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NEW ZEALAND.

THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

REPORT OF THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE DOMINION OF NEW ZEALAND ON THE SIXTEENTH ASSEMBLY OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS, HELD AT GENEVA, IN THE YEAR 1935.

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

SIXTEENTH ASSEMBLY OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

New Zealand Government Offices,
415 Strand, London W.C. 2, 21st December, 1935.

SIR,—

I have the honour to inform you that the Sixteenth Assembly of the League of Nations was opened in Geneva on Monday, the 9th September, by M. Ruiz-Guinazu, delegate of the Argentine Republic and Acting-President of the Council of the League then in session.

OPENING OF PROCEEDINGS.

In a brief speech M. Ruiz-Guinazu referred to certain aspects of the League's work and to some of the events of political importance which had occurred during the preceding year. An English translation of the speech will be found with the papers accompanying this report.

The procedure followed that to which the Assembly has become accustomed. A small Committee was set up to examine the credentials of the delegates. The report of this Committee showed that not all countries had made appointments in accordance with the methods laid down by last year's Assembly. The great majority, however, had appointed their delegates in the approved manner.

The report of the Credentials Committee having been adopted, the Assembly proceeded to elect its Chairman. It was expected that this honour would be conferred on M. Benes, and the result of the voting contained no surprises. Fifty-four States voted, and M. Benes received forty-nine votes. M. Benes, both as Prime Minister of his country (Czechoslovakia) and as a Czech patriot before and during the War, has an international reputation. His work at Geneva during and since 1920 is well known. It was fitting that one who has for so many years enjoyed a position of high standing in the League should at length become President of the Assembly.

The agenda was then examined. The President proposed that consideration of items 10 and 11 should be postponed and referred to next year's Assembly. These items (No. 10, "Question of prohibiting under the provisions of the Covenant the supply of arms and war material to belligerents," and No. 11, "Amendment of the Covenant of the League in order to bring it into harmony with the Pact of Paris") are of considerable importance, and it would not have caused surprise had the suggestion of postponement met with some resistance. It is true that the Belgian delegate asked for reasons why the Committee appointed by the Twelfth Assembly to consider the second of the two items had not met. The President promised to have the point considered. The agenda and the President's suggestions were, however, adopted and the items apportioned to the different Assembly Committees. These, as at recent Assemblies, were five in number, consisting of—

- (1) Legal and constitutional questions.
- (2) Technical organizations of the League.
- (4) Budget and finance.
- (5) Social questions.
- (6) Political questions.

The Third Committee (Disarmament) was not constituted.

In addition to the Committees mentioned above, another Committee was set up to consider proposals for the inscription of new items on the agenda. To this Committee, known as the Agenda Committee, I was elected.

On the afternoon of 9th September the various Committees met for the purpose of electing their Chairmen. The following were elected :—

First Committee	..	..	..	M. Limburg (Netherlands).
Second Committee	..	..	..	M. Zawadzki (Poland).
Fourth Committee	..	..	..	M. Radulesco (Roumania).
Fifth Committee	..	..	..	Countess Albert Apponyi (Hungary).
Sixth Committee	..	..	..	Mr. de Valera (Irish Free State).
Agenda Committee	..	..	..	M. Motta (Switzerland).

At the conclusion of these elections the Assembly met again. Its first business was to elect its Vice-Chairmen. Seven countries succeeded in obtaining a majority of votes, *i.e.*—

	Votes.
France	46
United Kingdom	41
Italy	41
Spain	41
Belgium	30
Mexico	30
Union of Soviet Socialist Republics	29

As the Vice-Chairmen number six only, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, which had obtained the smallest number of votes, was not elected. The so-called "Bureau," or General Committee of the Assembly, consisting of the President, the Vice-Presidents, and the Chairmen of Committees, was thus constituted.

Formalities were concluded by apportioning the items on the agenda amongst the various Committees.

I should mention that there came before the Assembly at its third meeting a proposition, emanating from the General Committee, that the first delegate of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics should be invited to join the Committee. The Assembly unanimously agreed.

REPRESENTATION OF NEW ZEALAND.

As you are aware, I had been appointed sole delegate of New Zealand. I nominated myself member of the First, Second, Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Committees, and Mr. R. M. Campbell, my Economic Adviser, and Mr. C. A. Knowles, my Private Secretary, as substitute members, to represent me on each Committee.

SECRETARY-GENERAL'S REPORT.

The discussion by the Assembly on the Secretary-General's report (Series of Documents No. A. 6) began on the 11th September.

It had been suggested in more than one quarter that the Assembly would proceed in the normal manner without reference to the dispute between Italy and Abyssinia. The wish was probably father to the thought. But from the outset the proceedings were overshadowed by something far greater than any item appearing in the agenda. The League was about to face a problem on the solution of which its very existence might depend. The only question was the *extent* to which delegates would refer to a matter which was before the Council and had not yet been officially brought under the notice of the Assembly.

The debate was opened by Sir Samuel Hoare, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in the United Kingdom. Quite early in his speech he defined the nature and the scope of the League. He said :—

"Members of the League by the fact of their membership are bound by the obligations that they themselves have assumed in the Covenant and by nothing more. They do not act at the bidding of the League, but in virtue of agreements to which they themselves are parties, or in pursuance of policies to which they themselves assent. The League is what its member States make it. If it succeeds, it is because its members have, in combination with each other, the will and the power to apply the principles of the Covenant. If it fails, it is because its members lack either the will or the power to fulfil their obligations."

After referring to the position in which the world found itself with a threat of war as an instrument of national policy, he stated :—

"The obligations of the Covenant remain; their burden upon us has been increased manifold. But one thing is certain. If the burden is to be borne, it must be borne collectively. If risks for peace are to be run, they must be run by all. The security of the many cannot be ensured solely by the efforts of a few, however powerful they may be. On behalf of His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom I can say that they will be second to none in their intention to fulfil, within the measure of their capacity, the obligations which the Covenant lays upon them."

He concluded as follows :—

“ It is to the principles of the League, and not to any particular manifestation, that the British nation has demonstrated its adherence. Any other view is at once an underestimate of our good faith and an imputation upon our sincerity. In conformity with its precise and explicit obligations the League stands, and my country stands with it, for the collective maintenance of the Covenant in its entirety, and particularly for steady and collective resistance to all acts of unprovoked aggression. The attitude of the British nation in the last few weeks has clearly demonstrated the fact that this is no variable and unreliable sentiment, but a principle of international conduct to which they and their Government hold with firm, enduring, and universal persistence.”

All doubt was resolved. Britain was prepared to shoulder her responsibilities and to take action provided action was collective. A lead had been given. The atmosphere was changed, and the key to future discussion had been struck. Delegate after delegate rose and pledged his Government to observance of the principles of the Covenant. It is not my intention to analyse their speeches, but I will say a few words regarding the attitude of the representative of one of the countries upon which the Assembly's thoughts were centred.

The Abyssinian delegate spoke early in the debate. He certainly kept the promise which he made in his opening remarks that he would say nothing calculated to annoy anybody or disturb the peace. He intimated that any suggestion made with the object of raising the economic, financial, or political level of his nation, provided it proceeded from the League of Nations and was carried out according to the spirit of the Covenant, would be regarded by Abyssinia as the action of sister nations which had reached a more advanced state of civilization and were sincerely desirous of guiding his country in the path of progress. Any proposal of that kind would be welcome and would be examined by his country with the greatest sympathy and with real gratitude ; but it would have to be based on the spirit of disinterestedness and carried out and put into effect for the good of all without any evidence of special and private advantage. He concluded by requesting the League to send immediately to Abyssinia an international commission of inquiry in order to examine the substance of the complaints brought against her ; and he added that the Emperor was prepared to accept any reasonable suggestion in the spirit of high conciliation by which he was moved, and to make just allowance to the demands of modern civilization and to the legitimate interests of all nations.

I myself spoke on the afternoon of the 14th September. My speech was recorded in full in the verbatim report to which I refer you. I may mention, however, that I concluded by supporting on behalf of New Zealand the policy which the Foreign Secretary of the United Kingdom had enunciated. I said that we accepted the implications of that policy, always recognizing, as we must, that the responsibility under the Covenant was a responsibility not for one, but for all of us. No formal motion was before the Assembly. The debate closed on the 16th September.

ELECTION OF A JUDGE OF THE PERMANENT COURT OF INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE.

Owing to the death of M. Adatci, a member of the Permanent Court of International Justice, the Assembly was faced with the necessity of electing a Judge to succeed him. The election was held on the 14th September, when the Assembly had before it the list of candidates nominated by the various National Groups (Document A. 14), together with particulars of the procedure to be followed in the election (Document A. 34).

M. Harukazu Nagaoka had been nominated by the greatest number of National Groups, including that of Great Britain. He obtained 35 votes out of 51. Whilst the election was proceeding the Council was also in session, engaged independently in the election, as required by the rules. The Council's choice likewise fell on M. Nagaoka, who was therefore declared elected.

M. Nagaoka, like his predecessor, is a citizen of Japan, and is well known in League circles. He has at times represented his country at League meetings.

I would here mention that at the meeting on the 27th September the President read a letter from Mr. Frank B. Kellogg in which he tendered his resignation as a member of the Permanent Court of International Justice (Document A. 51).

ELECTION OF THREE NON-PERMANENT MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL.

The mandates of three non-permanent members of the Council—those of Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Mexico—were due to expire, and on the 16th September the Assembly proceeded to elect three countries to replace them. In the morning of that day the request of Poland to be declared re-eligible for election was put to the vote, and that country received 35 votes in favour of the request out of 45 votes cast. In the afternoon Poland was elected, as were also Roumania and Ecuador, these countries receiving, out of 54 votes cast, 42, 50, and 45 votes respectively.

COMMISSION OF INQUIRY FOR EUROPEAN UNION.

It is only necessary to mention in passing that on the 27th September the Assembly agreed to renew the Mandate of the Commission of Inquiry for European Union for the coming year, and to place the question on the agenda for the next session of the Assembly (Document A. 65).

