

PROTOCOL ON THE EXECUTION OF FOREIGN ARBITRAL AWARDS.

The protocol on arbitration clauses, of 1923, to which New Zealand is a party, does not contain any provision for the enforcement of awards made in foreign countries. A body of experts was appointed to study how best this omission could be rectified, and its report (Document A. 11) was before the Second Committee.

The Committee of Experts kept in view three main points—the recognition of the validity of the submission to arbitration in private international relations, the enforcement of the arbitral award in the State where it was made, and the method of ensuring the international effect of such an award. The draft protocol prepared by the Committee of Experts, together with the observations of various Governments therein, was considered by a special committee consisting of jurists appointed by the Second Committee, with directions to produce a draft protocol which would, as far as possible, take account of the various views expressed. An account of the work of the special committee, together with the draft protocol which it produced, will be found in Document A. 106.

In accordance with the resolution (see the end of the Second Committee's report) passed by the Assembly on the 26th September, a Convention on the Execution of Foreign Arbitral Awards has been open for signature. Doubtless the Government will give careful consideration to the provisions of this instrument with a view to deciding whether it should be signed and ratified on behalf of the Dominion of New Zealand.

COMMUNICATIONS AND TRANSIT.

One of the organs of the League established in virtue of the Covenant is the Advisory and Technical Committee on Communications and Transit. An account of the recent work of this committee will be found in Document A. 39, whilst the report of the Third General Conference, held in Geneva from the 23rd August to the 2nd September last is Document A. 52.

New Zealand, having no land frontiers, is fortunate in not having to solve many of the problems with which most European countries are faced, and consequently much of the work of the organization is only of general and not of peculiar interest to the Dominion. There are, however, questions of international interest which come within the organization's sphere, and these merit careful consideration—such, for instance, as that concerning unification of buoyage and lighting of coasts, a report on which has been transmitted to Governments with a view to a conference.

It will be noted that, for the first time, the United States took part in the recently held General Conference, so that there is added yet another to the list of the organs of the League of which she wishes to be a member. A rule which would permit of the United States, or other countries not members of the League, taking an active part in the work of the Advisory and Technical Committee, without imperilling the statutory position of the committee in so far as it relates to States members of the League, was approved by the Assembly.

The Committee's report to the Assembly is Document A. 78 (1), and the Assembly passed the resolution with which it concludes on the 26th September.

THIRD COMMITTEE.

It is no exaggeration, I think, to say that the Third Committee had an unusual amount of important work entrusted to it this session by the General Assembly. The grave issues raised by the Polish and by the Dutch proposals (to which I have already adverted) were turned over to the Third Committee for consideration and report. In addition to these important problems, involving a study of the principles underlying the arbitration, security, and disarmament sections of the Covenant, further proposals were directly submitted to the Committee by Dr. Nansen on behalf of the Norwegian delegation regarding a draft additional convention for obligatory arbitration; and subsequently the committee had further to consider proposals from the French and German delegations dealing with the matters involved in the Netherlands delegation's resolutions. If you will be so good as to turn to the report and draft resolutions submitted on these various matters by the Third Committee to the Assembly (Paper A 108, 1927, IX) and adopted without amendment by the Assembly, you will obtain an accurate impression of the conclusions upon these all-important topics reached not only by the committee, but by the Assembly itself. So far as explanation by me is concerned, I may indicate that, as the Third Committee was fully seized of the grave importance of its task, very lengthy and exhaustive discussions took place. Certain features were emphasized. In the first place, it was quite clear that most of the Powers, more especially the smaller European Powers, were not satisfied with the progress that has been made by the Preparatory Commission for Disarmament. One could sense in this discussion the fear and suspicion of many of these smaller Powers with regard to their neighbours and their neighbours' intentions. Equally evident was a strong, if not overwhelming, desire on the part of certain Powers whose boundaries were created or altered by the Treaty of Versailles to secure themselves against any future possible aggression of their neighbours. It was felt not only by these Powers, but by all the Powers represented on the Third Committee, that as the attempt to revive the Geneva Protocol had failed in this year's Assembly, some other method must be evolved for giving that feeling of security to the Powers which alone would promise practical success to any disarmament scheme. There were many and varied suggestions. More than once members of the committee drew attention to the importance, from the point of view of security, of making agreements on lines which had been advocated in the United States—viz., the agreements for the "outlawry of war." I am bound to say further that I imagine the frank and straightforward declarations of Sir Austen Chamberlain in the Assembly (making it quite clear to the smaller Powers of Europe agitating the matter that the British Empire was not prepared to give guarantees for the permanence of the Eastern frontiers) had the important effect of turning the attention of the Powers most concerned