

1928.

NEW ZEALAND.

THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

REPORT OF THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE DOMINION OF NEW ZEALAND ON THE EIGHTH
ASSEMBLY OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS, HELD AT GENEVA IN THE YEAR 1927.

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

EIGHTH ASSEMBLY OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

SIR,—
New Zealand Government Offices,
415, Strand, London W.C. 2, 30th September, 1927.
I have the honour to advise you that the Eighth Assembly of the League of Nations opened at Geneva on Monday, 5th September.

OPENING OF PROCEEDINGS AND ELECTION OF PRESIDENT.

The proceedings began with a speech by M. Villegas, the Acting-President of the Council of the League, who occupied the chair pending the election of the President. The Assembly's choice for this office fell upon M. Alberto Guani, principal delegate for Uruguay, who received twenty-four votes.

ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE CONDUCT OF BUSINESS.

The agenda of the session is Document A. 2 (1), the items of which, with one exception, were divided into groups and referred for discussion and report to the following six committees composed of delegates or their substitutes :—

- Committee No. 1 : Legal and constitutional questions.
- Committee No. 2 : Technical organizations of the League.
- Committee No. 3 : Reduction of armaments.
- Committee No. 4 : Budget and financial questions.
- Committee No. 5 : Social and general questions.
- Committee No. 6 : Political questions.

Item No. 14, "To consider what questions are and what are not within the sphere of action of the League," was withdrawn from the agenda, as the British Government, which had introduced the motion last year, had since expressed a wish for its further adjournment.

REPRESENTATION OF NEW ZEALAND.

The programme of work of the Assembly is based on the assumption that each country is represented by three delegates; and bare justice can be done only if this number is available, as the committees usually meet in groups of three alternately. As sole delegate for New Zealand I nominated myself to serve on all committees, and placed my Private Secretary, Mr. Knowles, as a substitute on Committees Nos. 2, 4, and 5, at the same time deciding that when, as would frequently happen, two committees of which either the one or the other was a member were called together at the same time, the meeting should be attended at which the more important subject was to be discussed.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS OF THE ASSEMBLY.

On the afternoon of the 5th September there was a short adjournment to enable the committees to elect their Chairmen. The choice was—As Chairman of Committee No. 1, M. Adatei (Japan); as Chairman of Committee No. 2, M. Dandurand (Canada); as Chairman of Committee No. 3, M. Benes (Czecho-Slovakia); as Chairman of Committee No. 4, M. van Eysinga (Netherlands); as Chairman of Committee No. 5, M. Hambro (Norway); as Chairman of Committee No. 6 M. Bech (Luxemburg).

In accordance with the Rules of Procedure, the Assembly elected as its six Vice-Presidents—M. Scialoja (Italy), who received forty-three votes; M. Briand (France), who received forty-one votes; Sir Austen Chamberlain (Great Britain and Northern Ireland), who received forty-one votes; Dr. Stresemann (Germany), who received forty-one votes; Mr. Nemours (Haiti), who received twenty-eight votes; Count Mensdorff (Austria), who received thirty-two votes. For the sixth appointment it was necessary to proceed to a second ballot.

The President of the Assembly, the Vice-Presidents, and the Chairmen of Committees form the General Committee of the Assembly, which on this occasion made an addition to the General Committee by appointing as an honorary member M. Motta, the chief delegate of Switzerland, who has represented his country so often, and is this year again President of the Swiss Confederation.

DEBATE ON THE REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL.

The debate on the report on the work of the Council, on the work of the Secretariat, and on the measures taken to execute the decisions of the Assembly (Documents A. 13, A. 13 (a), and A. 13 (b)), began on the 6th September and continued to the 12th. As is usual in this debate, advantage was taken to introduce motions. There was one by the Italian delegate suggesting the creation at Rome of an International Institute of Educational Cinematography, to be maintained at the expense of the Italian Government (Document A. 51); and another by the delegate of the Netherlands, designed to refer to the appropriate committees of the Assembly the study of the fundamental principles of the Geneva Protocol of 1924, and the conclusions of the Report of the Preparatory Commission for the Disarmament Conference (Document A. 50); and yet another by the delegate of Paraguay, asking for the preparation of a general and comprehensive plan of codification of international law (Document A. 59).

On the 9th September the Portuguese delegation introduced a motion to refer to the Sixth Committee all documents issued in connection with mandates since the seventh Assembly (Document A. 55).

The debate on the report gives an opportunity for a general discussion on the principles and aims of the League, and on the work accomplished, and for making suggestions for the future. This year's debate can be followed in the *Journal*, and there is no need to deal with it here in its more general aspects. The Swedish, and especially the Norwegian, delegates were very critical of the methods of the Council, and deplored the tendency shown by certain members of that body to discuss amongst themselves questions, and even to arrive at decisions, without the precincts of the Council Chamber; the Japanese delegate referred to the desire of his country to put an end to the ruinous race in armaments, and to reduce them to the minimum required for national security and the fulfilment of international obligations; the Hungarian delegate asked for a declaration by the Council of its interpretation of the obligations imposed upon it by the Treaties of Peace in the protection of minorities; and there were many happy references to the recent International Economic Conference, which is generally considered to have been a most successful gathering, and to have given a clear indication of the steps which must be taken if many of the ills from which the world is suffering in the economic sphere are to be cured.

But it was the speech of the Netherlands delegate, and the motion he introduced regarding the Geneva Protocol, which was the centre of interest. The motion reads as follows:—

“The Assembly, convinced that, without reopening the discussions on the Geneva Protocol of 1924, it is desirable to consider whether the time has not come to resume the study of the principles on which that protocol was based, and considering it of the highest importance that the Assembly should give an impulse to the work of the Preparatory Commission for the Disarmament Conference, decides to refer the study of the fundamental principles of the Geneva Protocol, and the conclusions of the report of the Preparatory Commission, to the appropriate committees.”

A bomb has certainly been dropped in the Assembly, for I do not think there were many people not members of the Dutch delegation who had any notion that the protocol would be resurrected at this stage, especially in view of the impending Conference on Disarmament. It is true the Dutch delegate did not ask that the study of the protocol in all its details should be resumed, but that consideration should be given to the general principles on which it was based, with the object of making an effort to close the supposed gaps in Article 15 of the Covenant, by excluding the idea of a legitimate war, and by characterizing aggressive war as an international crime; and, further, to embody in any plan which was evolved the principle that compulsory international jurisdiction was the necessary complement of these ideas.

It was two days later before any speech of moment concerning the protocol was made in the Assembly. Indeed, it was only when M. Politis, one of the Greek delegates, mounted the rostrum that the Assembly seemed to get to real grips with the subject. What would he, one of the authors of the protocol, say of the child of his invention? What would be his opinion in the present international atmosphere of an instrument which insists on arbitration in all disputes not settled by conciliatory methods (that is, by the Council of the League or by judicial procedure), and on sanctions to be applied to the offending party should methods of conciliation or arbitration fail and war be resorted to—an instrument which even gives power to refer to the Council under Article 11 of the Covenant, a matter which has been declared to be domestic by the Court, or by the Council itself—an instrument which makes it obligatory on the parties subscribing their signatures to recognize as compulsory, *ipso facto*, and without special agreement, the jurisdiction of the Permanent Court of International Justice in the cases covered by paragraph 2 of Article 36 of the Statute of the Court, although certainly giving the right to make reservations compatible with that clause of the statute? It became clear that M. Politis has not lost faith in his child: he still firmly believed in the principles

of the protocol, and thought that the time would come when it would become a part of international law. He, however, deprecated any suggestion to consider it in fragments, or to remove from it its most practical provision—*i.e.*, the sanctions which it embodies. It was evident that whilst his speech was in the main approved, his advice “to wait” was far from being acceptable to many of the smaller States.

Someone had to make an effort to bring together conflicting views, and it was apparently with this intention that the Polish delegate, on the 9th September, brought forward the following motion :—

“The Assembly—recognizing the solidarity which unites the community of nations; being inspired by a firm desire for the maintenance of general peace; being convinced that a war of aggression can never serve as a means of settling international disputes, and is in consequence an international crime; considering that a solemn renunciation of all wars of aggression would tend to create an atmosphere of general confidence calculated to facilitate the progress of the work undertaken with a view to disarmament—declares (1) that all wars of aggression are, and shall always be, prohibited; (2) that every pacific means must be employed to settle disputes, of every description, which may arise between States. The Assembly declares that the States members of the League are under an obligation to conform to these principles.”