On the morning of the 28th September the Assembly completed the work for which it had been summoned ; but the President, in deference to the wishes of a great many delegations, and in view of the critical international situation, took the wise step of adjourning the Assembly instead of declaring it closed.

When, on the 28th September, the Assembly adjourned, the difference between Abyssinia and Italy had not been brought officially before that body. The Council was engaged in preparing a report under paragraph 4, Article 15, of the Covenant. This report, which is the work of a Committee of Thirteen—that is, the members of the Council minus the representative of Italy—is Document C. 411, M. 207. It is a paper of considerable historical importance. It furnishes a history of the dispute from the time (January, 1935) when the difference was brought under the notice of the Council by Abyssinia, through the intervening phases (including the deliberations of the Committee of Five, particulars of whose recommendations I telegraphed to you), down to the outbreak of hostilities early in October.

On the evening of Saturday, 5th October, wireless listeners in London learned that the Assembly had been summoned for the following Wednesday, that the Council had that day considered its report under Article 15, and that on the following Monday the Council would, in all probability, take the gravest decisions.

The Council met on Monday, 7th October, when, after listening to statements by the Italian and Abyssinian representatives, the report was put to the vote. It was accepted by every member with the exception of the Italian member (whose vote would, in any case, not have been counted) and by the representative of Abyssinia.

At its meeting on the previous Saturday the Council had appointed a Committee of Six to study the situation and report thereon. This latter report, which will be found on pages 7, 8, and 9 of the Minutes of the Council (Document A. 78), concludes as follows:—

“After examination of the facts . . . the Committee has come to the conclusion that the Italian Government has resorted to war in disregard of its covenants under Article 12 of the Covenant of the League of Nations.”

This report having been read, the representative of Italy entered a protest against the speed with which decisions were being taken. The President of the Council said, in reply:—

“To-day, 7th October, five days after the opening of hostilities, the establishment of the existence of a state of war, in relation to the obligations of the Covenant, compels the members of the Council to face their responsibilities. This obligation does not in any way prejudice the rights of the parties to make known their observations subsequently at another meeting of the Council. However anxious the members of the Council may be courteously to take account of the convenience of one of their colleagues, they cannot allow that anxiety to take precedence over a primary duty.”

He then put the report to the vote. The members of the Council, other than the representative of Italy, voted for its acceptance. It was likewise accepted by the Abyssinian representative. The representative of Italy stated that he did not approve of its conclusions.

The Council proceedings terminated with a short speech by the President, of which the following is an extract:—

“I take note that fourteen members of the League of Nations represented on the Council consider that we are in presence of a war begun in disregard of the obligations of Article 12 of the Covenant. Accordingly, the report of the Council Committee and the Minutes of the present meeting will be sent to all the members of the League of Nations. As the Assembly stated in its resolution of 4th October, 1921, ‘the fulfilment of their duties under Article 16 is required from members of the League by the express terms of the Covenant, and they cannot neglect them without a breach of their treaty obligations.’” (See also Documents C. 340 and C. 418.)

Such was the position when the Assembly met on the evening of Wednesday, 9th October.

The President of the Assembly (M. Benes), after referring to the considerations which had led him to adjourn, and not to close, the Assembly, proposed that the new item (the difference between Abyssinia and Italy) be added to the agenda, and that it be given immediate consideration. This proposal having been adopted, the President stated that from the Council documents submitted to the Assembly three points emerged:—

- (1) The dispute had not ceased to be under the consideration of the Council, and the Assembly did not therefore take the place of the Council.
- (2) The Assembly was not to reconsider the question or intervene in the procedure, under the terms of Article 15, which had taken place in the Council.
- (3) The Assembly had the opportunity of defining its attitude regarding the Council proceedings and was invited to pronounce on the opinions expressed in the Council. The acquiescence of each Government was involved. He did not propose a vote. He would call on those who desired to express a contrary view and on those who desired a record made of their abstention or reservations. But silence of delegations would be interpreted as an indication of the concurrence of their Governments in the opinion expressed by the Council. Explanations regarding practical difficulties which Governments might meet in applying Article 16 of the Covenant should, however, be made not to the Assembly, but to a special body which it was proposed to set up in view of the desire of the Council that the Assembly should be associated with the Council in connection with measures to be taken.

Three members of the Assembly, and three only, all near neighbours of Italy, expressed a contrary view. The delegates of Austria and Hungary in turn addressed the Assembly and stated that their Governments were not able to associate themselves in the conclusions reached by the Council. On a subsequent occasion the Albanian delegate, on behalf of his Government, expressed a similar view.

On the following day Baron Aloisi, the representative of Italy, addressed the Assembly. His speech, in the original French and in an English translation, will be found amongst the documents enclosed with this report. I invite your attention to it because, as he himself said, he was setting forth completely the point of view of the Italian Government as regards both procedure and the political and historical aspects of the dispute.

He began by alleging that neither the Council nor the Committees appointed by the Council had taken into account, or even examined, the Italian memorandum submitted on the 4th September (Document C. 340, M. 171). Further, that at a critical moment—the meeting of the Council on the 7th October—the Italian member of the Council had been refused an opportunity of stating his views. He then drew attention to the differences in procedure which had marked consideration of the Sino-Japanese and the Chaco disputes on the one hand and the Italian-Abyssinian dispute on the other, procedure which in two instances savoured of leisure, whilst in the third it was characterized by undue haste.

Then followed a recital of the grounds on which Italy based her case :—

- (1) The Italian Government had asked that the League should have regard to the fact that Ethiopia, far from being a united State, was composed of two distinct geographical and political regions. The position was that Ethiopia was in possession of non-Abyssinian colonies over which her rule was exercised only by means of atrocities and oppression. The League of Nations, which imposed on civilized States limitations of sovereignty with a view to safeguarding the rights of minorities, had remained indifferent to a denial of the right of mere existence.
- (2) Why had the League not deemed applicable the measure of exclusion referred to in Article 16 of the Covenant, paragraph 4, in the case of a country proving incapable of fulfilling its engagements ?
- (3) Italy, unable to rely upon the assistance of the League for the guarantee of its security and the recognition of its rights, had found it necessary to fall back upon its own resources in order to meet a danger imminent and considerable, which had culminated in the recent mobilization of more than a million men.
- (4) As to the international, legal, and political aspects of the question, Italy was within its rights in appealing to three clear and fundamental articles of the Covenant: Article I, Article 23, and Article 16 (paragraph 4).

Baron Aloisi made a significant reference to Article 22 of the Covenant (that dealing with mandates) and in particular the first two paragraphs, which he claimed appeared to have been drafted explicitly to meet the case of Abyssinia.

The recommendations of the Committee of Five, to which the Italian delegate earlier in his speech had alluded as containing suggestions involving a limitation of sovereignty and constituting a recognition of the fact that Ethiopia did not fulfil the conditions necessary to retain her position as a member of the League, had not been accepted by Italy. But, apart from the allusion to recommendations, there was not a word of recognition of an attempt, and a far-reaching attempt, to meet the Italian view.

Baron Aloisi then dealt with the alleged breaking by Italy of the Briand-Kellogg Pact, and referred to the reservations made by certain countries, and particularly Great Britain, when adhering to that Pact.

The Italian representative, who in the course of his speech had referred more than once to the want of League action, especially in regard to the non-imposition of sanctions in the Sino-Japanese dispute and in that between Bolivia and Paraguay, concluded by stating that “ Italy was convinced that she was fighting not only her own battle, but that of the League also, and that she was interpreting the true spirit of the League, which was a living thing, by exalting that spirit against the letter of the League, which was a synonym for death. Italy was proud to show the League the path which it must follow to render itself vital and effective. That path was marked by two principles : It must firmly set aside the policy of two different standards and it must regard the Covenant as a whole, harmonizing the part which dealt with the evolution of international life with the part which embodied the principle of conservation, in order to achieve an elasticity necessary to enable it to follow the movement of history and to deal with new situations which, failing such elasticity, would become a sure source of disputes.”

As the Italian delegate had questioned the legality of the Assembly's procedure, the President thought it advisable again to consult the Assembly on the point. No voice was raised against it, however.

The moment had arrived. The representatives of two countries who opposed the opinion of the Council had spoken ; the representative of a third (Albania) had not yet mounted the rostrum, but had been promised an opportunity of speaking later. The President therefore interpreted the silence of the remainder as an acquiescence on the part of their Governments in the opinion which had been expressed by the Council.

I now come to speeches made by other delegates.

M. Laval (France) stated that his country would observe the Covenant, but that, at the same time, the French Government would devote itself passionately to the work of peace.

Mr. Eden (United Kingdom) said that the foreign policy of the British Government was firmly based upon its membership of the League of Nations, for the maintenance of peace was the first objective of British foreign policy and the constant ideal of the British people. The League had two main tasks—the first, to avert war by just and peaceful settlement of all disputes ; the second, if it failed in its first task, to stop war. Action must be taken, and it was for the members of the League of Nations collectively to determine what that action should be.

Other delegates, like those of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and Yugo-Slavia (speaking on behalf of the Little Entente), accepted the implications of the Covenant.

There were interesting speeches from M. Motta, representing Switzerland, and from the delegate from Haiti.

Parts of three Swiss cantons march with the frontiers of Italy, and in one (Ticino) nearly one-fourth of the inhabitants are Italian subjects. Apart from this, Switzerland is in a unique position as regards membership of the League of Nations: the status of the Swiss Confederation in respect to its external relations is governed by the principle of neutrality, and this was recognized by the Council of the League when Switzerland was admitted in 1920. While M. Motta agreed that economic and financial sanctions were not intended to be, and were not in his opinion, hostile acts, and whilst he stated that the Swiss Confederation would not fail in its duty to stand with the other members of the League, Switzerland did not consider herself bound by sanctions which from their nature and effects would expose her neutrality to real danger.

I have made particular reference to the question of an alien population, because Switzerland is not unique in that respect. There are countries in South America faced with the same problem, as became manifest from speeches made by some of the representatives of Latin-American States.

