish delegations, decides to ask the Council to request the Health Organization of the League of Nations to collect full statistical information regarding alcoholism, considered as a consequence of the abuse of alcohol, giving prominence, *inter alia*, according to the data available, to the deleterious effects of the bad quality of the alcohols consumed; and, considering that, while it is for the Governments to put a stop to the contraband trade carried on in violation of the conventions in force between them, it may nevertheless be useful to examine the terms in which such conventions or agreements might be drawn up, for the prevention of smuggling in general and that of alcohol in particular, decides to ask the Council to request the Economic Committee to carry out this investigation and to submit any proposals to the Council arising out of its conclusions. It is understood that this resolution does not refer to wine, beer, or cider.”

COMMUNICATIONS AND TRANSIT.

An account of the work of the Advisory Committee for Communications and Transit (one of the permanent organs of the League set up in accordance with the provisions of the Covenant) done since the Eighth Assembly is given in Documents A. 6 and A. 6 (a). Whilst much of the work of the committee is of interest only to countries with land frontiers, there are subjects undergoing inquiry which are of world importance. There was not a general Conference last year, but the Advisory Committee had in view an International Conference on the Buoyage and Lighting of Coasts, and a European Conference for the Unification of Private Law in Inland Navigation. During the discussion in the Second Committee of the Rapporteur's report (Document A. 73) the Roumanian delegate introduced a motion requesting Governments to make every possible effort to prevent broadcasting of information which might prove harmful to the good relations between States. After a short debate it was conceded that this was a political question, with which the Advisory Committee could not deal, but that, on the other hand, the committee could usefully employ itself in an inquiry into certain aspects of wireless—such, for instance, as the possibility of completing agreements of a technical nature, more particularly concerning the use of certain wave-lengths, so that radio-telegraphic

communication could be carried on between various parts of the same country without being interfered with by outside messages. It is, however, uncertain whether any such international agreements concluded in the near future would be of lasting value, having regard to the rapid progress of technique in radio-telephony. As to the political aspect of the question, I quote from the resolutions of the Sixth Committee regarding the work of intellectual co-operation: "Finally, it calls the attention of Governments to the danger of cinematographic performances and of broadcasting characterized by a spirit antagonistic to that of the League."

The Second Committee's Report (Document A. 73) was presented to the Assembly on the 24th September, which passed the following resolution:—

"The Assembly, noting the report of the Advisory and Technical Committee for Communications and Transit on the work of the organization between the eighth and ninth ordinary sessions of the Assembly, expresses its satisfaction with the normal progress of the organization's work."

THIRD COMMITTEE.

DISARMAMENT.

As a result of the signing of the Kellogg Pact in Paris a few days prior to the General Assembly at Geneva, it was considered probable that some definite steps in regard to disarmament would be taken by the Third Committee during the session. Moreover, a number of delegates expressed the views that, as ten years had elapsed since the signing of the Treaty of Versailles and the establishment of a League of Nations, it was imperative that the question of disarmament should emerge from the sphere of academic discussion, and they all felt that a practical solution should be found for what is recognized to be the most serious and difficult problem confronting the League of Nations. But soon the difficulties inherent in this problem began to show themselves. For instance, it was repeatedly stated by some delegates that before disarmament could take place their countries must have a guaranteed security; while others remarked that small nations could not feel secure until the bigger nations effected considerable reduction in the large warlike establishments they now maintain. Further, a serious aspect arising from the fact that two powerful nations are still non-members of the League of Nations was mentioned by M. Paul Boncour (France), who clearly inferred that the signing of the Kellogg Pact by those two nations has not given the degree of security the European peoples require before they themselves undertake to effect further disarmament.

The work of the Third Committee consisted largely in discussing and examining the two groups of model treaties drawn up by the Committee of Arbitration and Security, which are of two kinds—viz., (1) arbitration and conciliation, and (2) non-aggression and mutual assistance.

The conclusion arrived at was to combine the three conventions dealing with arbitration and conciliation into one general Act, which, however, reserves the right of States to make bilateral agreements if they so desire. A number of delegates were of the opinion that too little time had been devoted to the drafting of this general Act, and that Governments concerned would probably require corrections to be made before they signed a convention adopting the Act in its present form. Objection was made by a number of delegates that this Act was put before the committee at a late stage of the Assembly, and, in spite of its great importance, was being rushed through committee before delegates had time to refer it to their Governments.

Generally, the discussions on disarmament revealed that the last Conference of the Preparatory Commission failed because preliminary conversations had not been previously held between representatives of the nations concerned with a view to getting partial agreement on important questions of principle. To obviate this sort of failure at the next Conference, Britain and France had recently endeavoured by secret negotiations to agree on certain questions concerning limitation of naval categories, particulars of which have since been made public. Although the action of these two Powers has been adversely criticized in both the American and European press, and they have been charged with carrying on "secret diplomacy in regard to armaments," it is recognized, at least at Geneva, that their efforts were to facilitate the work of the forthcoming Conference of the Preparatory Commission, and generally were in the interests of disarmament.

Impressed with the idea that something of a practical nature should be done, the majority of the delegates expressed a desire to hasten the next Conference of the Preparatory Commission by fixing a date for its assembly within the next three months, regardless of whether the nations concerned had previously agreed upon matters which would form a basis for discussion. Lord Cushendun, with force, pointed out that if the Commission were called together before these private conversations had been held and the various Governments were ready to discuss details the Commission would again have to adjourn and admit failure, thereby creating a wrong impression throughout the world as to the competence of the League of Nations to deal with disarmament.