What is a war of aggression? According to what principles is the aggressor to be determined? It is true that Article 10 of the protocol has a definition of an aggressor; but one has only to cast one's memory back to July, 1914, when great Powers in Europe were accusing one another of acts of aggression, of warlike acts, or to glance through the post-war flood of official publications, of books and pamphlets (which has not yet ceased), all intent on proving the aggressor of 1914, to realize the difficulties which must beset any body of men called together to determine such a question.

In spite of much that M. Briand said in the course of his fine oration on the 10th September, I cannot help coming to the conclusion that the Italian delegate, M. Scialoja, who had spoken the day before, was in the main on right lines. He wanted to know the reason for the obtrusion on the present Assembly of the protocol of 1924. Was it the failure of the Naval Conference? If so, he would point out that the League had not been present at that Conference; one of the parties thereto was not a member of the League, and the two other parties were not present as members. But, apart from that, was there anything to make people begin to despair of the peace of the world? Was it necessary every year to make a declaration, the principles of which were already embodied in the Covenant, with the possible consequence of a conflict of views between delegates to the Assembly and the States which they represented? He made a very happy reference to the time which had been required for the triumph of Christianity, and he inquired whether the main objects of the League were to be obtained in a few years. To my mind this is the essence of the matter. The signatures to the Peace Treaty were hardly dry before some nations expressed a desire to amend those articles of the Covenant designed to prevent war, with a view to making them not only more precise, but of strengthening several clauses of them. Will the Covenant work? Well, it has to be tried. The League must have time to grow and to acquire experience to enable it to determine whether the Covenant requires strengthening in this or that direction in order to make it effective as the greatest instrument for world peace which has ever been evolved from the brain of man.

Dr. Stresemann, the Foreign Secretary of Germany, in the course of a speech which he delivered in the Assembly on the 9th September, stated that he would, during the session, put his signature to the optional clause of the Permanent Court of International Justice at the Hague, for the policy of Germany was in every way in conformity with it, as was proved by the fact that it had concluded a whole series of arbitration treaties with a number of States. This was certainly a momentous declaration, which had a marked effect on the Assembly.

On the 23rd September the President of the Assembly announced that signature had been given in the following terms :—

“On behalf of the German Government, I recognize as compulsory *ipso facto* and without special agreement, in relation to any other member or State accepting the same obligation, the jurisdiction of the Court in conformity with Article 36, paragraph 2, of the Statute of the Court for a period of five years, in any disputes arising after the ratification of the present declaration with regard to situations or facts subsequent to this ratification, except in cases where the parties have agreed or shall agree to have recourse to another method of pacific settlement.”

On the other hand, Sir George Pearce, the chief delegate for Australia, spoke with some vigour against compulsory arbitration in the international sphere, claiming that compulsory arbitration in industrial disputes in Australia had not been an unqualified success, and that people were more and more turning to methods of conciliation.

But the British point of view had to be put with rather more definiteness, and this task Sir Austen Chamberlain took upon himself, in a speech which he made to the Assembly on the 10th September. If I dwell on this speech my excuse must be the seriousness of the occasion, and the necessity for saying in unequivocal terms that which had to be said if the position of the British Empire within the League was to be made clear. I recommend a close study of the speech, which was listened to with marked attention by the Assembly, on whom it had considerable effect. After replying in some detail to the criticism which had been levelled at the Council earlier in the debate, Sir Austen gave a welcome to the Polish motion referred to above, for it invited the Assembly solemnly to resolve “to pursue the ways of peace and to eschew the path of war.”

Coming to the questions of security and disarmament, which are interdependent, he touched first on the latter, and, after referring to the failure of the Conference on Naval Disarmament, which he

apparently attributed to want of preparation, he asked whether any Government with the responsibilities which lay upon the shoulders of Great Britain would have done so much—that is, reduce both Army and Navy to a level below pre-war strength. As to security, he reminded the Assembly of the obligations which Great Britain had undertaken when the Locarno treaties to protect certain western frontiers were negotiated. Yet she was asked to do more. He asked whether some members of the Assembly could not do as much before pressing Great Britain to go further. Was there not “some other troubled frontier which those so anxious for this international action could take under their protection, to which they could give their guarantee in the same manner as Great Britain regarding the western frontiers of Europe, and by so doing bring together two other nations at present regarding each other with mutual suspicion and fear?” To ask Great Britain to take upon herself for every frontier the obligation she had undertaken under the treaties of Locarno was to ask the impossible; indeed, it was to ask nothing less than the disruption of the British Empire. He added that he yielded to no one in his devotion to the League of Nations, but not even for the League of Nations would he destroy that smaller but older league of which Great Britain was the birthplace and of which it remained the centre. In saying this he discharged a task which, however unpleasant the duty, had to be discharged. But one may legitimately wonder what was passing in the minds of delegates. We always come back to the Covenant, and Article 10 remains unamended.

As to the protocol, Sir Austen said he did not see how its principles could be studied without reopening the discussion of 1924. By all means let the Assembly cherish hope for the revival of the protocol, but what useful purpose could that body serve if it reopened the protocol debates of three years ago before there had been any indication of a change of mind? This argument doubtless struck the Dutch delegation, since towards the end of that meeting it put forward an amendment to its former motion. The motion as amended reads,—

“The Assembly, convinced that, without reopening the discussions on the Geneva Protocol of 1924, it is desirable to consider whether the time has not come to resume the study of the principles of disarmament, security, and arbitration, which are expressed in the Covenant, considering it of the highest importance that the Assembly should give an impulse to the work of the Preparatory Commission for the Disarmament Conference, decides to refer to the Third Committee the study of the above-mentioned principles and the chapter of the Report and Supplementary Report on the Work of the Council and of the Secretariat relating to Disarmament”;

and this, together with the Polish motion, was in due course, referred to the Third Committee.

ELECTION OF NON-PERMANENT MEMBERS TO THE COUNCIL.

Early in the session Belgium made application to be considered eligible for re-election to the Council under the rules passed by the Seventh Assembly. A vote to determine the application was taken by the Assembly at its meeting on the 15th September. Belgium obtained twenty-nine votes, but failed by three votes to obtain the two-thirds majority required; consequently, under the rules, no votes could be cast for the re-election of Belgium on this occasion.

The Assembly then proceeded to elect members to fill three seats on the Council quitted by Belgium, Czecho-Slovakia, and Salvador, and its choice fell on Cuba, Finland, and Canada, for which countries forty, thirty-three, and twenty-six votes were recorded respectively. The new entrants have a three-years mandate. For the first time in the history of the League, a Council seat has been awarded to a British Dominion.

The Assembly closed on Tuesday, 27th September, having been in session for twenty-two days. There is little doubt that the failure of the Conference on the Limitation of Naval Armaments had had repercussions, especially in some of the smaller States, and accounted for some of the uncertainty which was felt at the beginning of the session. I think it is true to say, however, that after Sir Austen Chamberlain's speech the comparative gloom of the earlier days was dissipated, and consequently the Eighth Assembly may be called a successful one. Furthermore, towards the end there was certainly a tendency on the part of many delegates to view much more sympathetically the attitude of the British Empire towards the problem of security; indeed, Dr. Nansen, when speaking on disarmament towards the close of the session, was very appreciative of the British point of view, although he thought that the Empire had perhaps misunderstood the position of the other States relative to the protocol.

FIRST COMMITTEE.

ACCESSIONS TO INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS.

A reference to last year's report will show that the Seventh Assembly passed a resolution inviting the Council to call for a report every six months on the progress of ratifications of conventions and agreements. A report was before the Council in March last, and was commented on by the Polish delegate (see Document A. 12). It was then disclosed that certain States which had acceded to conventions after the closing-date for signature had made their accession dependent on subsequent ratification, instead of considering it complete as from the date of notification. It was this particular point that the First Committee was asked to consider. The First Committee considered that this procedure, which is new, should be neither encouraged nor discouraged, and that obligation should be presumed to be final when a State did not, when notifying accession, expressly mention that it was subject to ratification. The Assembly took note of the First Committee report (Document A. 95) at its meeting on the 23rd September.

CODIFICATION OF INTERNATIONAL LAW.