The delegate from Haiti, speaking for a Black Republic, maintained that there were not two truths—one for Africa and another for Europe—that the period of colonial wars had ended, and that one race could no longer be exploited by another. He protested against an attempt to crush an independent coloured race in a so-called colonial war.

Finally, the Abyssinian delegate came to the platform. He said that for ten months his Government had patiently, but with full confidence, waited for justice to be done according to treaties and the Covenant. The solemn verdict had been pronounced, and he asked every member of the League to discharge its duty under Article 16 of the Covenant. I cannot forbear quoting the conclusion of his speech as summarized in the Journal:—

“The Ethiopian Government was engaged in operations of legitimate defence. Nevertheless, it desired to reiterate that it was at the disposal of any organ that might be set up by the Council or by the Assembly for the purpose of interrupting hostilities immediately. It was ready to conclude an honourable peace, but those words must not be misinterpreted. It was the duty of the Ethiopian Government, in all loyalty, to proclaim that, having been made subject to an unjust war and being determined to defend its independence and its integrity to death, however long that war might last, it would not yield to force. It would not accept any condition which gave a premium to its aggressor, for that would be a challenge to international morality.”

In the meantime, a motion emanating from the General Committee of the Assembly had been circulated. It was expressed in the following terms:—

“The Assembly—

“Having taken cognizance of the opinions expressed by the members of the Council at the Council's meeting of 7th October, 1935;

“Taking into consideration the obligations which rest upon the members of the League in virtue of Article 16 of the Covenant and the desirability of a co-ordination of the measures which they may severally contemplate:

“Invites the members of the League (other than the parties) to set up a Committee, composed of one delegate, assisted by experts, for each member, to consider and facilitate the co-ordination of such measures, and, if necessary, to draw the attention of the Council or the Assembly to situations requiring to be examined by them.”

At the conclusion of the Abyssinian delegate's speech the President, when referring to this proposal, said it was not a resolution of the Assembly in the strict sense of the term, but an invitation addressed by the Assembly to the members of the League.

The representative of Italy then spoke. He said that, so far, there had not been any decision of a competent body of the League declaring that a case such as that contemplated in Article 16 had arisen. The proposed Committee could not be regarded as an organ of the League, for it would be a conference of States consulting together on the steps which they would agree to take on their own responsibility. He added that he would vote against the proposal.

The President met Baron Aloisi's two points by stating—(1) That no body of the League had the power to decide compulsorily for all members that one of them had committed a breach of the Covenant. That obligation followed directly from the Covenant and must be observed by members of the League by virtue of their fidelity to treaties. This had been in fact noted by the fourteen members of the Council at the meeting of 7th October, the minutes of which had been forwarded to the Assembly; and (2) that the Assembly was not asked to consider a resolution in the strict sense of the word, but an invitation addressed by the Assembly to States members, and he proposed the replacement of the word “invites” by the word “recommends.”

The proposal was then put to the vote and carried, one country (Italy) voting against, and two countries (Austria and Hungary) abstaining. It should be here noted that the Albanian representative did not speak until the next meeting.

Early in the afternoon of the 11th October the President replied to the observations which had been made by Baron Aloisi on procedure and the alleged omission by the Council to take into consideration certain documents. The remarks of M. Benes will be found in No. 23 of the Journal. The President then adjourned the Assembly after referring to the work accomplished during the preceding three days and to the duty of the Council under Article 11 of the Covenant.

The work accomplished by the Committee of Co-ordination established under the resolution quoted above will be found in a separate report.

FIRST COMMITTEE.

AMENDMENTS TO RULES OF PROCEDURE.

The first business transacted by the First Committee had reference to the maintenance or otherwise of certain temporary rules of procedure framed by the Assembly of 1933 regarding—

- (1) The formal adoption by the Assembly of certain Committee reports without discussion ; and
- (2) The faculty of convening a meeting of the Fourth Committee on a date not more than a week prior to the date of the first meeting of the Assembly, should conditions render such a course advisable.

The First Committee, after a short discussion, decided to recommend the Assembly to incorporate the first of these two rules in the Rules of Procedure and to maintain the second temporarily until next year's Assembly. This recommendation was adopted by the Assembly on the 24th September (Document A. 44).

NATIONALITY OF WOMEN.

This subject has been dealt with in reports of previous Assemblies. The inscription of the question on this year's agenda was due to the desire of some States, especially South American States, to give opportunities for a discussion of the Montevideo Convention of 26th December, 1933, on the nationality of women (see Document A. 7). The points involved are national rather than international ; but apparently the various women's organizations are of opinion that there is a better chance of their being taken up nationally if they are discussed, in the first instance, by an international organization.

Sympathetic as I am to women's just aspirations, I felt no good purpose would be served by taking an active part in the debate. Quite early in the proceedings, however, the New Zealand delegate on the First Committee made a short statement on the effect of the recent New Zealand Act (British Nationality and Status of Aliens' Amendment Act, 1935), section 3 of which goes beyond the Hague Convention. New Zealand's attitude, as disclosed by that Act, especially section 3 thereof, has given considerable satisfaction to women's organizations.

There are few subjects coming before the Assembly which are more controversial. It is difficult to overcome national prejudices, nor are national customs sufficiently taken into account by those who, through the League, would internationalize much which is essentially national. On the other hand, there are many who, while firmly believing in the equality of the sexes, question whether reforms can be secured, through the League, in States which are opposed to reform and voice their opposition at the Assembly. In spite of the belief of the women's organizations that international action should precede national action, the debate made one doubt whether much progress could be made along these lines. The results achieved by the Conference for the Codification of certain points of International Law do not offer much encouragement ; and perhaps that experience has not weighed sufficiently with the women's organizations. On the whole, the tendency of the debate in the First Committee was towards drawing the attention of States to the Montevideo Convention (Document A. 7) and to the possibility of acceding to it. Of course, there were speakers who went further. Ultimately a small drafting Committee was set up and it produced a resolution which was quite acceptable to the New Zealand delegation. This was passed unanimously, and was accepted as an Assembly resolution on the 27th September. (Document A. 53.) It reads as follows :—

“ The Assembly—

“ (1) Remarks with interest the achievement accomplished by the American States in drawing up a convention in accordance with Recommendation No. VI of the Conference of the Hague of 1930 ;

“ (2) Draws the attention of the members of the League of Nations to the fact that the Montevideo Convention is open to the accession of all States ;

“ (3) Thanks the women's international associations for the assistance which they have rendered, and will render, to the League of Nations in this field ;

“ (4) Renews its recommendation that the States which have signed the Hague Convention of 1930 will deposit their ratifications at an early date ;

“ (5) Requests the Council to continue to follow the development of this important problem both in the national and in the international field in order to determine when such development has reached a point at which further concerted international action would be justified.”

So far as the Assembly is concerned the matter seems closed. It is for the Council to watch developments to the point when international action might usefully be taken. (See also Document A. 1/2.)

STATUS OF WOMEN.

This question is related to the subject of nationality of women, dealt with above. So far as this year's Assembly is concerned, its inclusion on the agenda was due to a letter of the 26th September, 1934, signed by delegations of countries in Central and South America, requesting that the Assembly examine the status of women as a whole, and not merely in relation to nationality. The letter will be found in Document A. 8, which also contains the texts of—(1) a resolution on the civil and political rights of women passed at the Seventh Conference of American States held at Montevideo from 3rd to 26th December, 1933 ; and (2) an Equal Rights Treaty between the Governments of Uruguay, Paraguay, Ecuador, and Cuba.

At the opening of the debate there was placed before the Committee a motion by the Irish delegation which, after stating that the status of women was a question which should engage the attention of the League, recommended that the question, with reference particularly to the Equal Rights Treaty, should be referred to Governments and women's organizations for comments for submission to the Seventeenth Assembly. To give an account of the debate would be but to repeat much that has been said on the allied subject of the nationality of women. The speakers included a representative of the International Labour Office, who expressed the view that questions affecting labour should be dealt with by his organization. There was considerable opposition to the Irish motion, although there appeared to be no objection to Governments being asked to state their views. There is, of course, wide diversity as between the different countries, the Anglo-Saxon and Nordic countries, with some others, having the most progressive legislation.

The Belgian representative made an interesting but a rather trenchant speech, and then submitted a motion which suggested that the question of equality of civil and political rights could advantageously be examined by the League of Nations only when the League had before it the question of the rights of man and of the citizen. Doubtless the women of the advanced countries (and even these show considerable diversity) wish to see the rights they enjoy conferred on the women of countries the legislation of which is not advanced. It does not always follow, however, that these rights could be easily assimilated. Even in the countries in which there is equality as between the sexes the growth of freedom has been slow. In Britain, even, it is only in recent years that a woman has had complete liberty to dispose as she likes of her property. In one European country at least, without whose culture the world would be much the poorer, women do not enjoy the franchise, nor do they appear to be greatly anxious to possess it. It is to a great extent a question of manners, customs, and national feeling. Much can be done by international organizations to make known various efforts towards change and progress, but perhaps the League, composed as it is of Governments, is hardly the body to take charge of a matter which affects national life very closely.

We in New Zealand are proud of our enlightened outlook in the matter of the franchise and equality of the sexes. But it must be remembered that we are a new country, unhampered by certain customs and traditions which have a deep foundation elsewhere.

At the end of the debate the Chairman suggested that the representatives of Belgium, France, and the Irish Free State should draft a motion which should take account of the views which had been expressed. As the result of the collaboration of the representatives of these three countries a motion, expressed in the following terms, was laid before the Committee, which recommended its adoption by the Assembly.