It was noticeable that there seems to be a tendency on the part of some European delegates to assert that their Governments are in favour of immediate disarmament, but cannot do anything because the Great Powers will not agree to make a commencement. On the other hand, as before stated, a delegate of France expressed the view that little progress in disarmament could be made while Russia and the United States were outside the League. So that in the final result the sum total of the efforts of the Third (Disarmament) Committee has been to get the Assembly to ask the Council to request the Preparatory Commission to meet either before the end of 1928 or early in 1929.

In so far as the British Empire is concerned, the general opinion expressed privately by delegates is that the British have reduced their military forces almost below the safety limit, and, with regard to her Navy, that she has at least endeavoured to come to an agreement with France in order to help the work of the Preparatory Commission for the Disarmament Conference. Under the circumstances it appears improbable that this Commission will be able to effect any reduction in naval armaments, and that this great issue will stand over until the Washington Naval Conference in 1931.

The Third Committee again dealt with the question of publication of details of armament manufactured by private firms, a subject which has been discussed in former Assemblies, and upon which agreement could not be reached owing to the fact that in some countries, notably France, most of the war material is manufactured in Government arsenals and factories, whereas in England the Government manufacture a very small proportion of the nation's requirements, and nearly all British war material is the product of private enterprise. Under these circumstances publication of armaments manufactured privately would be an inadequate and unfair comparison between countries concerned. After considerable discussion it was agreed that the Council be requested to ask the various Governments to publish the details of both private and Government manufacture of armaments, and in such a manner as to enable fair comparison to be made.

Another matter dealt with by the Third Committee was the establishment of a wireless station at Geneva for the League of Nations. The discussion revealed that this question had not been sufficiently considered from the technical point of view. Apart from the doubt as to whether it is a useful or necessary expenditure, it would be of little benefit to communicate with distant countries unless a very powerful station were erected, and it was apparent that this involved a large initial expenditure and a fairly large annual recurring deficit. The British Government is opposed to this station, on the grounds that it is not really necessary. The proposal was also opposed by Japan and India, on the grounds that it would involve additional wireless installation in those countries, involving expense which the Governments concerned were not prepared to incur.

The following is a summary of the results obtained by the Third (Disarmament) Committee at the ninth session of the Assembly, viz. :—

- (1) To defer the establishing of a League of Nations wireless station at Geneva pending further investigation :
- (2) To recommend that details of both Government as well as private manufacture of armament be made public :
- (3) To draft a general Act for use in place of bilateral treaties on arbitration and security :
- (4) To fix a period within which the next meeting of the Preparatory Commission on Disarmament is to be held.

The A papers are Nos. 20, 22, 23, 31, 43, 60, 63, 67, 68, 75, 83, and 86.

FOURTH COMMITTEE.

The Committee Accounts for the ninth financial period (1927) are represented by Document A. 3. This was passed in committee without discussion.

Before consideration was given to the Budget of 1929 there was a general discussion, based on the reports of the Supervisory Commission (Documents A. 5, A. 5 (a), A. 5 (b)). Parts of the second and third of these documents deal with the proposed alterations to the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly, and to the Financial Regulations necessary in order to give effect to a resolution of last year's Assembly suggesting an improvement in the system of considering supplementary credits.

Delegates were quick to raise objection to the proposed addition to No. 14 of the Rules of Procedure, contending that its provisions went too far. After a discussion, in the course of which it was mentioned that other amendments to the rules lacked precision in drafting, it was decided to send the drafts to a small sub-committee.

Document A. 38, showing the financial position of the League on the 31st August, 1928, gave rise to a change of views regarding arrears of contributions, and a suggestion was put forward, but received little support, that some means should be found for rewarding those States which paid their contributions promptly.

The Fourth Committee was afforded an opportunity of asserting its rights, of which it is extremely jealous, when Paper A. 36 (New Work entailing New Expenditure on the Part of the League) was under discussion. The Council had given directions for improvements to be made in the Council Chamber. Now, it is the custom to report to the Assembly details of any unforeseen expenditure which has been incurred by the Council, and for which a sum of 500,000 francs is annually placed at the disposal of that body. The cost of improvements, instead of being charged to this special vote, was debited against the Building Fund. To this the Chairman of the Supervisory Commission, who sits on the Fourth Committee as delegate for Czecho-Slovakia, objected, and at the same time he charged the Secretary-General with not having brought the matter under the notice of the Supervisory Commission. The Secretary-General conclusively showed that in reporting direct to the Assembly a well-established rule had been followed; but he stated he had no objection, and, indeed, he would welcome, a direction to report to the Supervisory Commission items of unforeseen expenditure as they arose. As to his method of charging the item, he recalled to the committee the promise he had made that the vote "Unforeseen expenditure" would be drawn upon only for high political purposes. The Fourth Committee, with a view to avoiding similar occurrences in the future, decided to refer the matter to the Supervisory Commission, whose advice to repay the money to the Building Fund was accepted.

BUDGET FOR 1929.

The Budget for the eleventh financial period (1929), as submitted to the Fourth Committee, is contained in Documents A. 4, A. 4 (a), and A. 4 (b). A comparison of the figures with those of the previous year shows an increase of 924,166 francs in respect of the Secretariat, of 528,810 francs in respect of the International Labour Office, and of 84,451 francs in respect of the Permanent Court of International Justice. It is clear that these increases of about 9 per cent. on the Budget for 1928 much disturbed the Supervisory Commission, whose report (Document A. 5) is worthy of study. In that report the Commission gives expression to the feeling that "the financial position alone has now made it imperative for the Commission to invite the Assembly to consider the extent of the functions

attempted by the different organizations of the League, and the relative importance of these functions to the essential purposes contemplated by the Covenant and by the Labour Sections respectively of the Treaties. It is clearly impossible to secure due co-ordination between the minor functions of the League unless they are also brought into their due proportion to the objects for which the League was primarily created. This proportion must be reflected in the financial provisions; it can be determined only by the Assembly, and until it is so determined there can be no continuous or stable financial policy for the League."

