

The Budget for 1928 amounts to 25,333,817 francs.

When the Fourth Committee's report was before the Assembly the Swedish delegation introduced a motion to increase item 29 by 40,000 francs—that is, in effect, to restore 40,000 of the 75,000 francs which had been voted down by the Fourth Committee (see paragraph 4 of this section of the report). The motion came as a surprise to many delegations, and the President suggested that the Assembly should reserve this item and vote the remainder of the Budget. This was done. The motion was then put to the vote, the result being twenty for and seventeen against. But unanimity was required. The suggestion by the President that the matter should be referred back to the Fourth Committee was accepted. The committee met, but here unanimity was required, and, although some of the delegates had changed their minds and were then in favour of the credit, unanimity was unlikely. Ultimately the Fourth Committee, and later the Assembly, accepted a suggestion by the Secretary-General that no further credit should be voted, but that, should money be required, the Council should avail itself of the right to transfer money from one item to another in one chapter. Thus ended a troublesome incident. It is not quite clear what the supporters of the Swedish motion wanted—credit for possible meetings of the Expert Committee for consultative purposes (for its work on the subjects of the proposed conference was finished), or credit for meetings at which other points would be considered. The latter is presumed. The Central and South American delegations seemed to be solid for the Swedish motion, and made a bold bid for what was called a matter of paramount importance to the whole American Continent—the codification of international law.

I think it necessary to refer briefly to a matter which persists in coming up during the deliberations of one or other of the committees of successive Assemblies: the question of extending to the unemployed generally the help which is now rendered by the International Labour Office to certain categories of unemployed refugees. A reference to previous reports will show that both the Sixth and Seventh Assemblies were not in favour of this extension, and it became necessary in the Fourth Committee this year to request the Rapporteur to make it quite clear that suggestions in this direction had already been rejected.

Early in the session, Document A. 54 was circulated, regarding a gift of a sum up to 2,000,000 dollars for the construction and endowment of a library of the League, a gift which the Council had accepted. In due course it became known that the generous donor was Mr. Rockefeller, junior. Inquiries are to be set afoot with a view to ascertaining how best the money can be expended for the purpose for which it is offered.

The question of the adjustment of salaries of the staff is still unsettled, owing to the basis on which the variable portion is computed having proved to be unsatisfactory. Further consideration is to be given to the matter, and it is hoped that a report with definite recommendations will come before the Assembly in 1928. In the meantime no change is to be made (see Document A. 116).

FIFTH COMMITTEE.

OPIMUM.

The convention of 1925 is not yet in force, in spite of earnest appeals for ratification made by the Seventh Assembly. Much of the report on the work of the Advisory Committee on Traffic in Opium and other Dangerous Drugs (Document A. 23) is unpleasant reading. The difficulties of preventing illicit traffic are great. Turkey is not a party even to the Hague Convention, and it is inferred that some States are not keeping such obligations as they have entered into. So disquieting is the position that the Council of the League has convened an extraordinary session of the Advisory Committee for the end of September. A brief summary of the position will be found in the Fifth Committee's report to the Assembly (Document A. 64). When this was before the Assembly the chief delegate of India made a moving appeal for co-operation in fighting the traffic, which he said brought physical, mental, and moral degradation in its train. He considered that the 1925 convention was a weapon which had been put into the hands of nations to use, and he appealed for ratifications to bring it into force. The Assembly passed the following resolution on the 20th September: "The Assembly notes with approval the report of the Advisory Committee on Traffic in Opium and the resolutions contained therein, and earnestly recommends them to the attention of States members of the League."

PRODUCTION OF OPIUM IN PERSIA.

The question of the production of opium in Persia has occupied the Fifth Committee for some years. In 1925 the Sixth Assembly voted a sum of 100,000 francs towards the expense of sending a committee of inquiry to Persia. The position in relation to Persia as an opium-producing country had become somewhat grave because, apparently, little or no precautions were being taken to prevent illicit trading. It was felt that the only satisfactory solution would be so to limit the cultivation of the poppy that Persia's production of opium could be brought down to within legitimate limits. It will be seen that such a policy, involving a substitution of crops, opened up a large economic question which required careful thought. Consequently, Persia welcomed the inquiry which had been proposed, especially if those making it formulated a scheme for progressive substitution. Two years have passed. A Commission of three members was appointed by the Council in December, 1925. It has made its inquiry, and reported in Document A. 7, which was before the Fifth Committee of the Assembly. The Commission was in Persia from March to June, 1926, and an account of its itinerary and methods of work prefaces the report proper. In the words of the Rapporteur, the Commission of Inquiry concluded that, while difficult of accomplishment, it is not only possible and practically feasible, but to the