“ The Assembly—

“ Noting that the question of the status of women was placed on the agenda of the present session for examination, at the instance of a number of delegations, with particular reference to the Equal Rights Treaty signed at Montevideo on December 26th, 1933, by representatives of the Governments of Cuba, Ecuador, Paraguay, and Uruguay ;

“ Considering that the terms of the Equal Rights Treaty should be examined in relation to the existing political, civil, and economic status of women under the laws of the countries of the world ;

“ Recognizing that the question of conditions of employment, whether of men or women, is a matter which properly falls within the sphere of the International Labour Organization :

“ (1) Decides that the question of the political and civil status of women shall be referred by the Secretary-General to the Governments for their observations, including observations as to the action which in their view the League might take in this matter, and that the Governments shall be requested to supply to the Secretary-General, together with their observations, information as to the existing political and civil status of women under their respective national laws ;

“ (2) Recommends that the women's international organizations should continue their study of the whole question of the political and civil status of women ;

“ (3) Requests that the observations and information communicated by the Governments and the statements of the said international organizations shall be sent to the Secretary-General for consideration by the Assembly of the League of Nations at a subsequent session ;

“ (4) Expresses the hope that the International Labour Organization will, in accordance with its normal procedure, undertake an examination of those aspects of the problem within its competence—namely, the question of equality under labour legislation—and that it will, in the first place, examine the question of legislation which effects discriminations, some of which may be detrimental to women's right to work.”

The Assembly passed it at its meeting on the 27th September.

Paragraph 1 of the effective part of the resolution is the only section which concerns the Government. No doubt in due course you will receive a request to supply information. I should be glad if a copy of the Government's reply could be forwarded to me. It is only on the legal aspect of the question that Government action is desired—that is, to supply information regarding the laws of New Zealand as they affect the political and civil status of women (Document A. 60).

RULES OF PROCEDURE OF THE ASSEMBLY.

In the first section of this report I have related that although the first delegate of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics obtained a clear majority of votes in the election of Vice-Presidents of the Assembly he was not elected as there were only six seats to be filled and six other delegates obtained a higher number of votes. I mentioned that he was subsequently elected to the General Committee. Not to have put him on that Committee would have meant the absence of a representative of one of the countries possessing permanent seats on the Council. Now the rule, numbered 7, relating to the appointment of officers of the Assembly reads:—

“ 1. The officers of the Assembly shall consist of a President and of six Vice-Presidents, together with the Chairmen of the main Committees of the Assembly, who shall be *ex officio* Vice-Presidents of the Assembly. These officers shall form the General Committee.

“ 2. The President shall be elected at the beginning of each session.

“ 3. Until the election of the President, the President of the Council shall act as President of the Assembly.

“ 4. The election of the Vice-Presidents shall take place at one of the early meetings of the session.”

Thus the Assembly may choose from any nationality represented on the League. In practice its choice of a President has always fallen upon a citizen of a State not a permanent member of the Council, although it has been usual to elect as Vice-Presidents the chief delegates of the countries possessing permanent seats.

At a meeting of the General Committee held on the 21st September the Secretary-General presented a note containing certain amendments to the Rules of Procedure. The General Committee passed the proposals to the Assembly, which, in turn, directed its First Committee to examine them. The paper bearing on the subject is Document A. 49, and this contains suggested amendments to Rule 7, and an addition to that rule in order to make statutory provision for the Agenda Committee, which in practice has always been set up.

The proposals met with some opposition in Committee. The Norwegian delegate suggested further amendments, and, indeed, propounded a plan whereby an Assembly should agree on the States which were to provide the officers for the following Assembly. It is regrettable that the proposals of the General Committee should have been submitted so late in the session, which was then drawing to a close. Fortunately, the adjournment of the item was proposed, and this was carried by a majority of votes.

On the 28th September the Assembly decided to adjourn consideration of the matter until 1936 (see Documents A. 49, A. 1/17, A. 1/18, and A. 69).

AMENDMENT TO THE STATUTE OF THE PERMANENT COURT OF INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE.

The Protocol for the revision of the Statute of the Permanent Court of International Justice was drawn up and signed in 1929. When the Assembly met, the Protocol had not received all the ratifications necessary to put it into force. The position is explained on page 64 of the report on the work of the League (Document A. 6 (a)), and, under a motion presented by the Swiss delegation, the passage dealing with the statute was referred to the First Committee, with the request to consider what steps could be taken to remedy the situation.

To bring the Protocol of Revision into operation the ratifications of three States were still required—that of Brazil, Panama, and Peru. The Governments of these countries had, however, intimated that they would soon be able to deposit ratifications. Such being the position, there was reasonable prospect of the Protocol of Revision coming into force quite early; but in view of the promised ratifications a number of delegations expressed a desire to hasten the date. Ultimately the Committee decided that the date should be 1st February, provided Brazil, Panama, and Peru saw no objection. Under the resolution of the Assembly of the 27th September the Council and the Secretary-General are invited to take the necessary action (see Document A. 62).

INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE AT ROME FOR THE UNIFICATION OF PRIVATE LAW.

The Italian delegation proposed to the Assembly that that section of the Secretary-General's report on the work of the League (Document A. 6 (a), page 59) should be referred to the First Committee.

It will be remembered that, following the precedent created by the French Government in providing premises for, and funds towards the maintenance of, the Institute of Intellectual Co-operation, the Italian Government, in 1924, offered to establish and maintain in Rome an International Institute for the Unification of Private Law. The activities of the Institute, although known to members of the Assembly, had not been hitherto brought under the notice of this body in a formal manner. As, however, some years had elapsed since the creation of the Institute, it was perhaps as well that the Assembly as a body should learn what was being done. For a brief account of the position to date I cannot do better than refer you to the First Committee's report presented to the Assembly on the 28th September, when the Assembly passed the resolution with which the report concludes (Document A. 66).

It will be observed that under the resolution Governments are requested to give early and favourable consideration to drafts of the Law of Sale and the Law on the Responsibility of Hotelkeepers transmitted to Governments for observations under a resolution of the Council of 14th January, 1935.

PAN-AMERICAN UNION.

Under resolution of the Assembly of 1934 the question of relations between the League of Nations and the Pan-American Union was inscribed on this year's agenda.

The First Committee, after listening to speeches made principally by South American representatives, proposed the following resolution, which was passed by the Assembly at its meeting on the 28th September (Document A. 67):—

“The Assembly—

“Honouring the high ideal of international co-operation which inspired the Colombian proposal as to relations between the League of Nations and the Pan-American Union;

“Reserves the right to examine this proposal when it has learned the outcome of the studies recommended by the Seventh Pan-American Conference in a resolution concerning the relations of Pan-American bodies to other organizations;

“And authorizes forthwith the Secretary-General to maintain such relations for mutual information with the Director-General of the Pan-American Union as may prove desirable.”

REQUIREMENTS FOR VOTING A RESOLUTION REQUESTING AN ADVISORY OPINION FROM THE PERMANENT COURT OF INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE.

This is a somewhat vexed question. Several years ago the Assembly expressed the wish that the Council would have a study made of the question, whether the Council or the Assembly might by a simple majority ask for an advisory opinion within the meaning of Article 14 of the Covenant of the League of Nations?

Article 14 of the Covenant deals with the establishment of the Permanent Court of International Justice, and the last sentence of the Article reads: “The Court may also give an advisory opinion upon any dispute or question referred to it by the Council or by the Assembly.”

No study has yet been made.

On 14th September a motion, standing in the names of the delegations of Belgium, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, and Switzerland, was submitted to the Assembly. This motion reiterated the request for a study, and expressed the desire that, should the Council be unable to arrive at a decision, the question would be submitted to the Court for an opinion.

The motion was referred to the First Committee.

The position was well put in the Committee by the Belgian delegate. After stating that, in his opinion, the majority rule should be followed, he emphasized that it was an advisory opinion only which would be sought from the Court, and that in making a request to this effect neither the Council nor the Assembly renounced its right to make a decision on the point at issue. Guidance only was sought, and a request for it involved nothing more than procedure and could be determined by a majority vote, especially as the Covenant provided for consultation of the Court. The practice of the Council, however, was to request an opinion only by a unanimous vote.

The delegate of Yugo-Slavia at once joined issue with the representative of Belgium. After mentioning that every advisory opinion given by the Court had been adopted by the Council, he stated, as his opinion, that the Court's advisory opinions were judgments which in practice had the effect of rendering obligatory the jurisdiction of the Court. In the circumstances, the request for an advisory opinion was not a matter of procedure, but a question of principle, requiring the agreement of all the members of the League represented at the meeting (see paragraph 1, Article 5, of the Covenant). He even went so far as to say that, as many States had, when adhering to the Permanent Court, not accepted its compulsory jurisdiction, the request for an advisory opinion should receive a unanimous vote, *including the parties concerned*.

There was an interesting debate of a legal character, with the result that a Drafting Committee was appointed to draw up a motion for submission to the Assembly. The Drafting Committee produced a text which, however, did not meet with the unanimous approval of the First Committee. After further discussion, the following text was accepted.

“The Assembly—

“Whereas by its resolution of September 24th, 1928, it expressed the desire that the Council, when circumstances permitted, would 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;

“Observing that such a study has not yet been made and that uncertainty on the matter still persists and may have contributed to diminish the activity of the Permanent Court of International Justice;

“Considering that it is desirable for the security of the legal rights of members of the League of Nations that, in cases where it appears indispensable for the accomplishment of the task of the Council or the Assembly that advice should be obtained on some point of law, such advice should, as a general rule, be requested from the Permanent Court of International Justice;

“Expresses the desire that the Council will examine the question in what circumstances and subject to what conditions an advisory opinion may be requested under Article 14 of the Covenant.”

This motion came before the Assembly on the 28th September and was passed.

The First Committee's report to the Assembly is Document A. 68 (see also Document A. 39).

SECOND COMMITTEE.

The Second Committee is concerned with questions covered by the general term "Technical Work of the League." Under this heading, in 1935, the Assembly had before it the following subjects:—

- (1) Communications and Transit (Documents A. 20 and A. 47);
- (2) The Health Organization (Document A. 48);
- (3) League Committees (Documents A. 6 and A. 70);
- (4) Economic and Financial Questions (Document A. 71);
- (5) Nutrition and Agriculture (Document A. 61).

Brief comment will suffice for the first three of these, the discussions relating to the fourth and fifth items being of greater interest to New Zealand.

In reference to communications and transit the Assembly took preliminary steps towards putting under way a fact-finding survey of measures for co-ordination of transport in the principal countries. It will necessarily be some time before the outcome of such a survey can be made known, but with the wide variety of experience to be drawn upon, and in a problem which has considerable elements in common in widely scattered countries, there is little doubt that the survey can be well worth while.