This matter was under consideration for some two years by a Committee of Experts appointed under a resolution of the Assembly of 1924. A large number of documents has been issued, and the following were before the First Committee: C. 196, M. 70, 1927, V.; C. 197, M. 71, 1927, V.; C. 198, M. 72, 1927, V.; C. 199, M. 73, 1927, V.; C. 200, M. 74, 1927, V.; C. 201, M. 75, 1927, V.; C. 202, M. 76, 1927, V.; C. 203, M. 77, 1927, V.; C. 204, M. 78, 1927, V.; C. 205, M. 79, 1927, V.; C. 206, M. 80, 1927, V.; C. 207, M. 81, 1927, V.; and A. 18.

The Committee of Experts considered that five subjects were ripe for codification, but the Council of the League decided to reduce this number to three, those selected being—Nationality; territorial waters; and the responsibility of States for damage done in their territories to the personal property of foreigners. Accordingly, these are to be considered by a Conference, but careful preparation is necessary, and the First Committee thought that this work should be done by a preparatory committee of five, in conjunction with the Secretariat of the League. Questions of date and place of Conference were discussed by the committee. On the first it was impossible to make a pronouncement, but it was thought that the work should be sufficiently advanced for a Conference to be called in 1929. The place of meeting recommended is The Hague. The two subjects with which the Conference will not deal are piracy and diplomatic privileges and immunities.

Of other questions which the Committee of Experts considered, two formed the subject of special recommendations—*i.e.*, procedure of International Conferences and procedure for the conclusion and drafting of treaties; and the exploitation of the products of the sea. The former question is to be investigated by the Secretariat of the League. The latter requires a more thorough investigation before there can be any thought of a Conference, and, in view of the danger of extermination of many of the denizens of the sea, it is believed that the Economic Committee of the League can best undertake the work of investigation.

The prevention of the extinction of the whale by a system of catching under license has become an important matter to New Zealand since she assumed responsibilities in the Ross Sea area, and I have no doubt the Government will look forward with interest to the report of the Economic Committee.

It is not out of place to point out the connection between the question of territorial waters and the preservation of denizens of the ocean.

The First Committee's report is Document A. 105, and the Assembly passed the resolution with which it concludes on the 27th September.

Early in the session the delegate of Paraguay proposed the following resolution:—

"The Assembly, having in view the importance and urgency of preparing, for the use of all nations, a Code of International Law, invites the Council to entrust the Committee of Experts with the preparation of a general and comprehensive plan of codification of international law, paying due regard, as far as possible, to the work of codification which is being carried on in America."

This was referred to the First Committee.

It would perhaps have been better to await the results of the Conference referred to above before putting forward a resolution of this kind. The First Committee was sympathetic, but thought it advisable to wait until the Assembly was in a position to draw up a programme of future work for the Committee of Experts.

The Assembly took note of the First Committee's report (Document A. 111) on the 27th September.

SECOND COMMITTEE.

QUESTION OF ALCOHOLISM.

Consideration of this matter was postponed from the Seventh Assembly. It was therefore inscribed on the agenda of the Eighth Assembly, and by it referred to the Second Committee. The question raised by the Governments of Finland, Poland, and Sweden, and supported by those of Belgium, Denmark, and Czecho-Slovakia, was restricted to the prevention of illicit traffic—that is to say, consideration of means on an international scale to prevent smuggling into those countries where prohibition is in force (Document A. 19). It has been said that the League, having taken up the question as to the best means of restricting, and possibly eliminating, the illicit traffic in opium and other dangerous drugs, is the authority to take in hand the question of alcoholism, but I think it must be admitted that discussion would not have stopped at the prevention of smuggling. If a State has adopted prohibition, surely it must look to its own resources to enforce the law, and, if these are not sufficient, endeavour to conclude agreements with other States in which the contraband traffic has its origin.

There are certain questions connected with alcoholism with which the League can and does concern itself—*i.e.*, its effect from the point of view of health, and the part it plays in prostitution and vice—that is to say, the abuse of alcohol. In the discussion in the Second Committee an attempt was made to justify consideration of the question by the League by quoting Article 23 of the Covenant, the inference being that alcohol is a dangerous drug. One can easily imagine the position in which the committee, having members representative of the great wine-growing countries, would have found itself had discussion been allowed to develop on this basis. Had the framers of the motion merely suggested something in the direction of an international conference, leading up to a convention, perhaps the opposition would not have been so strenuous; but, unfortunately for themselves, they suggested that if it was found undesirable to establish a special organ of the League to deal with the matter, the International Bureau against Alcoholism at Lausanne might be prepared to undertake investigation on behalf of the League. The opposers of the motion carried the war into the enemy's camp, and one speaker remarked that if it was a question of binding the League to support the International

Bureau for the Suppression of Alcoholism, which was at the moment subsidized by thirteen States, he would desire to leave to those States the privilege of subsidizing this Bureau.

At the end of the sitting the representative of Finland made the following statement:—"After a long debate which has shown the complexity of the problem, and in view of the difficulties of principle and of procedure to which it has given rise, the delegations who signed the letter, while maintaining the principle underlying their proposal, declare their intention to put it in another form." The Assembly took note of this on the 20th September.

In the Assembly on the 23rd September the delegations of Finland, Poland, and Sweden gave notice of the following draft resolution, and suggested that it should be placed on the agenda of the Ninth Assembly:—

"Whereas it is desirable to co-ordinate the work which the League of Nations has been or will be called upon to undertake on the subject of alcoholism: The Assembly requests the Council (1) to appoint a Committee of Experts on alcoholism; (2) to instruct this committee to study the aspects of alcoholism falling within the competence of the League of Nations, and which could be the subject of scientific or practical work."

The President concurred in this proposal, which was endorsed by the Assembly.

HEALTH ORGANIZATION.

This organization is doing work of great variety and importance, but, as in the sphere of intellectual co-operation, some doubt may be expressed as to whether its programme is not overloaded and whether it would not be better to deal with fewer subjects at one time. The annual report of the Health Organization is Document A. 9, and reference may also be made to the section, dealing with health, of the Secretariat Reports, Documents A. 13 and A. 13 (a). Work such as the standardization of sera, the inquiry into certain aspects of the cancer problem, and the inquiry into and very full reports on malaria, are all of world-wide interest, and the results achieved cannot but be valuable to Government Health Departments. The organization is continuing and extending its scheme of so-called interchanges of medical officers. These interchanges are, however, better described as tours. There will be a tour in British India early next year, and those taking part will include Dr. Thomas Hughes, Medical Officer of Health at Auckland.

A separate report on the meeting of health experts on infant welfare and on the technical mission in the Argentine, Brazil, and Uruguay (Document A. 49) was presented to the Second Committee, and gave opportunity to the Japanese delegate to make a brief but interesting speech. He laid stress on the great future of the Pacific, and put in a plea for co-operation between Japan and other countries whose main interests were in that region.

Whilst much of the work of the health organization is done by, and appeals to, specialists, there yet remains a field of activity which is of interest to the practical politician, the social reformer, and the general public—for instance, the inquiry into methods of co-operation between health insurance organizations and public health services.

Two reports were presented to the Assembly, one on the organization itself, and the other on the South American Mission. These are documents A. 69 and A. 68, and the resolutions with which they conclude were passed on the 20th September. I would call attention to that part of the resolution dealing with the International Pacific Health Conference held in Melbourne in December, 1926, reading as follows: "Further, the Assembly, noting the recommendations which have been made by the International Pacific Health Conference held in Melbourne in December, 1926, in relation to the work which might be undertaken by the health organization for the study of health problems in the Pacific area, expresses its hope that the possibilities of action in this sense will receive full and early consideration by the Health Committee."

SETTLEMENT OF BULGARIAN REFUGEES.

Last year's report gave an account of the genesis of this work, which consists in settling on the land refugees in Bulgaria from surrounding countries, some of whom arrived during the Balkan wars which preceded the Great War. An agreement between the parties concerned was signed during last year's Assembly. Since then an international loan of £2,250,000 has been floated and the scheme put into operation. The work has already made good progress, and the Bulgarian delegate to the Second Committee paid an eloquent tribute to the League and to those acting for it.

It is in the field of reconstruction that the League has had its greatest successes, and there is every reason to hope that the Bulgarian Refugee Settlement Scheme will be one of them.

A brief but clear account of the scheme will be found in the Second Committee's report to the Assembly (Document A. 67), which passed the following resolution on the 20th September:—

"The Assembly—(1) Welcomes with great satisfaction the successful flotation of the Bulgarian refugee loan, providing funds for the carrying-out of the scheme approved by the Council; (2) takes note of the progress which has already been made in the work of making land and houses available for the occupation of the refugees; (3) expresses the hope that during the coming year it will be possible to record the completely satisfactory progress of the work of settlement; (4) desires to express its approbation of the courage and resolution displayed by the Bulgarian Government and the Commissioner of the League of Nations in carrying out the scheme."