The Secretary-General, in his statement to the Fourth Committee, maintained that most of the increase on the Budget of the Secretariat was due to additional work which the Assembly itself had imposed on his organization, but he indicated one or two directions in which he thought money might be saved, provided the Assembly took the initiative.

The discussion was opened by the representative of Great Britain. After making a plea for economy and a reference to stabilization, he introduced a motion to refer the Budget back to the Supervisory Commission, requesting that Commission—(1) to re-examine the Budget with a view to finding economies, taking into account the suggestions made by the members of the Fourth Committee in the debate on this resolution; (2) to schedule such economies as it can thus suggest, in order of the importance of the services, up to a total of 1,000,000 francs, in order that the Fourth Committee, in the light of the technical work thus carried out by the Supervisory Commission, may consider all the questions of policy involved and, after consultation, if necessary, with other committees, recommend to the Assembly what economies ought to be effected.

From the speeches which followed it was apparent that all members of the committee were united in their desire for economy, although, having in view the remarks of the Supervisory Commission quoted above, there was doubt whether the method proposed by the British delegate could be usefully employed. Certainly such a method did not appeal to those members of the Supervisory Commission who were representing their countries on the Fourth Committee, since it implied not only cutting down still further items which had already been severely pruned, but making suggestions for the suppression of items, and thereby entering into the realm of policy, which was the prerogative of the Assembly itself.

On the subject of the stabilization of the Budget all members of the Committee were not in agreement. One speaker described it as a chimera, and asked what would be the effect of "stabilization" on a growing child, to which he likened the League. Ultimately the motion referred to above was withdrawn in favour of one based on suggestions made in the course of the discussion. This motion, which was passed unanimously, reads as follows:—

"The Fourth Committee, having examined the draft Budget for 1929 and noted the rapid increase in the credits demanded, which at present represents about 9 per cent. as compared with the 1928 Budget, draws the special attention of the other Assembly committees to this position at the moment when they are about to consider the work contemplated for the League, and asks them to bear in mind the necessity for a reasonable limitation of the expenditure of the League.

"Similarly, the Fourth Committee requests the other committees to revise the programme of Conferences for which provision is made for 1929, and to limit them to those which cannot be postponed till 1930, and, more generally, to examine especially the budgets of the Economic Organization and the Transit Organization, of the opium and humanitarian activities and of codification of international law, and to make proposals for restricting expenditure, and to suggest any other direction in which economy can be effected, taking account particularly of the effect that the new tasks may have on the increase of the permanent staff."

At the next meeting questions relating to the method of making appointments in the Secretariat were raised by one of the delegates. The debate which followed was of considerable interest. It would be easy to overrate its value, but, on the other hand, it was not a mere letting-off of steam. It was a wise proceeding to have it reported at some length in the *Journal* (No. 11, of the 14th September), and to this I would refer you.

The burden of one delegate's speech was that the high international spirit which guided and was reflected in the work of the members of the original Secretariat had not been maintained under succeeding appointments, and he endeavoured to support this charge by stating that, of the present holders of the higher posts, seven were diplomats who, in the nature of things, might be expected to have a national bias. He even went so far as to say that these appointments had been influenced by Governments. He complained that tried members of the Secretariat had not been promoted when vacancies had arisen in the higher grades, and he mentioned, by way of illustration, that one post had been filled successively by men of the same nationality. These charges were dealt with in detail by the Secretary-General, whose remarks helped to allay in great measure the uneasiness which had been aroused. The Fourth Committee, however, felt that there was necessity to strengthen the hands of the Secretary-General, and ultimately it passed the following resolutions:—

"The Assembly—whereas the Staff Regulations were drawn up shortly after the organization of the Secretariat, and it would be advisable for the League to avail itself of the experience acquired since 1922—considering that, although the regulations have, on the whole, proved satisfactory, certain modifications would appear desirable to remedy certain disadvantages to which attention had been drawn, instructs the competent officials of the autonomous organizations, after examining the present situation and the improvements which might be made, to consider what steps—in particular amendments to the Staff Regulations—could be taken to ensure in the future, as in the past, the best possible administrative results, and to submit the results of this inquiry to the Supervisory Commission, in order that a report on the question may be communicated to the Assembly at its next ordinary session.

“The Assembly endorses and would recall the principles concerning the staff of the Secretariat contained in the report which Lord Balfour submitted to the Council in agreement with a memorandum drawn up by the Secretary-General, and which was adopted by the Council on the 19th May, 1920. In the words of this report, the Secretary-General, in making appointments to posts on the Secretariat, ‘had primarily to secure the best available men and women for the particular duties which had to be performed. But in doing so it was necessary to have regard to the great importance of selecting officials from various nations. Evidently no one nation or group of nations ought to have a monopoly in providing the material for this international institution.’ Lord Balfour emphasized the word ‘international’ because the members of the Secretariat, once appointed, are no longer the servants of the country of which they are citizens, but become for the time being servants only of the League of Nations. Their duties are not national, but international.

“The Assembly believes that the observance of these principles constitutes an essential factor in the confidence which the members of the League of Nations repose in the Secretariat.