In the same sphere renewed attention was given to the problem of pollution of the sea by oil, a matter which the United Kingdom brought before the Assembly in 1934. Since then comprehensive inquiries have been made by the League, revealing a great measure of agreement in holding that corrective action is both desirable and feasible. The New Zealand Government was amongst those indicating their readiness to join in appropriate common action, and, as on the previous occasion, the representatives of the United Kingdom stressed the urgency and importance here attached to the problem. The assembling of data and of governmental views has now reached the stage at which the drafting of a convention and the convening of an appropriate conference to finalize the matter were deemed to be justified; and a formal resolution to this effect was adopted.

The continued work of the Health Organization of the League is recorded in the reports of a detailed and technical character, which reports have been forwarded to appropriate agencies of government concerned.

Housing is one subject of interest now being examined by the League's Health Organization of interest for its bearing both on social welfare and on the possible stimulation of industrial activity; the widespread and practical attention that is being paid to these considerations suggests that a useful store of information will be collected and disseminated.

The form and procedure of Committees of the League of Nations came under review on the presentation of a report made by a special Committee which had been set up pursuant to a resolution of the 1934 Assembly. That report, and the detailed examination given it during the 1935 Assembly, are an indication of the scrutiny applied to maintaining the administrative competence of the League's machinery.

ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL QUESTIONS.

Under this comprehensive heading the League, and its Second Committee more particularly, considered recent facts and trends in relation to the world-wide depression. Geneva was, in a sense, a watch-tower from which the course of economic events could be viewed and analysed: the Assembly was the occasion for a stock-taking and an appraisal of developments in the economic life of the world.

Three reports published by the League in 1935 provided the basis of discussion, these being intitled—(i) inquiry into clearing agreements; (ii) considerations on the present evolution of agricultural protectionism; and (iii) remarks on the present phase of international economic relations.

Differing in their approach, these three documents agree in presenting a picture of the disorder into which international trade has fallen and of the extent to which the relatively free and competitive economic system of the nineteenth century has, for the present at any rate, become a thing of the past; they agree in observing the limits to recovery so far experienced; and in frankness it must be said that they also are closely akin to one another in holding out very little hope of an early return to what we have regarded as normal prosperity.

It is, of course, true that in the past year or two internal conditions in the principal countries, with the notable exception of those which still adhere to the gold standard, have somewhat improved; industrial activity and employment have increased, budgetary problems have become less acute, and prices of some important raw materials have risen. But, as careful observers are obliged to remark, recovery has been patchy; the hoped-for improvement in trade has not eventuated, the volume of world trade still standing substantially below its 1913 and its 1929 level—by value the total trade of the world in 1934 was only two-thirds of the 1921 value (the decline being due to a fall of approximately one-fourth in quantity and of three-fifths in prices)—and the contraction still continues; a hard core of unemployment remains, untouched by recent improvements; and part at least of such industrial improvement as there has been must, regrettably, be ascribed to rearmament activity.

The dilemma that constantly confronts the advocate of a general international attack on trade obstacles is that States are unwilling to remove their protective barriers while monetary factors remain uncertain, and unwilling also to bind their currencies to rigid exchange rates while trade itself remains in an "abnormal" state. Thus the path of return to the old normal is effectively blocked; and hence the role of the League in economic recovery is severely limited in potential value. One feels, too, that the causal connection between the depression and the so-called artificial measures of governmental control is often tacitly assumed to be the converse of what was in fact the case, and that reiterated emphasis on those measures has only the limited value of pointing to symptoms.

The delegate for France in 1935 endeavoured to carry discussion a stage forward when he suggested that, as a step towards at once reducing trade barriers and stabilizing currencies, countries might enter

into bilateral agreements in which tariff concessions would be contingent on the maintenance of existing exchange parities. The declared readiness of France to negotiate agreements on this basis, though at first sight surprising in view of the disabilities that her trade would suffer if she were forced off the gold standard after concluding such agreements, is reasonably explained as a considered move by a gold standard Government to burn the bridges behind it, making departure from gold more difficult. The resolution under this heading that finally emerged, as proposed by the United Kingdom representative, with the French representative's concurrence, urged that as many countries as possible should conclude bilateral agreements; it favoured the continued inclusion therein of the most-favoured-nation clause, and it suggested that, if necessary, the agreements should be subject to the provision that "in the event of a large variation in the rate of exchange between the currencies of the contracting parties there should be power to revise the agreements at short notice."

From the angle of possible monetary action the clearest reluctance was displayed by countries not now on the gold standard to bind themselves to any early return to that standard. Thus, in the final stages of drafting a non-committal summary of the general committee's discussions, exception was taken (primarily by the United Kingdom representative) to words stating that "a restoration of the *stability of the monetary basis*" was felt to be essential to the regular development of international trade; the word "stability" was objected to because of its evident ambiguity in implying either stable exchange rates or stable internal prices; the discussion and the redraft agreed in placing first emphasis on the latter of these two objectives. That "we are nearer to achieving stable purchasing-power than to achieving any general adoption of the gold standard" was certainly the consensus of opinion.

NUTRITION AND AGRICULTURE.

New Zealand was one of twelve countries whose representatives at Geneva in 1935 asked by formal requisition that the Assembly should place the subject of nutrition on its agenda, the stated grounds being that the relation between nutrition and health has become a significant social and economic problem and that the subject has an important bearing on world agricultural problems. This led to an extended discussion in the Second Committee, which drafted recommendations, later adopted by the Assembly, for further examination of the practical means of securing better nutrition.

As might be expected, the discussion disclosed no differences of opinion. With only different emphasis and in different language, delegates from a score of countries deplored the failure of man to live as abundantly as his health required and as agricultural progress has made possible. If it was conceded that the problem is especially pressing in the older and more highly protected countries, there was none the less a recognition that there is no community that does not have its black patches, that the extension of consumption rather than the curtailment of production can be the only sound and enduring objective, and that, whether immediately realizable or not, the improvement of health through better nutrition and the benefiting of agricultural producers are purposes that are wisely to be pursued in unison.

The difficulty is, of course, to say how these admittedly desirable ideas can best be translated into reality, and, more particularly, to say what contribution the League of Nations and related organizations can bring to the problem. Without doubt the answer must be that the solution will wait upon the taking of appropriate action in the individual countries. The League can usefully collect, analyse, and publish information on the measures that are taken in all countries; and the resolution as adopted looks to this clearing-house function as the part the League can take.

The significance of the attention given to this problem, and of the favourable public notice which it received, is that they point to a new awareness of consumers' interests; and, if there is a vagueness about the action to be taken in recognition of those interests, there is no doubt that recent trends at this end of the world do strongly suggest that Governments will not be content with ineffective resolutions.

It is, I think, not too remote from the object of this report for me to suggest that New Zealand might most appropriately further the purposes indicated by the League of Nations' unexceptional resolution, and at the same time consult her own enlightened self-interest, by taking every possible step towards extending to the optimum figure the consumption of agricultural foodstuffs within the Dominion. Already our favourable figures in infantile mortality are at once an inspiration and a challenge to the world. Is it beyond the bounds of reasonable possibility to aspire towards a like leadership in respect to adequate nutrition and health?

FOURTH COMMITTEE.

M. Radulesco, the Chairman, has on several occasions represented Roumania on the Fourth Committee, so that the Committee enjoyed all the advantages to be derived from the possession of a Chairman thoroughly familiar with its work and procedure.

Document A. 25 gives the financial situation on the 31st August last, and it is convenient for the purpose of reference. A brief recital of the situation as it emerged from the speeches on the first day of the debate will, however, not be out of place here. The year 1934 ended with a cash surplus of 3,878,641 gold francs. The receipts of the year were 30,198,115 francs, and the expenditure 26,319,474 francs. It is of interest to observe how the receipts were made up. The sum of 22,186,192 francs only was in respect of contributions, as against a budget of 30,827,805 francs—that is to say, more than one-fourth of the contributions remained uncollected. The balance was represented by 6,643,379 francs contributions of arrears and 1,368,544 francs appropriations in aid. Although the revenue of the League showed a reduction in respect of current contributions, the position was not quite so disturbing as appeared on the surface, since the reason for the fall in receipts was to be found

in the withdrawal of certain States from the League. On the other hand, there was an increase in the sum paid in respect of arrears.

It was, of course, too early to speak in definite terms of the current year, but the Secretary-General was able to assure his hearers that there would be no deficit.

The general position, while weak, is not entirely unsatisfactory. The steady and progressive reduction in expenditure, as the result of the "drive" for economy by successive Assemblies, is quite marked. The budget for 1935 shows a reduction in expenditure of more than three million francs over that of 1932, and this tendency to reduction is by no means at an end. To show that those critics of the policy of economy were unduly alarmed as to the effect of that policy on the League I cannot do better than refer you to the section headed "General Remarks" on page 2 of the first report of the Supervisory Commission (Document A. 5). After touching briefly on the economies effected (which far from impairing efficiency have, I believe, increased it), the Commission (an authoritative body of men) says:—

"When conditions improve and normal activity is resumed the League will probably be able to cope with the situation without any increase in its budget. In any case, the Secretary-General thinks that it would be unduly pessimistic to stabilize the League's activities at the lowest level reached during the depression."

Viewing the situation in the early days of September, 1935, the League had suffered serious losses—in particular, the withdrawal of Japan, which had become effective, and the imminent withdrawal of Germany. Many States suffering from the economic crisis were not only alarmed at the size of the budget (in spite of reductions), but were claiming reductions in their contributions; yet the work of the new building was continuing, and the League was facing, probably, its greatest political crisis. I think it would have been a short-sighted policy, on the approach of the crisis, to have done anything which savoured of despair, and I hope that a spirit of quiet resolve and determination will help to tide the League over its many difficulties.