ECONOMIC COMMITTEE.

This is one of the permanent organs of the League. Its work has recently been somewhat overshadowed by the International Economic Conference, and its second session this year was devoted to consideration of some of the recommendations of this Conference. An account of its ordinary work since the last Assembly will be found in Document C. 103 (2), M. 48 (1).

The Economic Committee's inquiries in connection with the abolition of import and export prohibitions and restrictions have made such progress that the Council of the League has summoned a conference, which is to meet in Geneva in October.

Other subjects on which conferences are now contemplated are the treatment of foreign nationals and enterprises, and the unification of economic statistics. The committee continues its work in such subjects as the unification of Customs nomenclature and the unification of bills of exchange, and in connection with questions such as false declarations in Customs matters and economic crises.

It was the labours of this committee and of the section of the Secretariat dealing with economic matters which helped to make the International Economic Conference the great success it was.

The Second Committee's report to the Assembly is Document A. 70, and the resolution with which it concludes was passed on the 20th September.

INTELLECTUAL CO-OPERATION.

The documents before the Second Committee of the Assembly were A. 35, Report on the Ninth Plenary Session of the International Committee on Intellectual Co-operation; A. 31, Report on the Work of the International Institute of Intellectual Co-operation; A. 44, Report of the Council and its Resolution of the 2nd September, 1927; and A. 26, the Report of the Special Committee of Experts for the Instruction of Children and Youth in the Existence and Aims of the League of Nations.

One can only marvel at the variety and extent of the subjects which the Committee on Intellectual Co-operation has thought it advisable to study; and I hope that it is not the lot of any one man or woman to have to assimilate the many reports and papers which the committee sends forth.

The committee feels that the time is ripe for a general revision of its organization and the whole field of its activities, but it wants money—its income is insufficient for its present needs. It seems to me that if there is to be reorganization it should be in the direction of concentrating on a few subjects, and finishing the study of them before any of the proposals for new work, which are constantly being made, are seriously considered. It would be a mistake to underrate the usefulness of the committee on Intellectual Co-operation: as a means of bringing together men and women of learning who are united in their desire to achieve a common object it merits attention and support; but "to cut one's coat according to one's cloth" is a good maxim, and those enthusiastic souls who criticize in such strong terms the parsimony of Governments in the intellectual sphere must not lose sight of the demands which are made on the national purses for other directions.

I deal, if only briefly, with one aspect of the committee's work—i.e., the final recommendations of the Special Committee of Experts for the instruction of children and youth in the existence and aims of the League of Nations, which are to be found in Document A. 26. The recommendations are ambitious in scope, but doubtless wisdom went to the making of them. Any one with a practical experience of education knows that the average child cannot possibly assimilate teaching given in a set lesson on the aims and functions of the League. As the Special Committee realizes, such teaching as is given will probably be in connection with a lesson on history or geography. In the past we have often paid insufficient attention to foreign ideas and susceptibilities; we have been too self-satisfied; but we must beware lest the new outlook engendered by the developments of the Great War lead us too far in the opposite direction. The League during its short life has done good work, but the results achieved can be easily exaggerated. Too much must not be expected of what is at present but an imperfect instrument.

In the Special Committee's report there is a reference to the Casares proposal for endeavouring to correct any misstatement of fact appearing in school-books. The procedure involved is explained on page 6; but it is as well to add here that if the author refuses to see the error of his ways, no further action is proposed. It is not at all pleasant to be told on the highest authority that an item of history flattering to our national susceptibilities is not based on truth, and it is better to confess that it is wrong than to go on teaching it. But surely as much, if not more, harm is done by ephemeral publications which cannot be dealt with in the manner indicated in the Casares proposal.

The Second Committee's report (Document A. 63) was considered by the Assembly on the 22nd September, when the resolutions with which it concludes were passed.

EDUCATIONAL CINEMATOGRAPHIC INSTITUTE.

The full text of the Italian motion submitted to the Assembly is as follows:—

"The Assembly, in consideration of the wishes formulated by several international congresses and meetings, encouraged by many experiments made in Italy in the use of moving pictures for the intellectual development of the nation and its employment as an auxiliary system of teaching in every kind of public school; conscious of satisfying a need which all civilized nations strongly feel, and considering that even the industrial world does not only look at the cinema with a view to speculation, but with a real sense of the lofty and practical objects which it is possible to attain with this new and important form of propaganda; convinced that the creation of an International Institute of the Educational Cinema, to be established in Rome, might have the most beneficial effects, not only for the Government but also for public and private institutions and commercial enterprises, which will be able

to find in it a powerful help in their business ; has decided to propose the creation of an International Institute of the Educational Cinema, to be established in Rome, which, according to Article 24 of the Covenant, has to be placed under the direction of the League of Nations. For this purpose the Royal Government offers the funds necessary for the first establishment of the Institute and for its ordinary maintenance, together with a seat in the historical palace of the Stamperia in Rome. It will thus be possible for all nations to participate under conditions of perfect equality and without laying any pecuniary burden on them or on the budget of the League of Nations."

This was referred to the Second Committee. A question of principle is involved, and during the debate in the Second Committee it was proposed that the Council should be asked to study and determine the principles and methods followed in establishing autonomous organizations under the auspices of the League of Nations. A motion to this effect was submitted to the Assembly on the 22nd September, and referred back to the Second Committee for consideration. In this connection it is not out of place to refer to that part of the report of the Fifth Assembly dealing with the gift by the French Government of an Institute of Intellectual Co-operation in Paris. The procedure then followed was recalled in committee, and the discussion on the draft resolution to the Assembly was animated.

The question of the Educational Cinematographic Institute at Rome was referred to a sub-committee, which submitted a unanimous report. This report (Document A. 65) was approved for submission to the Assembly, which, on the 20th September, took note of the generous offer of the Italian Government.

On the 26th September the Assembly invited the Council to arrange a study of the question of the relations between the League of Nations and institutes or bodies set up under its authority, and asked that a report be submitted to the Ninth Assembly in 1928. (Documents A. 94 and A. 107).

SETTLEMENT OF GREEK REFUGEES.

An account was given in last year's report of the scheme for the settlement of Greek refugees, numbering some one and a half millions, most of whom arrived in the Mother-country after the disastrous war with Turkey in Asia Minor which followed the Great War. The loan raised for the purpose of settlement has been insufficient, and Greece has spent in addition some £5,000,000. As a consequence there are considerable Budget arrears. The position created by this vast influx of immigrants and expenditure of money has become serious, and Greece has turned to the League for aid in raising a loan of £9,000,000 and in effecting currency and banking reform. The Finance Committee has been considering the request, and an account of its work will be found in Document A. 53.

The loan, when raised, will be applied as follows: One-third to complete the work of resettlement, one-third towards paying off Budget arrears, and one-third to pay the debt of the Greek State to the existing National Bank. This last amount will, however, be passed to the account of a new bank of issue, to be known as the Bank of Greece, which will exist side by side with the National Bank. We have therefore a complete scheme of financial organization and currency stabilization.

The Second Committee's report (Document A. 91) was before the Assembly at its meeting on the 22nd September, when the resolution with which it concludes was passed.

INTERNATIONAL RELIEF UNION.

At the conclusion of the Conference for the creation of an International Relief Union, held in Geneva in July last, a report was addressed to the New Zealand Government, and there does not appear to be any necessity to give details regarding the scheme itself or the convention drawn up by the Conference. Prints of the minutes of the Conference and the convention (Documents A. 36 and C. 364, M. 137) are attached, and these were before the Second Committee.

The Assembly passed at its meeting on the 22nd September a resolution expressing gratification at the success of the Conference, and endorsing the proposal of the Council that the Preparatory Committee should continue to meet to prepare draft regulations, and to submit to the Council any proposals that might facilitate the putting into force of the convention. (Document A. 89).

WORK OF THE FINANCIAL COMMITTEE.