“The Assembly relies on the Secretary-General and on the Council, which in virtue of Article 6 of the Covenant is responsible for approving the nominations made by the Secretary-General, to uphold in their entirety the principles stated above.

“The Assembly requests the Council to submit to the members of the League of Nations in good time before the tenth ordinary session of the Assembly a list of the appointments, promotions, and resignations of officials of the rank of members of section and above that have taken place since this Assembly, and of the salaries allotted in each case.”

The Budget of the International Labour Office is always closely examined and severely pruned before it is submitted to the Fourth Committee, since, before it is considered by the Supervisory Commission, it undergoes close scrutiny by the governing body of the organization. The attitude of most of the delegates on the Fourth Committee indicates that, in their view, it is unnecessary to press strongly for reductions. This year there were long discussions on two points. In 1929 there will be two Conferences—the Annual Labour Conference and a Maritime Conference. Budgeting was for non-consecutive Conferences, but the British delegate contended that no difficulty would arise if they were held consecutively, and, moreover, a saving of money would thus be effected. He did not put forward a formal motion, but asked the Director to make a *beau geste* in the interests of economy. The only result of a long debate was the passing of a resolution recommending that if in the future the International Labour Organization decided to hold two Conferences in the course of the same year the dates might, for reasons of economy, be so chosen that these Conferences might take place consecutively.

The other point at issue was the question of the creation of seventeen new posts, involving an expenditure in 1929 of nearly 220,000 francs. A motion to omit the item, and another to reduce it by 150,000 francs, were heavily defeated, but a third motion to refuse the creation of the most important of the posts (Chief of Division), although lost, received strong support. Many of the delegates had an uneasy feeling that these new creations had a political significance, especially as it came to light in the course of the debate that nationals of some of the countries members of the organization were not on the staff. It was also suspected that one of the proposed posts was the result of pressure which had been brought to bear on the Director. It is, however, due to the Director to say that he made an effective reply to criticism, and that it is learned from an independent source that in one section at least a good deal of work which Governments have requested the organization to perform is in arrear.

The Budget of the Permanent Court of International Justice was passed without comment.

New work approved by the other committees involved supplementary credits, of which one (to meet the cost of the proposed Commission to the Far East to consider the situation as regards prepared opium) was the subject of a long discussion. Eventually the question was referred to a sub-committee, whose recommendation to inscribe 100,000 francs on the Budget was ultimately accepted.

As the Secretariat feels that it cannot cope with two Conferences of the magnitude of a Disarmament Conference and a Conference on the Codification of International Law in one year, there will be a paper saving, the Fourth Committee having passed a resolution to the effect that only if the Disarmament Conference is not held in 1929 will the other Conference be called. For the Codification Conference 208,500 francs will be required, the Dutch Government having generously offered, subject to parliamentary approval, to make itself responsible for the amount (up to a maximum of 128,500 francs) by which the expenses will exceed the former sum should the Conference be held at The Hague, as is contemplated.

The salaries of the staff have hitherto been variable, depending on fluctuations in the cost of living. The Fourth Committee passed a resolution recommending the Assembly to stabilize the salaries of officials of the Secretariat and the International Labour Office at the nominal rates adopted in 1921, and the salaries of the officials of the Permanent Court of International Justice at the nominal rates of 1922, provided that the proposal is accepted by the officials before the 1st January, 1929. In the event of the proposal being rejected by the staff the variable salaries, with some modifications, will remain in force. Should the proposal be accepted, an addition to the Budget of 288,681 francs would thus be entailed.

Although the supplementary credits total no less a sum than 562,736 francs, considerable savings, amounting to 405,700 francs, were effected by deferring certain work and making readjustments on some items. The net increase amounts to 157,036 francs, and the total of the Budget as passed by the Assembly is 27,026,280 francs. Exchanged into sterling this represents a sum of about £1,074,600.

On items on which there was a saving comment need be made on one only. One delegate contended that a saving could be effected if the League discontinued the purchase of the annual reports of the Mandatory Powers. As he pressed the point, the Fourth Committee reduced the vote of the Mandates Section by 100 francs, to mark its desire that the Mandatory Powers should increase the number of free copies supplied. It is for the Governments concerned to say whether they will make a

gift of further copies: fifty was the number mentioned. This particular question will no doubt receive the consideration of the Samoan Administration or the Department in charge thereof.

When the Fourth Committee's report to the Assembly (Document A. 85) came up for consideration the Norwegian delegate handed in a motion having as its object the suppression of the new post (Chief of Division) in the International Labour Office, of which mention has already been made. The motion was put to the vote: six States voted for and eighteen against. The position arising out of the voting was a difficult one, but the Norwegian delegate, after consulting those who had voted with him, stated that he would be willing to withdraw the motion and to vote for the Budget as presented to the Assembly. The Budget was therefore passed unanimously.

In spite of certain economies effected, the Budget for 1929 shows an increase of 1,692,463 francs—*i.e.*, £67,300—over that of 1928. One cannot describe this increase as either normal or reasonable. I think that unless a check is put to this process the time may come when Governments may be compelled to instruct their delegates to take, in the interests of economy, severe measures to keep the annual expenditure of the League within reasonable limits. It should not be forgotten that it is the Assembly itself which is primarily responsible for increases, since delegates on other committees do not always realize that new Commissions, new tasks, and new work imply additions to the annual Budget.