The general discussion of the Committee opened on the 12th September and closed on the 17th, three meetings in all being devoted to it. It is reported with a fair degree of fulness in Nos. 6, 8, and 9 of the Journal. It was chiefly remarkable for the demand by the French delegation for a reduction by 10 per cent. of the budget. This demand had been foreshadowed in a letter addressed to the Secretary-General by the Prime Minister of France on the 9th August, and it was formally made by the French delegate at the second meeting of the Committee. Such, however, was the importance which the French delegation attached to the motion that M. Laval, the Prime Minister of France, appeared at the fourth meeting of the Committee in order, personally, to explain the French point of view. It was to the effect that drastic cuts had been made in the French budget which affected even the humblest railway employees. As a consequence of the need for economy the amount of the contribution of France to the expenses of the League, as entered in the French budget, had been reduced by 10 per cent. M. Laval was not prepared to make any detailed suggestions as to how the reduction could be effected. He, however, thought it logical that since the salary of every French official had been cut by 10 per cent., League officials must be asked to make a similar sacrifice. He added that if the Fourth Committee thought that the proposal was unacceptable the French Government would have to place before the Chamber of Deputies a request for a supplementary credit, a procedure which would entail a debate in the Chamber.

In the course of the debate considerable attention was paid to the French motion, particularly by the representatives of Switzerland and Norway and by the Chairman of the Supervisory Commission. The French motion, as a matter of fact, followed others of a somewhat similar nature made in previous years by the representatives of other countries hit by the depression. Unfortunately, however, these countries did not receive much support from quarters which are now so insistent on reduction, and it was but natural that these inconsistencies should be pointed out. In the past there has been much criticism of the action of those who pressed for wise economy. A reply to such criticism is to be found in the remarks of the Swiss delegate to the effect that whenever a delegation made any proposals in the Fourth Committee for the reduction of expenditure the world press immediately represented the country in question as anxious to attack and reduce the strength of the League. This was very unfortunate, because such proposals invariably came from States which always paid their contributions.

The question of economy, which is prominent in the Fourth Committee every year, is one which affects most delegates. In many countries currency is so depreciated that the contribution, which is based on gold, to the expenses of the League is extremely high. Again, while, of course, economies in the League are reflected in national budgets, the reduction is small compared with what might be achieved were the assessment lower in number of units. It is therefore not only economy which is exercising the minds of some delegates, but a desire to see established a scale of allocation which, in their opinion, would be more equitable. The Norwegian delegate, who made a pleasing reference to New Zealand, stated that some States had hinted that they would not be surprised if they were asked to pay more. It may be, as he suggested, that payment of a larger contribution to the League might enhance the prestige of a country. What, however, is more apparent is the continuous demand for a reduction of units.

There were some references to "over-budgeting"—*i.e.*, deliberately estimating the expenditure on an item at a higher figure than is warranted—a subject which has been dealt with in former reports by the New Zealand delegate. In illustration of this system Mr. Bruce, of Australia, quoted some striking figures, only to be told in reply that, generally speaking, surpluses were returned to respective States. But that answer, of course, did not meet the point. If States would pay their subscriptions there would be no necessity for "over-budgeting," as I have before remarked. Mr. Bruce went so far as to say that a situation might arise, for example, in the Australian Parliament to cause the Australian

contribution to be calculated not on the basis assessed by the League, but on Australia's own assessment, taking into account the amount which it was considered Australia should justly pay.

The general debate came to a close. In the course of it motions had been put forward by the Portuguese and Norwegian delegates. The Portuguese motion provided for reference to the Supervisory Commission of the French proposal, whilst the Norwegian motion was conceived in the following terms:—

“ Considering the proposal of the French Government for a reduction of the contributions of member States for the year 1936 by 10 per cent. ;

“ Considering that substantial economies have been made in the draft budget for 1936 ;

“ Considering that these economies together with the proposed restitution of a proportion of the surplus for the year 1934 have ensured that, despite the withdrawal of two member States from the League, the contributions of member States for the year 1936 will be no greater than for 1935 ;

“ Considering further that the draft budget for 1936 has been examined by the Supervisory Commission and recommended for acceptance by that body :

“ The Assembly resolves—

“ (1) That the various organizations of the League of Nations, in consultation with the Supervisory Commission, shall frame their budget for the year 1937 with due regard to the request of the French Government and to the essential needs of these organizations ;

“ (2) That these organizations shall be instructed to limit such activities the limitation of which will not be detrimental to the future of the League of Nations.’ ”

This motion was not put to the vote, and ultimately the Committee decided, with the consent of the French delegate, to refer the budget, together with the French proposal, to the Supervisory Commission. In due course the Supervisory Commission reported. A hasty glance at its report gave some ground for satisfaction, for it was seen that a reduction of 1,950,000 francs was proposed. But a closer examination failed to maintain first impressions, since provision was made for no considerable saving which had not already appeared likely to materialize. For instance, every year provision is made in the estimates for conferences to be held if circumstances permit. In recent years much money thus provided has not been spent. The Supervisory Commission proposed a reduction in respect of such conferences. Some savings were effected on the budget of the Permanent Court of International Justice (on a guarantee being given to the Registrar that deficiencies would be met) ; by postponement of part of an addition to the International Labour Office building ; by a modification of the budget of this organization, including a reduction of new posts ; and by an additional refund to States, to be taken from the surplus.

Salaries were not touched. Few delegates expected they would be after the experience of former years when tackling this question. An opportunity of raising one aspect of the question was, however, seized by your representative when Chapter 3 of the budget (Salaries and General Services) was under discussion. If you will refer to paragraph 17, page 4, of the report of the Supervisory Commission (Document A. 5), you will observe that the Secretary-General had put forward a request for an increase of the salary of members of section who had been promoted to the rank of Counsellor. The increase was refused by the Supervisory Commission and the request withdrawn, only to be replaced by another for a personal grant of 2,600 francs to each Counsellor—in effect an increase in salary given in an irregular way. This was agreed to by the Supervisory Commission (presumably by majority vote, or in the absence of one member), and the estimates contained a provision for 10,400 francs—not a large amount, but one involving a principle which it was worth examining in the light of day. There were whispers that grants were looked upon as compensation to men who performed work for which superior officers were receiving the pay. A principle was at stake, however ; the salary attached to the post was adequate or it was not. What was the opinion of those competent to speak ? A question framed in this sense was put by your representative. The Secretary-General, in the course of his explanation, stated that the four Counsellors to whom he proposed to make this allowance did work which was far outside the scope of the normal activities of members of section. It was not on account of their title, therefore, but mainly in consideration of the quality and quantity of the duties they were called upon to discharge that it was proposed to make them a special allowance. But the matter was not allowed to rest there. The Secretary-General was followed by Mr. Hambro (a member of the Supervisory Commission), who made it clear that he was opposed to personal grants, and by M. Rappard, the Swiss delegate, who proposed the annulment of the grant. There was a debate of some animation. At length the proposal for a reduction was put to the vote. I quote from the *draft* minutes : “ A preliminary vote was taken by a show of hands, but as it was impossible to arrive at a definite interpretation of the result the Chairman took a roll call. The result of the voting was as follows :—

Votes in favour of the Swiss delegate's proposal (deletion of the special allowance to Counsellors)	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	11
Votes against the proposal of the Swiss delegate	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	14
Abstentions	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	6

The annual allowance was consequently maintained. I might comment on the circumstances attending the taking of the vote on this issue, but I will refrain.

As usual, supplementary credits were requested in the course of the Assembly. Some of these were granted; some were not. Detailed examination is not necessary, but in respect to one item I think a few words are required.

During the past year or two the question of the ultimate settlement of Assyrians now living in Iraq has given some trouble to the Governments interested. The matter came before the Sixth Committee, and will be dealt with later. A supplementary credit being involved, the Fourth Committee took its share in the discussion. I have nothing to say against the decision which the Assembly ultimately took. If the plan for the transfer of the Assyrians to Syria succeeds, there will be much ground for satisfaction, and the League will have assisted in the accomplishment of another task well worth the doing. But I do question whether it is not possible to avoid demands for large supplementary credits at a comparatively late hour of the session. It is true that the regulations admit it; how otherwise would it be possible to deal with matters unexpectedly if belatedly occurring and involving expenditure? But surely it is incumbent on Governments proposing work involving additional and considerable expenditure to make their plans known early enough to permit other Governments, some of which are situated at great distances from the seat of the League, to give their delegates instructions based on a proper consideration of all the facts. In this instance the assistance of the League involves an expenditure of 1,300,000 francs, spread over four years, with an expenditure of 400,000 francs in 1936. The matter is dealt with at length in paragraphs 17 to 27 of the Supervisory Committee's Second Report (Document A. 5 (b)).

The Supervisory Committee's report to the Assembly is Document A. 75. In addition to a brief but clear exposition of the budget as passed by the Assembly on the 28th September, it gives information on the new building, the Staff Pensions Fund (the position of this fund is not a happy one), disposal of the 1935 surplus, and other matters. The budget for the calendar year 1936 amounts to 28,279,901 francs, as compared with 30,639,664 francs for 1935.

In closing my remarks on the budget I would state that a step of great importance is to be taken—no less a one than the creation of a reserve fund, the nucleus of which will be arrears that have recently been and, it is hoped, will continue to be collected. The next Assembly will deal with the matter (see also Documents A. 3, A. 5 (a), A. 10, A. 11).

ALLOCATION OF EXPENSES.

Complaints that the contributions of some countries are fixed at too high a rate are growing in volume; nevertheless, the invitation of the Assembly of 1934 to States to make suggestions concerning the method or basis of contribution of members of the League was not accepted, no proposals having been communicated to the Secretary-General. Nor was the suggestion, made in 1934, of the British delegation to fix at 105 units the contribution of States having permanent seats on the Council debated this year. M. Hambro thought that a few countries would offer to pay more, regarding it as an honour to be assessed at a higher rate. There was, however, no definite evidence of this spirit. I am of opinion that no question of an administrative nature will give the League more trouble to solve.

The Committee on the Allocation of Expenses hopes to produce next year a basis for settlement. This year it recommended that Ecuador be assessed at one unit, and that the contribution of China be reduced from 46 to 42 units. This recommendation the Assembly accepted on the 28th September (Documents A. 29 and A. 74).

