

economic interest of Persia, to adopt a programme for the gradual diminution of the cultivation of the opium-poppy.

The Commission's report was in due course submitted to the Persian Government, whose comments will be found in Document A. 8. These comments were in turn dealt with by the Chairman of the Commission (Document A. 16).

The Persian Government, while not agreeing with certain conclusions of the Commission, accepted the report as a whole, and is prepared to give a three-years trial to a plan involving, amongst other measures, a reduction of 10 per cent. per annum of the area under poppy-cultivation. At the end of this period the Persian Government will reconsider the position in the light of the economic conditions created by the reduction and of the action taken by other countries to bring production within reasonable limits.

If, as was stated in committee, opium represents 20 per cent. of the exports of Persia, exclusive of oil, and nearly 10 per cent. of the Government revenue, the Persian Government must be congratulated on having at length decided to take suitable steps, especially as that country has already an adverse trade balance. The Persian Government has, however, put in a plea for tariff autonomy.

The Fifth Committee's report to the Assembly is Document A. 66, and the resolution with which it concludes was passed by the Assembly at its meeting on the 20th September.

ADVISORY COMMISSION FOR THE PROTECTION AND WELFARE OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE; TRAFFIC IN WOMEN AND CHILDREN.

It will not be out of place perhaps, to say a few words on the genesis of this Commission. Article XXIII, Section (c), of the Covenant entrusts the League "with the general supervision over the execution of agreements with regard to the traffic in women and children." In 1921, during the Second Assembly, an International Convention embodying the recommendations made by an International Conference, which had met earlier in that year, was opened for signature. As you know, New Zealand is a party to this convention. Later, an Advisory Committee was set up as an organ of the League, and it was the report (Document A. 25) of this committee, which is a section of the Advisory Commission for the Protection and Welfare of Children and Young People, that was before the Fifth Committee of the Assembly. The Fifth Committee also had before it Part I of the report of the special body of experts on traffic in women and children (Document C. 52, M. 52). This is a report of a lengthy and thorough investigation into the traffic, an investigation carried out with the aid of American money by a body set up by the Council of the League in 1923. To many people, and, I imagine, to most in New Zealand, it must be a matter of surprise to learn how widespread and lucrative is this abominable traffic, although its extent and ramifications have long been known to social reformers.

Part II of the body of experts' report has not yet been published. Governments have been asked to make comments on it, and these will be considered by the experts in November. Later, Part II will be published, with such modifications as the experts consider desirable in the light of the comments received.

In its report to the Council the Committee on Traffic in Women and Children made a number of recommendations, of which the more important were that Governments should take severe measures against foreign procurers, and that Governments should be invited to supervise conditions under which girls under eighteen are allowed to go abroad with contracts of employment. A recommendation that the Secretariat and the Labour Office should look into the possible connection between prostitution and the low wages paid to women in certain forms of employment was rejected by the Council on the ground that it was an economic question and seemed to lie outside the scope of the committee's work.

The Rapporteur's report to the Assembly (Document A. 73) came before the Assembly on the 20th September, when the following resolution was passed:—

"The Assembly takes note of the report of the Traffic in Women and Children Committee, thanks the committee for the good work it has accomplished, and expresses the hope that this work will be continued along the same lines. The Assembly learns with the greatest interest that the Traffic in Women and Children Committee is examining carefully, in connection with Part I of the experts' report, the problem of the relationship which exists between the licensed house and the traffic in women: it requests the Traffic in Women and Children Committee to examine as soon as possible the question of the desirability of recommending to all Governments the abolition of the system of the licensed house. The Assembly further desires to express its warmest approval of the able and courageous work of the special body of experts, and earnestly recommends Part I of the report, and especially its conclusions to the study of the Governments of all States members and non-members of the League of Nations."

CHILD WELFARE.

The Report of the Third Session of the Child Welfare Committee, which is a section of the Advisory Commission for the Protection and Welfare of Children and Young People, is Document A. 24. The work of the Welfare Committee has always provoked comments to the effect that the committee has extended its investigations from an international sphere and now deals with questions which are purely national. During its third session the committee decided to begin an examination of the measures taken in various countries for the protection of illegitimate children, but the Council thought this was a matter which affected national administration so closely that each Government should be left to decide whether it should or should not furnish the information required of it by the committee.