

FOURTH COMMITTEE.

As regards League finances, the Audited Accounts for 1928 (Document A. 3) did not call for comment.

BUDGET FOR 1930.

This year, as in former years, the work of the Fourth Committee had been much facilitated by the close scrutiny which the Supervisory Commission had given to the estimates prepared by the Secretariat, the Director of the International Labour Office, and the Registrar of the Permanent Court of International Justice. Credits additional to those shown in the estimates as prepared for the Assembly (see three documents bearing the numbers A. 4, 4 (a), and 4 (b)) were, of course, called for, but, although one or two questions of principle were raised, the estimates as originally presented did not give rise to a long discussion so far as the items were concerned. This is not surprising, since, according to the report of the Supervisory Commission (page 2 of Document A. 5), the increase in the 1930 estimates over the Budget of 1929 "was not so much as the total of the annual increments for the staff," a position due to some reduction of estimated expenditure in various departments. The increase in the estimates of the International Labour Office over the Budget figures for 1929 (for there is actually an increase when one takes account of the transfer from that Office to the Secretariat of the sum of 298,000 francs for work on behalf of refugees) was largely due to the automatic augmentation of salaries; and the same may be said in regard to the estimates of the Permanent Court of International Justice.

The general debate on the Budget affords members of the Fourth Committee a wide opportunity, but this year there was little discussion. One delegate, however, raised a question regarding the activity of members of the staff of the International Labour Office in Home politics. The delegate who raised the point did not receive much articulate support, but one was aware of a deep feeling in the Committee in favour of the principle of strict neutrality in party politics, and it is to be hoped that the Committee which is going into staff matters will not lose sight of this principle.

TRAVELLING-EXPENSES OF DELEGATES.

During the Ninth Assembly the Secretary-General was asked to submit to the Assembly of 1929 an estimate of the cost of the travelling-expenses of three delegates of each member of the League from their country to Geneva and return. The Secretary-General stated this year that on the basis allotted for members of League Commissions (*i.e.*, moderate first-class fares on steamships, first-class on railways, with sleeping-accommodation, journey allowances to cover necessary disbursements during the trip) the sum involved would amount to 430,000 Swiss francs.

It seems to me that a proposal to include in the Budget of the League a sum of money to enable each State to send three delegates has much to commend it in principle. No action was taken this year, as it was thought advisable to give Governments an opportunity of expressing their opinion of the proposal, and, if they approved, of instructing their delegates on various points of detail.

ARMENIAN REFUGEES IN ERIVAN.

The sum of 50,000 francs for administrative expenses for the settlement of Armenian refugees in Erivan was struck out of the estimates, the High Commissioner for Refugees having expressed the opinion that it was useless to go on with the work. This saving, however, is rendered almost negligible owing to an addition of 35,800 francs to the vote for other refugee work.

Certain credits were demanded for which it was not possible to make provision in the Budget for the twelfth financial period, and they are shown in Document No. A. 4 (c).

Amongst the supplementary credits rendered necessary by decisions of the Assembly itself, the sum of 120,000 francs was voted to cover the cost of additional work thrown upon the Economic and Financial Section, including that to be incurred in a possible Geneva Conference.

There was considerable addition to the Health Budget, including about 50,000 francs to be used in connection with the sanitary reorganization of Bolivia, and 100,000 francs for a survey of port health and maritime quarantine to be carried out in China. So much of the Health Organization's work has been concerned with Europe that it would have been unwise to contest the credit to be used in inquiries in Eastern countries and in South America.

A Conference on the Treatment of Foreigners has been convened for November this year. During the debate in the Fourth Committee the Secretary-General informed those present that the Council had decided, subject to the approval of the Fourth Committee and of the Assembly, that this Conference should be held in Paris instead of in Geneva, thus entailing an additional cost of 69,000 francs. In explanation of the Council's decision, the Secretary-General stated that Ministers in Paris of certain South American States had represented that it would be more convenient to them if the Conference were held in Paris, as they would not then have to leave their Legations. The chief spokesman for Latin America repeated the explanation already given by the Secretary-General, and added that, although the Latin-American States were deeply interested in the proposed Conference, it might be necessary for them to abstain from taking part unless it were held in Paris. A motion to have the Conference in Paris was put to the vote and carried by twenty-four votes to seven.

SECRETARY-GENERAL'S HOUSE.

The Secretary-General has for many years occupied a house and grounds adjoining the Ariana Park, in which the new building of the League is being erected. Indeed, the house adjoins the building-site. A citizen of the United States, being of the opinion that the property is of great