The Financial Committee is another permanent organization of the League, created as a result of the Brussels International Financial Conference of 1924. Its best-known work has been in the region of reconstruction and in framing schemes for the reform of currency and financial administration. Former reports have dealt with financial reconstruction of both Austria and Hungary. In the reports placed before the Second Committee this year (Documents A. 38 and A. 53) will be found an account of the Financial Committee's work in connection with the reorganization of the finances of the Free City of Dantzig, and the reform of banking and currency in Estonia. Work not quite so well known, but equally important, consists of inquiries into double taxation and evasion, and the counterfeiting of currency. In connection with the former question, preliminary drafts of four conventions have been prepared dealing with double taxation in the sphere of direct impersonal or personal taxes, double taxation in the special matter of succession duties, administrative assistance in matters of taxation, and judicial assistance in the collection of taxes. As a collective convention does not, in existing circumstances, seem possible, the aim of the committee is that the drafts may serve as types when Governments are negotiating bilateral conventions. In the matter of counterfeiting currency there is in existence a draft for an international convention which will shortly be submitted to the Council.

A readable account of the Financial Committee's operations is the Second Committee's report to the Assembly (Document A. 85). The Assembly took note of this report at its meeting on the 22nd September.

Mention must also be made of the proposals for the establishment of financial assistance in support of a State which is the victim of an aggression. The report of the Financial Committee on the subject, and the statement made by Sir Austen Chamberlain at the meeting of the Council on the 8th September, will be found in Document A. 57.

INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC CONFERENCE.

The doubt expressed in some quarters as to the wisdom of calling an International Economic Conference has been dissipated. Representatives of most of the countries of the world sat together and discussed in a spirit of conciliation and goodwill matters which, twenty-years ago, perhaps would have meant dissension. The success of the Conference is due to several causes, but amongst them may be mentioned the excellent work of the Preparatory Committee, and, above all, the fact that the delegates, although appointed by, did not represent Governments, and thus were able to state their personal opinions frankly, and unhampered by governmental instructions.

The documents before the Second Committee were the Final Report of the Conference, and the discussion and declarations on that Final Report at the meeting of the Council on the 16th June last.

New Zealand was represented at the Conference by Professor James Hight, and towards the end by Sir George Elliot.

In the discussion of the Second Committee great stress was laid on the interdependence of agriculture, trade, and commerce. A well-regulated organization would provide for equality of prices. but, unfortunately, such is the economic condition, due to the war and other causes, of European and other countries that the agriculturist is obliged to sell cheaply and to buy dearly. Unemployment and the impoverishment of the masses has restricted the market for agricultural produce, with resulting lower prices; but, on the other hand, much that the farmer requires has to be purchased dearly. This condition raises problems of dominating interest to agricultural countries: consequently, the recommendations of the International Economic Conference and the reports of the Dominion's delegates deserve, and are no doubt receiving, careful consideration.

The discussion in the Second Committee began with a statement by the Chairman of the Conference, M. Theunis. This statement, which traced the origin of the Conference and gave an account of the preparatory work and the labours of the Conference itself, was reprinted in the *Journal* of the 18th September. It provides an excellent introduction to official documents, and is well worthy of study.

The debate, which can be followed in the *Journals* of the 18th, 20th, and 22nd September, consisted largely of eulogistic references to the success of the Conference, and statements of the attitude of various Governments towards the results of the Conference. There was, however, one point to which a separate sitting was devoted.

"The [International Economic] Conference is of opinion that the success of its work will depend upon the execution of the principles laid down." This passage is taken from one of the general resolutions of the Conference, and it is followed immediately by, "With regard to the action to be taken on its recommendations, the Conference, while offering no suggestion as to a permanent organization, cannot do better than draw the Council's attention to the well-balanced composition of the Preparatory Committee, which has yielded excellent results in the preparatory work for the Conference."

There was no doubt in the mind of the Second Committee that if the Conference was not to become a dead effort, machinery must be devised for carrying on its work; but what would happen? Would the existing Economic Committee be strengthened or reorganized, or would a new committee be created? If the latter, would it have amongst its members the whole or only a part of the existing organ? and if only part, what would be the relation of this new organ to the Council and the existing Economic Committee? It was a burning question, but the debate in the Second Committee cleared the air and showed that there were points of contact: a new consultative organ should be created; there should take part in its deliberations some members of the existing Economic Committee; the International Labour Office should be represented, but whether the persons chosen should be representatives of labour only or of both capital and labour had to be determined; indeed, on this point there was some divergence of opinion, and, unfortunately, the question of labour *versus* capital obtruded itself overmuch. The difficult task of endeavouring to meet all interests by methods of conciliation and compromise was entrusted to a small drafting committee, which ultimately produced a scheme. This scheme provides that the existing Economic Committee shall be reconstructed so as to be best suited for its principal work—*i.e.*, economic relations between States, and their economic policies so far as they have international aspects; that, in addition, a consultative committee should be created on which there will sit persons competent in industry, commerce, agriculture, finance, transport, labour questions, and questions relating to consumption. Provision is made for the International Labour Office to nominate three labour members; and the International Institute of Agriculture and the International Chamber of Commerce may also be represented thereon; further, on this consultative committee there will be five members of the permanent organization—*i.e.*, the Economic Committee—who will take part in the deliberations of the former as members thereof.

There was criticism by one delegate, that the permanent organization, which consisted of representatives of Government and lacked initiative and independence, should be given such full powers; and some doubt was expressed by several others lest agricultural interests should not be sufficiently represented on the consultative committee. As, however, the scheme met with general acceptance, no modifications of form were made in full committee, but the Rapporteur promised to stress in his report the necessity for having adequate agricultural representation.

The Report of the Second Committee to the Assembly is Document A. 92, and the resolutions with which it concludes were passed on the 24th September.

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

to finding some other schemes for security. None of these critics was satisfied with the progress made by the Disarmament Commission. It was noteworthy that most of the delegates who were concerned with the slowness of the proceedings in the Preparatory Commission fully recognized that the great difficulty lay in securing a spirit of "moral" disarmament among the peoples by first bringing about in each case a feeling of absolute security before any State would consent to reduce or extinguish its armed forces and throw away the weapons of war.

Perhaps the resolutions ultimately achieved by the committee may be summarized by pointing out that we recommended the creation of a special committee which should take its instructions from the Preparatory Commission, and would study, under the direction of the Preparatory Commission, the best means of giving all countries the guarantees of arbitration and security necessary to enable these countries to fix the level of their armaments at the lowest possible figures. So that for the future (working *pari passu* with the Preparatory Commission) we shall have a special committee consisting of the representatives of all States having seats on the Preparatory Commission, and endeavouring, in the case of every State, to bring about by arbitration and mutual agreements and guarantees (probably of a regional character) the state of absolute security which alone will give an impetus to the actual work of disarmament.

I attach a great deal of importance to the work entrusted to this special committee. It will study the circumstances of each country. Thus it may be able, by apposite suggestion and conciliatory counsel, and by satisfactory guarantees, to bring about a state of security which would be a prelude to a disarmament of warlike forces. I am satisfied that unless security can be given to the various peoples involved the work of the Disarmament Committee will be most difficult, if not impossible.

Finally, in my opinion the work of the Third Committee was excellently done. There was much tactful forbearance, much friendly and helpful counsel, between the various delegates, with the result that we were able unanimously to agree upon a single recommendation to the Assembly which sufficiently covered the three or four texts of the Netherlands, Norwegian, French, and German delegations.

May I conclude my reference to this aspect with the statement that all the delegations were agreed that the work for disarmament should be prosecuted with the utmost energy. The Preparatory Commission was strongly urged to hasten the completion of its technical work, and to convene the Conference on the Limitation and Reduction of Armaments immediately this work has been completed. Later, the Assembly declared that the measures capable of giving the States the necessary guarantees of arbitration and security so as to enable them to fix the level of their armaments at the lowest possible figures could best be found in agreements between the nations, after the type of the Locarno Treaty, or in preparing machinery of a general character, to be employed by the organs of the League, to enable its members to perform their obligations under the various articles of the Covenant. In other words, the securities and powers already given in the Covenant itself were to be further and more intensively exploited by the members of the League. I gave my adherence strongly to this latter aspect, feeling as I do that while in the last seven or eight years there has been a great deal of discussion, in the League and out of it, as to the need for a special protocol after the character of the Geneva proposal of 1924, yet it would appear that already in the Covenant itself, and especially in its terms dealing with arbitration and disarmament, there are very full powers which the League has not yet fully exploited or used.