The present scale of allocation of League expenses is to remain in force. It is, of course, always possible for the Assembly to take the initiative in the matter of revision, but there is little doubt that the policy of delay advocated by the sub-committee set up to consider the question will in the long-run prove to have been the only one likely to give satisfaction to the majority of States. If the Budgets of 1930 are ultimately accepted as the basis for computation of the new scale, the present scale will remain in force until the end of 1932.

REGULATIONS CONCERNING SUPPLEMENTARY CREDITS, ETC.

The small sub-committee appointed to consider the draft amendments to certain Rules of Procedure of the Assembly and to some of the Financial Regulations proposed some improvements in drafting, and the suppression of the second sentence in the suggested addition to Rule 14 of the regulations. The new draft was accepted without further amendment.

The committee also approved of an amendment to paragraph 2 of Article 1 of the Financial Regulations for transferring to the Assembly the right of appointing the members of the Supervisory Commission (Document A. 78).

These amendments were passed by the Assembly.

CONTRIBUTIONS IN ARREARS.

This question was, in accordance with custom, referred to a sub-committee, which presented a confidential report. The usual resolution, couched in the mildest terms, was passed. The position is perhaps a little more promising than it was a year ago, but nothing can be said which has not been said in previous reports. In my judgment, the position is quite unsatisfactory. (See Document A. 81.)

NEW CONFERENCE HALL, SECRETARIAT, AND LIBRARY.

The question of the erection of a Conference Hall has occupied the attention of the Assembly since 1924. The original conception has become wider in the course of years, and ultimately it was decided at the Assembly in 1927 not only to erect an assembly hall and building for the Secretariat, but a library, for the construction and endowment of which a sum of two million dollars had been offered by Mr. Rockefeller, jun. The whole matter has been in the hands of a committee of five. The unexpected addition of a library made necessary a reconsideration of the plans, which had already been approved. Careful examination showed that the site acquired by the League adjoining the present Labour Office, did not permit of a sufficiently good layout. By arrangement with the cantonal, municipal, and federal authorities, it has been possible to envisage the exchange of this site for a portion of a public park known as Ariana Park, situate to the west of the high road from Geneva to Lausanne. An account of the present situation, and a resolution passed by the Assembly at its meeting on the 25th September, will be found in Document A. 79.

FIFTH COMMITTEE.

I personally attended the Fifth Committee during nearly all of its sittings. The work was interesting. This committee devotes itself entirely to social questions, and I regard the activities of the League in this respect as of very great importance. No single country could do for humanity in general what the League of Nations is able to do at Geneva, for no single country has the prestige or the authority of an organization of all the nations. In my judgment, if the League fulfilled no other task, its existence is justified because of what it does in the way of world social welfare.

This year the committee had relegated to it the consideration of matters of (1) child welfare, (2) traffic in women and children, and (3) traffic in opium and other dangerous drugs.

CHILD WELFARE.

I need make no special mention of the report from the Child Welfare Committee, except perhaps in one particular aspect. The Fifth Committee evinced a special interest in the inquiry into the relation of the cinematograph to child welfare. In this regard I may remind you that when I was Minister of Education in New Zealand I on more than one occasion expressed concern at the influence of the pictures upon the youthful mind of New Zealand. And, in particular, I recall that the Education Department in my time was greatly concerned with regard to the effect of indecent posters upon the minds of school-children passing them every day. It was therefore not unsatisfactory to me personally that this very question which agitated the Education Department in my day in New Zealand has now come to the fore for serious treatment at the League of Nations.

A governing body of the International Educational Cinematographic Institute has been set up, and there can be little question that the operations of this governing body will be in the direction of urging upon the world by moral suasion the absolute necessity of guarding the young from the evil effects of indiscriminate and sometimes evil cinemas. I strongly urged that women should be represented on this governing body.

Other relative matters dealt with were the drawing up of a draft convention for the repatriation of minors who have escaped from the authority of their parents or guardians, and the contemplation of a draft convention for the relief of minors of foreign nationality. This latter draft would be in the nature of a model. Another matter of some interest to New Zealand was the resolve to draw up a convention on the execution of judgments relating to maintenance payable on behalf of children by persons responsible for their support who have deserted them and gone abroad.

TRAFFIC IN WOMEN AND CHILDREN.

A rather fierce discussion took place on resolutions submitted to the committee dealing with the traffic in women. The ladies on the committee (and they number about twelve altogether) supported by a Committee of Experts who had investigated the question, made a dead set against the licensed houses which still obtain in France and other countries, and from which they claimed that the white slaves sent principally to South America and the Central American republics were recruited. This section of the committee insistently demanded that the committee should advise the League to request that those countries which still retain the licensed-house system should at least investigate the question immediately, with the view to their abolition. Not unnaturally perhaps, the French representative opposed this movement against the licensed houses with some vehemence. He denied the contentions of the other side that the licensed houses led to more prostitution and disease than was the case in countries which had abolished these institutions. This contention, however, of my French colleague was flatly denied by the representatives of other countries, who claimed that the best results possible had been shown from the abolition of the licensed-house system. I was not especially interested in the matter, for in New Zealand, as you are aware, licensed houses were abolished thirty or forty years ago, and there has never been the slightest hint since then of going back to the old system. Personally, I had some sympathy with the French delegate and the representatives of the other countries, who, I believe, with perfect sincerity contended that the systems which they had in their countries were best suited to the special circumstances and temperament of their respective peoples.

Eventually a resolution was carried by the committee and subsequently adopted by the General Assembly requesting that Governments of those countries still retaining the licensed-house system should inquire at once as to the possibility of their immediate abolition. In the committee this resolution was carried by a large majority.

TRAFFIC IN OPIUM AND OTHER DANGEROUS DRUGS.