I have noted your instructions in regard to the general question. It may be that in the light of events you will wish to modify them. If so, doubtless you will cause me to be informed well in time for next year's Assembly.

CONTRIBUTIONS IN ARREARS.

This question (especially in regard to its bearing on the question of the allocation of expenses) was dealt with fully in my report on the Fifteenth Assembly. The Fifteenth Assembly appointed a sub-committee to negotiate and conclude arrangements with States for the settlement of their debt in respect of arrears outstanding at the end of 1932. This sub-committee met and produced a report (Document A. 15). It met again during the Assembly session and made a further report (Document A. 73). These two reports give a great deal of information on the position generally, as well as on each State affected, and furnish particulars of the arrangements which the Committee succeeded in making with certain States and of proposals made in connection with the debts of other States.

The various settlements so far effected involve considerable sacrifices on the part of the League. But is it not better to make a sacrifice which holds out a prospect of receiving something than to continue an *impasse*? It may well be that the example set by States with whom an accord has been reached will influence others to come to terms.

The short report of the Fourth Committee, which should be read in conjunction with the documents cited above, is numbered A. 76. It will be observed from the resolution passed by the Assembly on the 28th September that the sub-committee is invited to continue its tasks and to present a report at the next session of the Assembly.

In the middle of October Germany settled her debt to the League, of which she ceased to be a member a few days later.

FIFTH COMMITTEE.

INTERNATIONAL RELIEF UNION.

This Union, which owes its existence largely to the efforts of a distinguished Italian citizen was set up by international convention drawn up as a result of a conference held in Geneva in 1927. The Committee has been functioning since 1933. It was of real assistance to the authorities after the earthquake in Baluchistan, as was testified by the representative of India.

The Fifth Committee had before it the report of the Executive Committee on the activities of the Union during the period 12th July, 1933, to 31st December, 1934 (Documents C. 346, M. 175), and to this I refer you. Consideration of the report did not require much of the Fifth Committee's time. At the end of a short debate, the Committee agreed to a draft resolution, which was passed by the Assembly at its meeting on the 27th September. It read as follows:—

“The Assembly—

“Having taken cognizance of the report on the activity of the Executive Committee of the International Relief Union for the period from July 12th, 1933, to December 31st, 1934;

“Is gratified to note that thirty States have acceded to the Union, and expresses the hope that further accessions will come to reinforce the authority and means of action of that Union;

“Expresses its satisfaction at the first steps taken by the Union in the presence of certain calamities and at the encouraging reception given by several Governments to one of its appeals;

“Furthermore, lays stress on the importance of the measures taken with a view to ensuring the co-ordination of the efforts of other relief organizations and encouraging, especially by the appointment of experts, preparatory studies for the purpose of facilitating future action;

“Pays tribute to the purposes of the Union and the steps taken to ensure its development.”

PENAL AND PENITENTIARY QUESTIONS.

The problem of the unification of criminal law and the co-operation of Governments in the suppression of crime has been before the Assembly for some years. Last year, under resolution of the Assembly, Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners, framed by the International Penal and Penitentiary Commission, were recommended for consideration of Governments, who were at the same time invited to make observations. Document A. 21, which was before the Fifth Committee this year, summarizes the observations made by a number of Governments, and also furnishes information on the work of several organizations dealing with penal matters. In the short debate in the Committee there were references to the existence of methods of dealing with prisoners not in accordance with the best practice of civilized countries, and it was urged that these should be studied by the Penal and Penitentiary Commission.

The report of the Fifth Committee (Document A. 63) came before the Assembly at its meeting on the 27th September, when the resolution with which it concludes was passed. It will be noted that the resolution instructs the Secretary-General—

- (1) To request Governments accepting the standard minimum rules to give such rules publicity.
- (2) To convey to Governments an expression of hope that certain reprehensible practices (which are enumerated), where they exist, will be abandoned.

ASSISTANCE TO INDIGENT FOREIGNERS.

As stated in the Fifth Committee's report to the Assembly, the study of this question has not advanced far since 1934. A draft Multilateral Convention of Assistance to Indigent Foreigners, the text of which was before the Fifth Committee in 1934, was submitted to some seventy Governments, twenty only of which had by September in that year offered observations. However, observations from other Governments have since been received, and these are embodied in Document A.E. 21. Although little more than half the Governments to which the draft Convention was submitted have replied, the Fifth Committee was of opinion that the Committee of Experts which had drawn up the draft should meet again shortly. A recommendation to this effect was accepted by the Assembly at its meeting on the 27th September (see Document A. 55).

TRAFFIC IN OPIUM AND OTHER DANGEROUS DRUGS.

Several documents were before the Committee (C. 530, M. 241; C. 253, M. 125; C. 390, M. 176; C. 462, M. 198); but the most convenient document for the purpose of reference is the Aide Memoire, presented by the Rapporteur (Document A. V/6).

This question of opium and allied drugs is always the subject of a long and interesting debate in Committee. The most important point which emerged from this year's discussion was the anxiety felt by the representatives of a number of Governments at the persistence of the clandestine traffic in dangerous drugs; indeed, more than one speaker suggested that the evil was growing worse. With the measures adopted by Governments under the International Conventions legitimate manufacture can be strictly controlled. The Rapporteur himself stated in his opening speech that as a result of international effort the illicit traffic could not be supplied from legitimate manufacture. On the other hand, clandestine manufacture, from which the illicit traffic draws its source of supply, presents grave problems, and for discovery and suppression of the traffic new methods are required. One of several methods which could be adopted in an effort to effect suppression is a limitation of production of raw material. A conference on this aspect is under consideration.

A warning note was sounded in the Committee as to the necessity for continuous and close co-operation between Governments, even in connection with the legitimate traffic, since any relaxing might entail a transfer of drugs to illegitimate channels.

In connection with the framing of estimates, which Governments parties to the 1931 Convention are required to supply, one speaker made a special appeal that these estimates should be in the hands of the supervisory body by the 1st August each year. He said that a satisfactory application of the principles of the Convention was dependent upon proper examination of the estimates by the supervisory body, and that examination could only be undertaken satisfactorily if the world's estimates were known to that body by the beginning of August.

The Rapporteur, M. François, representative of a country (The Netherlands) which has always taken a prominent part in this important activity of the League, submitted on behalf of the Fifth Committee a most interesting report. To this document (A. 56) I refer you. It came before the Assembly on the 27th September, when the following resolution was passed :—

“ The Assembly takes note of the report submitted by the Fifth Committee and adopts the conclusions of the report.”

CHILD WELFARE.

Questions affecting the welfare of the child come within the sphere of one of the Standing Committees of the League. The body responsible, known as the Advisory Commission for the Protection and Welfare of Children and Young People, is composed of Government delegates and assessors, the latter representing well-known international organizations.

The report on the work of the Eleventh Session of the Commission, held in April and May, 1935 (Document C. 187, M. 104), was presented to the Fifth Committee of the Assembly. The Commission has in recent years dealt with a number of matters having an international bearing, such as the influence of the cinematograph on the young and the effects of the economic depression and of unemployment upon children. Even if it has sometimes concerned itself with questions which are national rather than international, the result of its deliberations has, undoubtedly, been of use in making known the various methods in use. It is gratifying to be able to record that advantage is being taken of the establishment of an Information Centre; and an appeal was made to Governments by the French delegate on the Committee to assist the Information Centre by furnishing it with all available reports and material on child welfare.

The Fifth Committee's report to the Assembly treats of various questions which have been under consideration since the Assembly of 1934, and to this report (Document A. 54) I refer you. It was submitted to the Assembly on the 27th September, when the resolution with which it concludes (dealing with the imprisonment of children, the unemployment of young persons, and other matters) was passed.

TRAFFIC IN WOMEN AND CHILDREN.

Questions coming under the heading of “ Traffic in Women and Children ” are within the competence of yet another Standing Committee of the League—the Traffic in Women and Children Committee. The recent work of this Standing Committee was under review by the Fifth Committee of the Assembly, whose report (Document A. 57) gives in brief all essential information.

On one question, the position of women of Russian origin in the Far East, there was a long discussion. It was felt that it would be useless to ask the Fourth Committee to provide funds, so the efforts of the Fifth Committee were directed to ascertaining the best means of aiding these unfortunate women, many of whom had fallen into the hands of traffickers. There is a considerable amount of local effort to ameliorate the lot of these women, but it was thought that co-ordination was necessary. In the course of the debate the Belgian representative submitted a motion to authorize the Secretary-General of the League to endeavour to secure the services of a competent person (preferably a woman) resident in the Far East who was in a position to visit areas in which this social problem was evident, on the understanding that no expense to the League was involved. This motion was accepted in principle, and it will be observed that the long resolution with which the Fifth Committee's report concludes has a section devoted to the Belgian delegate's suggestion.

Another question which has occupied much time in recent years is that of the suppression of the activities of *souteneurs*. For the present it seems that the problem of the *souteneur* must be dealt with nationally rather than internationally, since those countries which permit licensed houses can hardly enforce legislation specially directed against the *souteneur*. Unfortunately, more than one country which had closed licensed houses has felt compelled to return to the old system. But the whole problem bristles with difficulties, not the least being the rehabilitation of former inmates of licensed houses.

The Fifth Committee's report was accepted by the Assembly at its meeting on the 27th September (see also Document A. 12).

SIXTH COMMITTEE.

MANDATES.

This item was, as usual, inscribed on the agenda at the instance of the Norwegian delegation. The discussion, which was opened by a member of that delegation, did not long occupy the time of the Committee.

The work of the Permanent Mandates Commission during its two preceding sessions came under review, and the more important points dealt with by that Commission were referred to in the Committee's discussion. Increasing co-operation between two adjoining territories, the one belonging to

a mandatory power and the other governed under mandate by that power, was mentioned; but from the remarks of the representatives of the mandatory powers concerned it seems clear that the co-operation is in the administrative field only, and makes for economy. There is no intention of incorporating one territory in the other, and the closer co-operation has no political significance.