A most important indication in another direction of the feeling of the Third Committee and of the Assembly may be found in the last paragraph of the committee's report, which suggested that the Council should request the several States to inform the Council of the measures they would be prepared to take to support the Council's decisions in the event of a conflict breaking out in a given region. Each State, therefore, in the future (and this is of importance to New Zealand) may be invited by the Council to indicate in a particular case what it is prepared to do in the way of bringing its forces into the field to intervene in a conflict to support the Council's decisions and recommendations. I ought here to state that I and other Dominion representatives made it clear to the committee that far-away Dominions such as Australia and New Zealand could not reasonably be expected to give, and in any case would not commit themselves to, any pledge or guarantee respecting the integrity of the boundaries of mid-European Powers, nor would we send forces (naval or military) to the scene of the conflict to support the Council's decisions. I said that I agreed entirely with the declaration contained in Sir Austen Chamberlain's speech when he pointed out that Great Britain has gone as far as the Rhine frontier in giving guarantees, and was not prepared to go any further. I stated, further, that I considered that while there undoubtedly should be guarantees of security, these guarantees ought to be of a regional character only, and should be entered into by the Powers most directly concerned; and, lastly, that no one could reasonably ask a country twelve thousand miles away, as is the case of New Zealand, that it should be as intimately concerned about matters such as the Dantzig corridor, the Vistula boundary, and the Polish or Balkan frontiers as the European countries in close connection with the *locus in quo* of these litigated districts.

Lastly, as to the questions of security and disarmament, I opine that by the time the Assembly meets next year a critical stage will have arrived in the history of the League. It will be evident by September, 1928, as to whether the work of obtaining peace for the European world by bringing about a substantial limitation of armed forces and equipment is to be a reality or a dream. The good faith of the various Powers on the Continent will have been put to the test. One can only watch with supreme interest the future proceedings of the Disarmament Committee, with its ally the special committee aforesaid, and express the hope that the labours of the Preparatory Commission may result in a distinct advance in the actual work of reducing or limiting armaments, and thus may ease the

anxieties of the peoples of Europe. If this should come about, one happy result would be a reduction of the enormous Budgets of war expenditure indulged in by many of these Powers.

There is another question. I should inform you that so far as the proposals of the Polish delegation were concerned, in deference to the wishes of Great Britain and other Powers, the Polish delegate amended his original motion so as to make his attack rather upon wars of aggression than upon every kind of possible conflict. The result was that the Third Committee found no difficulty in confirming the attitude of the Polish delegate and sending forward to the Assembly a recommendation of his final motion, which was in the following terms:—

“The Assembly—recognizing the solidarity which unites the community of nations; being inspired by a firm desire for the maintenance of general peace; being convinced that a war of aggression can never serve as a means of settling international disputes, and is in consequence an international crime; considering that a solemn renunciation of all wars of aggression would tend to create an atmosphere of general confidence calculated to facilitate the progress of the work undertaken with a view to disarmament—declares (1) that all wars of aggression are, and shall always be, prohibited; (2) that every pacific means must be employed to settle disputes, of every description, which may arise between States. The Assembly declares that the States members of the League are under an obligation to conform to these principles.”

This motion was adopted by the Assembly.

Another aspect of the work of the Third Committee dealt with the question of civil aviation and military aviation. Upon investigation the committee found that in certain countries there is at present a close connection between the development of civil aviation and that of military aviation. Obviously this connection will lead to serious difficulties in the limiting of armaments without at the same time hampering civil aviation. The committee was unanimous in declaring that it is desirable that the development of civil aviation should be directed solely towards economic ends to the exclusion of military interests. There can be no question in certain countries where aviation is developing that the Governments (directly or indirectly) are requiring a type of airship or an equipment which, while suitable for civil purposes, may easily be transformed quickly into a machine suitable for the purpose of war. It was made clear that it was against this sort of thing that the resolutions of the Third Committee were directed.

As regards the Finnish delegation's suggestion that financial assistance should be found by other Powers for any Power aggressively attacked, you will observe from the report to which I have already referred you that the various delegates on the Third Committee found the greatest difficulties in giving any sort of guarantee. Indeed, it seemed to me rather amusing to find that while a considerable amount of sympathy was expressed, no Power in particular seemed at all anxious to put its hand in its pocket to help the unfortunate Power which might be attacked. Consequently, there was complete unanimity in sending this proposal to a committee for further consideration.

The question of the supervision of private manufacture of arms and ammunition again came before the Third Committee. It was clear that the problem had not been solved. The main difficulty lay in the fact that some of the States desired to bring in State manufacture as well as private manufacture. Eventually the Assembly adopted the following resolution:—

“The Assembly—having noted the report of the special committee appointed by the Council to draft a convention on the supervision of the private manufacture and the publicity regarding the manufacture of arms and ammunition and of implements of war; reaffirming the importance it attaches to the establishment of a convention which would enable non-producing and producing countries to be placed on an equal footing, as contemplated in the declaration embodied in the Final Act at the Conference for the Supervision of the International Trade in Arms and Ammunition and of Implements of War; convinced that the establishment of a convention for the supervision of private manufacture and the publicity regarding manufacture is of the highest importance for the putting into force of the Convention on the International Trade—requests the Council to convey its views to the special committee, in order that the latter may agree upon a single text which will enable the Council to convene an international conference as speedily as possible.”

In conclusion, I may add that the evident good feeling which obtained when the Third Committee's resolutions were carried by the Assembly was a considerable encouragement for the future. indeed, when one remembers that there was at the beginning of the session a strong sentiment of discontent in the breasts of many representatives, the fact that this discontent largely gave way at the end of our deliberations to feelings of mutual confidence and respect, augurs well for the future;

FOURTH COMMITTEE.

CONTRIBUTIONS IN ARREARS.

As usual, this question was referred to a small sub-committee, whose report was adopted by the Fourth Committee for presentation to the Assembly. Full particulars of the unpaid arrears and of the position at the end of August will be found in Annexes B and C to Document A. 47.

Of the ten States in arrears, two are regularly paying contributions over a term of years as authorized by special decisions of the Assembly, and two have paid up since the issue of the statement; whilst a fifth, a part of whose debt represents certain arrears compounded by special arrangement with the Assembly, has paid the annual instalments due under the arrangement. There is therefore some improvement, and the sub-committee had to give consideration to the question in so

far as it related to five States only. The Secretariat is in communication with all five, and, from the information placed before the committee, there is ground for confidence that ultimately the arrears will be paid, although one of the States has not replied to the communications of the Secretary-General.

In the case of China, the sub-committee had before it the representative of that country, who made a suggestion that the Chinese Government should be afforded facilities for the imposition of a special tax. The sub-committee thought that this proposal was not within its competence, but suggested that it should be brought under the notice of the various Governments.

Attention may be called to Document A. 10, on the legal position of States which do not pay their contributions to the League.

The Fourth Committee's report (Document A. 71) was before the Assembly on the 22nd September, when it passed the following resolution:—

“The Assembly requests the Secretary-General—(1) to continue negotiations with the Chinese Government with a view to arriving at some arrangement by which the contributions in arrears may be liquidated; (2) to make further representations, through such channels as he may consider appropriate, to the other States at present in arrears; (3) to submit to the Council in due course a report showing the results of the action taken by him.”

NEW LEAGUE OF NATIONS BUILDING.

This question, which has occupied the attention of previous Assemblies, was this year referred by the Assembly itself to a committee of five members, which produced a report on the present position (Document A. 93.)

On the 31st August there was in hand on account of the Building Fund the sum of 11,400,000 francs, to which must be added the guaranteed sale price of the present Secretariat (4,000,000 francs), making a total of 15,400,000. This total represents the existing financial position, even after taking account of certain book-keeping transactions.

After carefully considering the estimates which had been submitted, the special committee came to the conclusion that ultimately a sum of 19,500,000 francs would have to be provided. It was not necessary to find a further credit this year, and the Assembly passed the resolution at the end of Document A. 93 at its meeting on the 26th September (see also Document A. 110). An amendment by the Netherlands delegation to enlarge the number of plans from which the selection should be made (i.e., twenty-seven preferred by the jury) was not accepted.

It may be here noted that difficulty has arisen in acquiring part of the site selected, and the question is now before the Court.

The Fourth Committee proposed that the committee set up under the Assembly resolution should be composed of the five members who had studied the question, and the Assembly decided that the task should be entrusted to Messieurs Adatci, Osusky, Politis, Urrutia, and Sir Edward Hilton Young. It is hoped that a plan from amongst the nine which obtained first prizes will be selected before the next Assembly.