There was this year the usual discussion with regard to opium and other dangerous drugs. In the discussion I was much struck with the evidence of the world-wide extent and awful dangers of this great evil. A good deal of the discussion was directed to the question of illicit traffic in drugs.

It appears from the documents submitted to the committee that the position with regard to the illicit traffic is still highly unsatisfactory; that the manufacture of harmful drugs goes on unrestricted, and, in fact, is increasing; that new methods of manufacture are rendering the supervision of manufacture more and more illusory. The situation is, therefore, extremely serious, if not alarming. The committee thought that the attention of Governments should be drawn to the necessity of inflicting on traffickers heavy penalties, and that the Courts everywhere should energetically associate themselves with the action of the administrative authorities. A resolution was adopted emphasizing the urgent necessity for—

- (a) The immediate ratification and enforcement by all States, members of the League, of the Geneva Convention of 1925;
- (b) The adoption and strict application of the other measures which have been recommended by the committee from time to time, and in particular the following:—
 - (i) Withdrawal of the license to manufacture or trade in the drugs from any firm, if there is sufficient evidence to show that the firm is engaged in or is knowingly supplying drugs for the illicit traffic;
 - (ii) Strict control over exports to countries not exercising adequate supervision over the trade in the drugs, and the rigid limitation of such exports to the quantities that may reasonably be required for medical purposes in the country itself;
 - (iii) Immediate communication of the fullest particulars relating to any important seizures of smuggled drugs to the Governments of any countries in which the persons connected with the transaction may be or may have been residing at the time, or in which any part of the transaction may have taken place;
 - (iv) Immediate and full investigation by the Government, on the receipt of particulars of such a transaction, whether directly or from the League;
 - (v) Exercise of an adequate control by every Government to ensure as far as possible that its territories shall not be used for the transit or transshipment of consignments of drugs (whether declared as such or not) for the illicit traffic;
 - (vi) Provision in each country's national law of severe penalties for persons convicted of organizing the smuggling of drugs, whether into that or into other countries.

In order to facilitate the efforts of each individual Government to stamp out the illicit traffic, the committee once more insisted upon the necessity of full co-operation; Governments were recommended to supply each other with all particulars necessary for inquiries with regard to persons implicated in smuggling offences, and to communicate to each other, whenever this was recognized as essential, copies of telegrams relating to the transactions of smugglers.

Before, however, dealing with the general question before the committee, may I briefly remark upon a proposal strongly put forward by Great Britain, and which had my full support. To Great Britain the evil has reached such proportions in Hong Kong and other Eastern possessions as to bring the administration to an impasse. For instance, in Hong Kong the Governor of that colony reports that since the war there has been a great increscence in the growth of the poppy in China, with the result that smuggling on a hitherto unheard-of scale has become quite a common thing. Indeed, before this state of things, the Government itself undertook the direct importation and control of opium in Hong Kong, selling it at a high price, so as to make it difficult to get. In view, however, of the wholesale smuggling from China that has come about since the war, the Government has found that there is no demand whatever for its article, and it is calculated that the smuggling agencies are able to sell opium in Hong Kong territory at a ridiculously low price, owing to its proximity to China and the freedom from payment of duty. The Governor frankly reports that the whole administration of Hong Kong is being seriously prejudiced by this menace. Similar reports come from other British quarters in the East, and the British Government consequently drafted a strong memorandum to the League setting out the facts, and suggesting that a Special Commission should be appointed by the League of Nations to go to the Eastern countries with a view to gathering authoritative evidence upon the whole situation in these countries, so that, armed with the report of such a Commission, the League itself could take some useful and perhaps drastic action to curtail the horrible evils of the opium trade. I should mention that it is the smuggling of opium, and not the use of drugs, that is accentuated in these countries as the great evil against which it was desired to take the action as indicated in the above sentences.

When the British proposal came before the committee strong objection was taken to it by most of the nations present. They suggested, indirectly, that it was really a British matter, not one for the League; and, in any event, the expense, they said, was (particularly in this year, when drastic economy was being insisted on) a matter that the League ought not to undertake. However, thanks to the pertinacity of Dame Lyttelton and other members of the British delegation (whom I loyally supported, believing, as I do, that you would always wish me on every reasonable occasion to support the British delegation), a resolution of sorts was finally adopted which may result in the British delegation getting its way.

Returning again to the general question, I think there is evidence that the moral influence of the League is having some effect already. Persia, one of the principal offenders, has reduced the growing of the poppy very considerably, and other countries, too, have followed the same course. In passing, I should mention that I stated to the committee that New Zealand would include the derivatives of opium—namely, eucodal and dicodide—in the convention. While some countries, however, seemed to be anxious, I must confess that the general impression upon my mind is that few, if any, of the countries are showing a great deal of vigour about the present situation. No doubt there is the economic question, which obtrudes itself against any great immediate reform. The countries which grow the poppy do so as one of their staple industries. The representative of Czecho-Slovakia (in Europe) admitted, as did the representatives of other poppy-growing countries, that it would be a very real economic hardship to materially reduce the area now under cultivation in their respective countries.

Eventually a resolution was carried approving of the work of the committee. I imagine that new energy may be galvanized into the movement against opium and dangerous drugs by the meeting of the Special Conference in 1929, in terms of the convention of 1925.

ARMENIAN AND TURKISH REFUGEES.