Somewhat analogous is the problem raised by a resolution of the Legislative Assembly of South-west Africa for the incorporation of that mandated territory in the Union. The South African representative stated that the matter was being investigated by a Commission and that the questions raised would not be settled without, if necessary, consulting the authorities concerned at Geneva.

There was also reference to the mandated territories in the Levant—the suspension of the constitution of Syria, and Jewish immigration in Palestine. There have, however, been no untoward incidents.

Japan having quitted the League, there was, of course, no representative of that country able to speak on behalf of the Government in reference to the islands under Japanese mandate, but it is well known that the Permanent Mandates Commission is concerned at certain aspects of administration and notably at the large sums of money being spent on harbour-works.

Western Samoa was not mentioned, and as the next session of the Permanent Mandates Commission, at which the last report on the administration of Western Samoa would be examined, would shortly begin I felt that any remarks I had to offer should be reserved for a later date.

The Sixth Committee's Report is Document A. 50, and on the 24th September the Assembly passed the following short resolution:—

“ The Assembly—

“ Having surveyed the activity of the mandatory powers, the Permanent Mandates Commission, and the Council in regard to the execution of the provisions of Article 22 of the Covenant :

“ Expresses its appreciation of the work accomplished by the mandatory powers and the organs of the League responsible for the supervision of the mandates, and renews the expression of confidence in them voted by previous sessions of the Assembly.

“ It trusts that their efforts, pursued in a broad co-operative spirit, will bring about that progress which is the essential object of the institution of the mandate.”

You will observe from the report that the suggestion has been made that the Permanent Mandates Commission should be provided with funds to enable visits to be made to mandated territories. With the present need for economy the suggestion is not likely to be pressed for the time being.

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN BOLIVIA AND PARAGUAY.

The fratricidal war which raged for so long in the Chaco was happily brought to an end on the 12th June last. Negotiations for peace between the two countries concerned—Bolivia and Paraguay—were in progress when the Assembly met. For information on the action of the League in connection with the dispute I refer you to Document A. 6. I merely remark in passing that this dispute was essentially one which could have been settled under one or other of the procedures envisaged in the Covenant, given the will. Failure of the League to prevent war, or for some years to bring about a suspension of hostilities between two countries whose inhabitants speak the same language and enjoy a common culture, has given the cynics plenty of scope to scoff.

The Sixth Committee's report, which came before the Assembly on the 24th September, is Document A. 46.

SLAVERY.

“ Slavery ” was inscribed on the agenda at the instance of the delegation of the United Kingdom. There are references to the matter in Document A. 6. Special interest attached to the debate this year because addiction to slavery was one of the charges brought by one member of the League against another.

In opening the debate the representative of Great Britain suggested that the Advisory Committee of Experts on Slavery should consider to what extent it was able to perform its duties within the present limit of its powers, and he indicated that the rules of procedure would have to be amended sooner or later. He also suggested that the Committee should hold an extraordinary session next year. The problem of slavery is a difficult one because of manners and customs, centuries old, which cannot be abolished by a stroke of the pen. Complete abolition must be a gradual process, consequent upon publicity and enlightenment. So far as the powers possessing colonies are concerned, their interest in the abolition of the scourge is genuine and deep-seated, but, doubtless, there are administrative difficulties to be overcome by degrees.

The Sixth Committee's report is Document A. 58, and concludes with the following resolution passed by the Assembly on the 27th September:—

“ The Assembly—

“ Having noted the activities of the Council and of the Advisory Committee of Experts on Slavery :

“ Expresses the hope that the Governments concerned will act on the suggestions and recommendations sent to them by the Council and will communicate the necessary information in order to enable the Committee to perform its task, and

“ Instructs the Secretary-General to convey the present resolution to the States not members of the League which are parties to the 1926 Slavery Convention.” (See also Document C. 159.)

REFUGEES : NANSEN INTERNATIONAL OFFICE.

The report of the governing body of the Nansen International Office for Refugees for the year ended 30th June last is Document A. 22, and this was referred to the Sixth Committee. Brief information is to be found also in Documents A. 6 and A. 6 (a). Although it is some sixteen years since the conclusion of peace, various problems connected with refugees still remain, and attempts are being made to widen the scope of the League's activities. This great work for refugees, in the inauguration of which the Norwegian explorer, Nansen, took a prominent part, has been one of the bright features of the League's humanitarian activities; but I doubt whether those members of the early Assemblies who generously voted money imagined that the item "refugees" would find a place on an agenda so far in the future as 1935. An excellent summary of what has been done in the preceding year is given in the report of the Sixth Committee to the Assembly (Document A. 45). This report concludes with the resolution which the Assembly passed on the 24th September.

The Assembly was notified at its meeting on the 27th September that the General Committee proposed the adjournment of the appointment of a successor to M. G. Werner, President of the Governing Body of the Nansen International Office for Refugees, until an inquiry (which is dealt with in the next paragraph) had been held.

INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE TO REFUGEES.

The two preceding paragraphs touch those aspects of the refugee problem which the Nansen International Office was created to deal with. This Office is in the process of being wound up under a scheme approved by the Assembly a few years ago. During the last two or three years the refugee problem has been intensified by certain political events, and aspects have been created which are not within the competence of the Nansen Office.

The question of international assistance to refugees was raised this year by the Norwegian delegation and referred to the Sixth Committee. The Committee came to the conclusion that the refugee problem required further examination, and it decided to recommend the Assembly to request the Council to appoint a small committee of competent persons to report. The inquiry, however, for political and financial reasons, is to be limited to the categories of refugees already under the Nansen Office and the High Commissariat in London. The Assembly agreed to the proposal on the 28th September under a resolution which will enable the Council to take action, even before the next Assembly, should the report be available (see Document A. 64).

SETTLEMENT OF ASSYRIANS OF IRAQ.

This item appeared for the first time on the agenda of the Assembly. It had, however, occupied the attention of the Council for some years, and for this reason it was argued that the League had a moral responsibility for the settlement of a Christian community which has been described as "an alien element in Iraq."

Investigations into a possible place of settlement had extended over a lengthy period, and finally a part of Syria, over which country France exercises a mandate, was selected. Negotiations with the various authorities had not been without considerable difficulty. Moreover, the country chosen will have to be reclaimed and partly irrigated.

The British Government proposed to meet five-twelfths of the cost of settlement provided—

- (1) Its contribution did not exceed £250,000; and
- (2) That the Government of Iraq contributed a like amount.

Apart from any contributions from private sources, it was for the League to make provision for the balance of the money required.

A statement on the matter made to the Sixth Committee has been issued in documentary form. It is numbered A. VI/5/1935. The report of the Committee of the Council set up to consider the actual questions arising out of the proposed settlement is Document C. 352, M. 179.

After a short debate the Sixth Committee referred the matter to the Fourth Committee under a resolution which expressed the opinion that the financial participation of the League was worthy of the most sympathetic consideration of the Assembly.

In due course the question of the provision of funds came before the Fourth Committee, and was by that Committee referred to the Supervisory Committee. To the recommendation of the Supervisory Committee I have alluded in my remarks on the work of the Fourth Committee. It suffices to mention here that the recommendation was to the effect that 400,000 francs should be contributed by the League in 1936, and that the total contribution of the League should be limited to 1,300,000 francs spread over four years.

The report of the Sixth Committee is Document A. 72, and on the 28th September the Assembly agreed to accept the responsibilities—financial and otherwise—proposed by its Committee.

INTELLECTUAL CO-OPERATION.

The Sixth Committee devoted a considerable part of its time to the discussion of certain aspects of the work conducted by the Intellectual Co-operation Organization. The distinguished French statesman M. Edouard Herriot acted as Rapporteur, to whose report I invite your attention, especially the introduction (Document A. 59). Those who attach great importance to the moral influence which they think the League is able to exercise were, I am sure, glad to read M. Herriot's remarks.

The work of the Intellectual Co-operation Organization is very varied. For an account of it in some detail I refer you to the various publications of the Organization, although the more important activities are referred to in the Rapporteur's report. These include the Conference of Directors of Higher Education held in Paris in May, 1935, the preliminary work in connection with the proposed publication of a collection of ethnographical and historical works on the origins of American civilization, the methods of instructing the young in the work of the League of Nations, and the revision of school text-books.

The Organization had proposed a scheme of tours to be undertaken by high officials of public Education Departments and heads of educational institutions, and the Sixth Committee asked the Fourth Committee to provide 10,000 francs for the purpose in the budget of 1936. The Fourth Committee, however, on the advice of the Supervisory Commission, declined to vote the money on the ground of continued need for economy, but suggested that provision for the expenses of the tours should be left to private initiative. On the other hand, the Fourth Committee consented to provide 6,000 francs of the 10,000 francs asked for by the Sixth Committee to meet the expenses of convoking a Committee of scientific experts with a view to the establishment of closer relations between the Intellectual Co-operation Organization and the International Council of Scientific Unions.

The Roumanian delegate made the interesting suggestion that a collection of translations be published in one or more world-wide languages of representative and classical works from the literature of the various European regional languages. This suggestion has been referred to the Organization under resolution of the Assembly.

The Assembly also decided to refer to the Assembly of 1936 the draft International Convention for the use of Broadcasting in the causes of peace. It is proposed that the problem be examined by an *ad hoc* conference constituted during the Assembly by delegates provided with the necessary powers.

The Intellectual Co-operation Organization is also interested in the Convention for the Protection of Literature and Artistic Property, which is due for revision next year, when a Conference will meet in Brussels.

I cannot conclude without remarking that the feeling of scepticism which was apparent in the early life of the Organization has given way to one of respect for much that it has accomplished. Of course, a good deal of the work appeals mainly to specialists, but the Organization has succeeded in making its efforts felt also in spheres which have a wider appeal. The tribute paid to it by the eminent Rapporteur of the Sixth Committee is well deserved.

The Sixth Committee's report came before the Assembly on the 28th September, and the resolution with which it concludes was then passed.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

C. J. PARR,

High Commissioner for New Zealand.

The Honourable the Prime Minister, Wellington, New Zealand.

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