PROPOSED ESTABLISHMENT OF AN ADMINISTRATIVE TRIBUNAL.

The international status of the League does not permit of its officials bringing actions in their national Courts to enforce the terms of their appointments, and the question of establishing an administrative tribunal to deal with such cases has been under consideration for some time. The matter was referred to the Supervisory Commission, which, after full consideration, drew up a draft statute for the purpose of establishing such a tribunal. The Supervisory Commission's report, Document A. 6, together with the draft statute, was referred to a small sub-committee of the Fourth Committee. There was a conflict of opinion in the sub-committee, and the report which it presented to the full committee is essentially a compromise.

It appears that since the existence of the League only two cases of the kind which would be referred to an administrative tribunal had come before the Council. In the circumstances one is inclined to think that a tribunal is unnecessary; indeed, a proposal was put forward in the sub-committee that if the need arose a Court of Arbitration consisting of two arbitrators, selected from a list drawn up by the Council, one to be chosen by the Administration concerned and the other by the other party to the case, should be constituted. However, the majority of the sub-committee preferred an administrative tribunal, and proposed that one should be set up as an experiment, and function for three years, after which the position should be reconsidered in the light of the experience gained. As the annual expenditure involved, 6,000 francs, is small, there did not seem valid reason for amending the sub-committee's report, and it was adopted, with slight modifications, for submission to the Assembly, which passed the following resolution at its meeting on the 26th September (Document A. 72):—

“Subject to the amendment of form suggested by the Fourth Committee, the Assembly adopts the annexed statute establishing a League of Nations Administrative Tribunal. The Assembly of 1931, however, will consider, in the light of the experience gained whether there is reason to abrogate or amend the said statute. The Assembly's resolution of the 17th December, 1920, giving to certain officials in case of dismissal a right of appeal to the Council or to the governing body of the International Labour Office, is abrogated as from the 1st January, 1928.”

I might mention, for what it is worth, that some stress was laid on the psychological aspect of the establishment of a tribunal.

BUDGET.

Document A. 3 is the Audited Accounts for the Eighth Financial Period, 1926, whilst the Budgets for the Secretariat, the International Labour Office, and the Permanent Court of International Justice as submitted to the Fourth Committee at its first meeting are Documents A. 4 (1), A. 4 (a) (1), and A. 4 (b). These should be examined in conjunction with the reports of the Supervisory Commission, A. 5 and A. 5 (a), and an interesting account of the present conditions of work in the Secretariat, A. 21.

When these documents were laid on the table it was announced that the Fourth Committee would be asked by other committees to vote supplementary credits, and it was decided to deal with these requests towards the close of the session in order that the relative claims for money could be considered. Consequently the Budget as submitted was approved provisionally, with the exception of one item in Chapter 2 of the Budget of the Secretariat.

A sum of 12,000 francs was provided for the expenses of the Committee on the Allocation of Expenses (item 17 (d)). M. Reveillaud, the President of the Allocation of Expenses Committee, who was representing France on the Fourth Committee of the Assembly, moved to reduce the amount by 4,500 francs, and he proceeded to give his reasons for introducing the motion. He reminded the committee that in 1925 the Sixth Assembly passed a resolution which (1) provided that the scale of allocation of expenses annexed to that resolution should be adopted for the years 1926, 1927, and 1928, and (2) asked the Council to request the Committee on the Allocation of Expenses to submit a revised scale to the Assembly of 1928. He reviewed the task of his committee in the light of the economic and financial conditions of the last few years. He admitted that conditions were more stable now, but gave it as his opinion that to take the various national Budgets for 1926, for instance, as a basis of calculation would be unjust. He went so far as to say that it might be necessary to keep the present scale in force for a few years longer, and not to come to a final decision until 1930 or 1931. He added that he would have been prepared to recommend the elimination of the vote had it not been necessary to maintain a credit for use in the event of another State being admitted to the League next year, thus making a meeting of the committee necessary in order that the scale on which the new entrant would pay could be determined. Of course, no decision regarding the scale of allocation of expenses was taken. The position remains as heretofore, and the question will be placed on the Agenda for the next Assembly.

Towards the end of the session there was brought before the committee a request for supplementary credits made by the Secretary-General and the Director of the International Labour Office, together with a list of supplementary credits required if certain decisions made or endorsed by the other committees were to be carried out. Supplementary credits amounting to 533,695 francs were voted by the Fourth Committee, and, in addition to the saving of 4,500 francs referred to above, a saving was effected by suppressing the item of 75,000 francs for the Committee of Experts for the Codification of International Law. The First Committee had, in principle, decided to recommend the setting-up of a committee to prepare for a Conference on the Codification of three subjects of International law, and for this new committee the Fourth Committee voted a supplementary credit of 80,000 francs. The First Committee, however, thought it advisable to keep the Experts Committee in being for the purpose of consultation by the new committee; but, as was pointed out by the Chairman of the Supervisory Commission, the experts had finished their work on the three subjects of international law mentioned above, and his Commission could not recommend a continuance of the credit. There was an exchange of views, and ultimately the committee proceeded to the vote, the result being that the credit was struck out. The First Committee was disappointed on hearing the decision of the Fourth, but in order to meet the views of the former it was arranged that any money not needed for the Preparatory Committee should be made available for the Committee of Experts, and item 29 (see page 6 of Document A. 113) was worded accordingly.

In this connection attention may be drawn to the discussion on another supplementary credit which was not allowed, one for 44,334 francs for the collection and exchange of data on communications and transit problems, recommended by the Third Conference on Communications and Transit, and also to the supplementary credit of 63,300 francs for the expenses of the Central Opium Board (dealt with in the section of this report relating to the Fifth Committee). In regard to the first of these two credits, one speaker urged that the Fourth Committee had not the right to veto a credit required to carry out the recommendation of an International Conference held under the auspices of the League. If such a view were to prevail, however, the Fourth Committee would be so circumscribed in its actions that it would lose some of its powers as a Budget Committee. Wisdom prevailed and the credit was rejected, but only after two votes had been taken, the first having resulted in a tie.

As to the second of these two credits, no question of principle was at stake; the machinery of the Board is provided for in an International Convention, and the credits necessary must be voted when required, but the point at issue was—would money be required next year? In the opinion of the Supervisory Commission, as ratifications were coming in so slowly, the League would incur little risk in not voting the credit, for it did not seem likely that the Board would be constituted before the end of 1928.

It is well to draw attention to a principle which must never be lost sight of—i.e., of following the advice of the Supervisory Commission, unless high politics render it necessary to take a different view: indeed, one cannot but be grateful to the Supervisory Commission for the great care which it displays in the examination of all questions relating to the Budget. Nevertheless, in spite of this care, the Budget increases year by year, and the question arises whether the powers of that Commission are not insufficient, and whether the time has not arrived to appoint a small body which would examine all questions of new expenditure and make proposals thereon. This point was brought up by the British delegate, and is mentioned in the Fourth Committee's report to the Assembly (Document A. 113).

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

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.

The study of the cinema in relation to child welfare, and the inquiry, in conjunction with the International Labour Office, of the effects of family allowances on the welfare of children, still occupy the attention of the Welfare Committee.

With regard to some of the other questions, notably the mental and physical recreation of children, the Child Welfare Committee, doubtless in deference to the view expressed by the Assembly last year, is limiting its inquiries to a collection of information by the members of the committee in their respective countries.

The Fifth Committee's report to the Assembly is Document A. 62, and the Assembly passed the following resolution on the 20th September :—

“ The Assembly notes the report submitted by the Child Welfare Committee, expresses its appreciation of the work it is doing, and requests it to continue on the lines indicated in the report on its third session.”

PROTECTION OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN IN THE NEAR EAST.

A reference to last year's report will show that for this work of rescue of women and children who had escaped from countries to which they had been deported no money was voted by the League for 1927. It was, however, stated in committee last year that the work would be carried on for another year with the aid of private subscriptions. The Fifth Committee of the Assembly had before it this year the final report on the work carried out at Aleppo (Document A. 29). This report contains a review of the work done since the establishment of the local Commission in 1922. Miss Jeppe, a Danish lady, to whose courage tribute has been paid on many occasions, has severed her official connection with the League, but she will continue to direct the work, which will be carried out with the aid of private financial support.