It seemed, I observed, rather a general opinion this year that the League had, perhaps, gone as far as it could reasonably be expected to go in the work of repatriation of refugees. It was significant rather that Dr. Nansen was unable to get any greater assistance than the mere payment of the administration expenses for his scheme for repatriating Armenians. It is sufficient to say that the League seems determined to recognize the whole of the refugee services on more rational lines. Nor do I conceal my impression that the time has grown ripe for a very careful investigation of the whole system of refugee repatriation.

Generally speaking, I consider this committee, keeping its eye ranged all over the world upon the vices and shortcomings of mankind, is doing satisfactory work, and has, indeed, in front of it a splendid future. For indeed, as I remarked at the beginning of this report, concerted international action from Geneva is likely to achieve much more in the way of world reform than any isolated national effort.

SIXTH COMMITTEE.

This committee, which I personally attended, had this year to deal with some interesting questions. On all the subjects it took in hand I found it expedient to express what I considered to be the viewpoint of the Dominions, and particularly of New Zealand. On each occasion your representative's observations were received with courtesy and attention by the representatives of the other forty-seven nations.

In the first part of our session the work of the International Committee on Intellectual Co-operation came into review. Included in this subject were frequent observations on the International Institute of Intellectual Co-operation, established at Paris, which is nowadays, in a sense, the nursery and almost the seat of the operations of this movement.

At the beginning great regret was expressed on the death of Professor Lorentz, who for many years has presided over the deliberations of the committee, and by the sway of his remarkable personality has exercised a very considerable influence on the whole movement. In the election of Professor Gilbert Murray, an Englishman, to the chair in place of M. Lorentz a compliment was paid to Great Britain and the Dominions, though, in any event, Professor Gilbert Murray, by the force of a remarkable intellect and by a very tactful attitude, has already made a name for himself in Europe in this aspect of the League's work.

Generally with regard to intellectual co-operation between the nations, I confess I am strongly of opinion that it is all to the good that we should have an organization steadily working with quiet but effective persistence to bring the minds of the various peoples together. Once we can get co-operation of mind and thought between the various nations of the League, then, and I think then only, will such grave problems as disarmament be solved; whilst the lesser problems, social and political, which afflict the world will be much the easier of solution if we can bring the peoples to think along the same lines. The work of this international committee all tends in this direction.

I should here observe that this committee fathers and supports the Rome Conference on Copyright, at which the right of an author over his work has at length obtained recognition, thus crowning the protracted efforts of the Committee on Intellectual Co-operation, as the eminent Frenchman, M. Paul Boncour, observed before the Assembly. You will recollect that New Zealand was ably represented at the Rome Conference by Mr. Raymond, K.C.

Further, it may not be out of place at the present to mention the Congress of Statisticians at Cairo. The committee viewed the efforts of this Congress with sympathy, because, I think, it gave an impetus—indeed, a decisive impetus—to the negotiations which the Institute of Intellectual Co-operation is conducting with the idea of securing the adoption by the various nations of the same rules in the matter of intellectual statistics.

SCHOOLS.

I should make it plain, I hope, that with so many highly cultivated men, mostly from the universities, on the League, it is very natural that uppermost in their thoughts should be the work of international university relations. Practical work has this year been done in this direction by the compilation of a Handbook of University Exchanges in Europe, an innovation which is to be repeated next year.

Further, it is to be noted that the secondary schools, as a means of international co-operation, have come into play. Holiday courses and study tours have not only been considered but are already taking place between many of the Central European States. For instance, with a view of securing a closer intellectual relationship between countries such as Switzerland, Poland, and Czecho-Slovakia, high-school boys and girls in great numbers are organized in parties to visit their comrades across the border. This work naturally creates a better understanding, and all makes for the great object—peace.

A great deal of discussion on this occasion centred round about arts and letters and their international character.

The committee has been profoundly struck by the importance of the development of the cinematograph. Indeed, it has drawn the special attention of the Assembly to the danger of cinematograph performances which may be inspired by a spirit opposed to, or, rather, at variance with, that of the League. The discussions on this and cognate subjects served to impress upon my mind the great importance of the Paris International Institute of Intellectual Co-operation. Indeed, I think it not improbable that the work in the future will gradually direct itself more to Paris than to Geneva.

Touching again upon the subject of school activities, I may say that I ventured before the committee to stress the important aspect of getting the minds of the young people in the schools in the right direction as regards war and peace. I asserted that the League ought to make special efforts in this direction, because experience had shown that it was possible to change the whole thought and mind of a people through the training of the young. Why, therefore, not make use of this tremendous force? I suggested that the sub-committee dealing with education should prepare suitable text-books upon the work of the League and its various activities for the use of teachers in secondary and elementary schools. I pointed out that the existing text-books were rather abstruse and dry and lacked human interest. Eventually, I am pleased to record that instructions were given for the preparation by a Committee of Experts of more suitable books of instruction for schools and colleges generally. Doubtless you will be able to receive within the next year or so, for the use of New Zealand teachers and schools, very useful handbooks which will invest the work of the League with some real human interest. Further, in this regard, I think the day is not far distant when exchange visits of school-children of different nations (to a limited degree, of course) will be brought about, as a most potent factor in creating that mutual friendliness and understanding which alone can create a universal will to peace.

It is to be noted that the committee this year resolved to ask the Assembly to agree to the principle that there should be an Information Bureau in the national or central library of every State. Further, the committee stressed the necessity for the preservation of manuscripts, which will naturally be of interest to librarians and others. Another important resolution dealt with getting suitable measures for the preservation of primitive languages which are dying out.

Finally, it dealt with a subject upon which I in past years in New Zealand have spoken and written. I refer to the danger of cinematograph performances if they are not properly supervised and controlled by an adequate censorship. Certainly, the danger from the cinema that the League had in mind was somewhat limited to such broadcasting as might create a spirit antagonistic to the League. Nevertheless, the animadversions of the committee on the subject of the cinemas were not confined to this aspect only, but dealt with the danger to the individuals, and particularly to the youth of a country, from the encouragement of a poor or vicious class of cinema education.

SLAVERY.

The "hardy annual" of the Slavery Convention again came before the committee. More and more nations are ratifying the convention of 1926, in which they pledge themselves to the entire abolition of this great menace to human happiness. It was a matter of pride that Great Britain has shown a magnificent lead with regard to its colonies and dependencies in its attempt to stamp out the last remnants of this evil. There are still, among the nations, offenders. For instance, this committee, year by year, hammers away at the Abyssinians, and, in a lesser degree, at another Power which has African interests. There can be little question that large numbers of human beings in the deserts about Abyssinia and in the neighbouring British Protectorate of the Sudan are carried off in

camel raids and taken into Abyssinia and there sold and disposed of, as has been the custom for, I suppose, hundreds of years. In the case of another Power which has African interests it is well known that a considerable amount of slavery exists in the hinterlands. The constant pressure of the League is, however, beginning to have its natural effect. The Abyssinian delegate was directed by his Government to say that the evil was being reduced, and it was hoped that before long it would disappear. Here is an excellent example of the usefulness of the League's work. No nation cares to be regarded as a black sheep. Consequently when, year after year, on a committee dealing with some great social evil, such as slavery or opium, a nation is haled before the bar of international public opinion, that nation cannot feel indifferent or unrepentant for long. No sort of force, of course, is threatened on these occasions; merely an intellectual and moral pressure is strongly exerted. I have been on more than one occasion struck by the effect that peaceful, persistent pressure of this sort has upon a recalcitrant country. For instance, I believe that in the realm of slavery the world is being quickly rid of the menace merely by the assertion of an overwhelming international public opinion against it at Geneva.

MANDATES.

Part of the work of the Sixth Committee is the annual examination of the work of the Mandates Commission. Naturally, the New Zealand representative could not fail to watch with interest the discussion on the general question of mandates. Our own mandated territory—Samoa—has come before the Mandates Commission so frequently of late that one could not help being interested in the viewpoint that the committee of the Assembly took of the work of this very important Commission. You may remember that last year, so impressed was I with the thoroughness, patience, and tact of the Commission in dealing with the grave problem of Samoa, I ventured to express publicly the debt which the League and the various mandated countries owe generally to the Mandates Commission for the remarkably efficient manner in which it discharges its almost Herculean labours of maintaining an entirely novel kind of rule and government satisfactorily in so many parts of the globe; and so it was a source of some satisfaction to find that the same high opinion of the Permanent Mandates Commission was held by this, an authoritative committee of the League of Nations. The committee expressed its views by passing a resolution in which "it greatly appreciated the competence, impartiality, and common-sense with which the Commission's work has been carried out."

Later on, the committee placed on record its appreciation of the good judgment of the Mandates Commission and the wisdom displayed by the Council as having been instrumental in removing so many of the difficulties naturally presented by the Mandates system, which, as I have already stated, is an innovation of government dealing with so many territories, all differing greatly in their social, political, and economic situations.

REFUGEE WORK.

As you are aware, great things have been accomplished in the past by the League in regard to the removal of conquered and destitute peoples from territories where they were being ill-used and massacred to more congenial places of abode in Europe. The Armenians, who suffered so terribly from their Turkish overlords, have been the principal subjects of this work. One of the difficulties, however, is becoming apparent. It seems to me that the more the nations of the world do to transport these unhappy people to safer climes, the more they will be called upon to do. Naturally, therefore, the League, after spending, through its auspices, millions of money in transporting hundreds of thousands of these people from Asia to Europe, is manifesting a tendency to go slow on these schemes. Still, however, the indefatigable Dr. Nansen, the High Commissioner for Refugees, before the committee this session, expressed the hope that the League would definitely declare in favour of a scheme for the settlement of more Armenian refugees, this time in the Republic of Erivan. Already the Council had made an appeal to all the members of the League for financial support in favour of the scheme in question, and up to the present seventeen Governments had replied to the appeal, but only Germany and one or two others were disposed to contribute. The German Government gave a guarantee of £50,000, but their offer was made conditional upon four other Governments at least taking part in the work. Apparently the response from three or four other Governments (who alone made any offer at all) was not an impressive one. Later on Dr. Nansen stated that he had received from the Armenians in Europe the sum of £100,000 to go towards the realization of the scheme. After a long discussion, in which it was pretty evident that the League as a whole was not very heartily in favour of the idea, it was decided that the Assembly be asked to allot merely the sum of 65,000 Swiss francs (that is, about £2,585) for the express purpose of meeting the administrative expenses of the settlement. I have little doubt that Dr. Nansen, with his very fine record in refugee work, will show his usual indefatigable spirit and endeavour to carry on this new task of bringing these Armenians to Erivan, even though his funds be limited so drastically.

I imagine, however, that the signs are not wanting that the League will be less enthusiastic in the future with regard to refugee work generally.

Finally, I would report that the important activities of the League controlled by the Sixth Committee undoubtedly are going steadily forward, and my opinion that the League of Nations is a useful world institution was at this session greatly reinforced by the happenings at this committee.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

C. J. PARR,

High Commissioner.

The Right Hon. 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.]

Approximate Cost of Paper.—Preparation, not given; printing (510 copies), £17 10s.

By Authority: W. A. G. SKINNER, Government Printer, Wellington.—1925.