The Rapporteur's report (Document A. 61) came before the Assembly on the 20th September, when the following resolution was passed :—

“ The Assembly approved Miss Jeppe's report, and expresses its thanks and appreciation for the unselfish and admirable work which she has done for the protection of women and children in the Near East. The Assembly hopes that the generous financial support given to Miss Jeppe by voluntary organizations in the past will continue, in order that she may be enabled to restore to a normal life those who have been rescued.”

MEASURES IN FAVOUR OF ARMENIAN AND RUSSIAN REFUGEES.

The question involved is the difficult one of finding work in various parts of the world for Russians and Armenians who are refugees from their own countries. Fortunately, this year, consideration of the position was not complicated by the introduction of irrelevant matter such as the ill-timed motion introduced last year, which, if passed, would have given the International Labour Office a mandate to deal generally with unemployment. The task of finding employment is now in the hands of the High Commissioner for Refugees (Dr. Nansen, the eminent explorer) and the International Labour Office.

In the course of the Fifth Committee's debate it was stated that although 38,000 Russian and Armenian refugees had been placed in the last two years, many thousands still remained to be dealt with. A revolving fund of £100,000 was aimed at in the first instance. A charge on self-supporting refugees of 5 Swiss francs for the renewal of identity certificates has produced only 150,000 francs, and, although money has been received from Governmental and other sources, the need for more funds is exceedingly great, and is now hampering the acceptance of an offer of five South American States to take some thirty thousand refugees. A meeting of Government representatives to consider proposals for the settlement of refugees in overseas countries was held in Geneva in June last, and a report on the Conference will be found in Document A. 30.

A clear account of the present position will be found in the Rapporteur's report to the Assembly (Document A. 90), which passed the resolution with which it concludes on the 26th September.

Shortly before the report came before the Assembly Dr. Nansen mounted the platform and delivered a speech regarding the scheme for the transfer of Armenian refugees to the Republic of Erivan, which he claimed was an Armenian Republic of nearly one million persons. He said that owing to want of success he had felt inclined to recommend that the League should sever its connection with the scheme, but that the Council had again made an appeal for money, and under the circumstances he was content to continue the work. He ended his speech with an earnest appeal for help.

THE OPIUM CONVENTION.

Reference has already been made to this question in the section of this report dealing with the Fourth Committee.

EXPENSES OF THE PERMANENT CENTRAL BOARD.

Article 19 of the Opium Convention of 1925 provides that the Council of the League of Nations shall appoint, within three months of the coming into force of the convention, a permanent Central Board, consisting of eight persons, who, by their technical competence, impartiality, and disinterestedness, will command general confidence. The convention is not yet in force, owing to lack

of the necessary ratifications. There is hope, but some doubt, that these will be forthcoming shortly ; consequently the question of the remuneration of the members of the Board and of its secretariat has arisen. An estimate was prepared amounting to 147,200 francs, and referred by the Council to the Assembly, which in turn referred it to the Fifth Committee (Document A. 22).

The main point to be considered was, was the estimate sufficiently large ? A suggestion that it be accepted for 1928 because, in any case, some months must elapse before the Board could be set up, was vetoed, because the members of the Board must be appointed for five years, and consequently no provisional scheme which could be modified in the light of experience was possible.

Some doubt was expressed as to whether the Central Board, which was to take over part of the work of the Advisory Committee in traffic in opium, would do that work more effectively than the Advisory Committee. It was, however, impossible to pursue this argument to its conclusion, because the Board and its machinery is part of the convention, and the Board must be established after the convention comes into operation. It would function within the limits prescribed by the convention, and the Advisory Committee would continue to assist the League in the discharge of the latter's duties under Article 23 of the Covenant. The essential difference between the two bodies is that, whilst the new one will consist of persons independent of Governments, the Advisory Committee is composed of persons representative of Governments, apart from assessors, who have no votes.

On the question of remuneration of the members of the Board when set up there were two schools of thought—that which advocated adequate remuneration, and that which believed that it should be possible to secure the gratuitous services of eminent and able persons qualified to do the work, travelling and sustenance allowance, of course, being given on a generous scale. It may be mentioned here that, although the Central Board will be an organ of the League (for it is to be appointed by the Council in conjunction with a representative of the Government of the United States, if America thinks fit to participate), the parties to the convention who are not members of the League will bear their share of the expenses.

Ultimately a letter, of which the following is a summary, was addressed to the Fourth Committee :—

“ The Fifth Committee is of opinion that it would be well if the Council could secure the gratuitous services of persons of the qualifications contemplated in the report to the Geneva Conference, thus carrying on the traditions of the League. Should this prove impossible, as is feared by several members, the Fifth Committee is not prepared to say that the provisional estimate would be sufficient, because it appears that the remuneration suggested in the provisional estimate will not be likely to attract the class of person contemplated by the Geneva Conference. As regards subsistence allowances, the committee feels that the members of the Board should be placed on the same footing as members of other League Committees. With regard to travelling-expenses, while it makes no comment on the figures given, the Fifth Committee points out that these expenses must depend on whether the Council, in order to secure continuity in the work, finds it possible to appoint members living within easy reach of the seat of the League. As to the salaries of the staff, the Fifth Committee trusts that, in considering the remuneration of the secretary, the Fourth Committee will not overlook the view expressed by the Opium Conference that the secretary should occupy a confidential position of importance and responsibility.”

SIXTH COMMITTEE.

SLAVERY.

It is regrettable that few States (eleven in all) have ratified or adhered to the Slavery Convention, but it is believed that further ratifications will shortly be received by the Secretariat.

In accordance with a resolution of the Seventh Assembly providing for the transmission to it every year of information communicated to the Secretary-General, under Article 7 of the convention, a document called “ Annual Report by the Council ” (A. 37, A. 37 (a), A. 37 (b)) was issued, and this the Sixth Committee had before it.

As was made clear by several delegates, the Assembly must not expect to have every year a progress report, because few countries now require to make legislative or even administrative enactments regarding slavery. The public eye, however, is turned to some countries, and developments there are awaited with interest.

The Sixth Committee's report to the Assembly is Document A. 74, and the Assembly passed the following resolution on the 22nd September :—

“ The Assembly notes the report from the Council and the supplementary reports regarding slavery, which contain communications on this subject from the Government of Abyssinia, the British Government, the Government of India, the Government of Portugal, and the Government of the Sudan, and, in view of the limited number of ratifications of the Convention of the 25th September, 1926, which have been deposited up to the present, expresses the hope that the States which have signed will ratify the convention as soon as possible.”

METHOD OF ELECTION OF NON-PERMANENT MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL.

The Seventh Assembly agreed to increase to nine the non-permanent members of the Council, and when the report of its First Committee on the method of election and the tenure of the non-permanent seats had been disposed of last year the question of the utilization of the single transferable vote, and the principle of proportional representation in general, was raised by one of the Norwegian delegates. Later in that session the Assembly requested the Council to instruct the Secretariat to study the system, with a view to the matter being considered by the Eighth Assembly. The Secretariat issued an interesting report (Document A. 41).

In the course of the debate of the Sixth Committee it was generally agreed that, if the principle of proportional representation were to be adopted, the single-transferable-vote system would be a form of it which could be applied to election for membership of the Council. It was thought, however, that the system adopted last year should be given a fair trial.

The Sixth Committee's report to the Assembly is Document A. 75, and the Assembly approved of it at its meeting on the 22nd September.

CONFERENCE OF PRESS EXPERTS.

On the 25th September, 1925, the Sixth Assembly of the League of Nations passed the following resolution :—

"The Assembly, considering that the press constitutes the most effective means of guiding public opinion towards that moral disarmament which is a concomitant condition of material disarmament, invites the Council to consider the desirability of convening a committee of experts representing the press of the different continents with a view to determining methods of contributing towards the organization of peace, especially (a) by ensuring the more rapid and less costly transmission of press news with a view to reducing risks of international misunderstanding, (b) and by discussing all technical problems the settlement of which would be conducive to the tranquilization of public opinion,"

with the result that a Conference of press experts was held in Geneva in August last, and attended by press representatives of most countries members of the League. It is to be noted that it was not a Governmental Conference. It is true that Governments nominated representatives, but these took part in the Conference as assessors, and with only an advisory vote. The report of the Conference (Document A. 43) was before the Sixth Committee. It will be seen that the Conference passed a number of resolutions which, if carried into effect, will, in its opinion, be "to the general interest to assure the propagation of press news as rapidly as possible and at moderate rates."

Questions of finance are involved in some of these resolutions, others contemplate administrative action, whilst yet others have a moral bearing. The Council of the League had already considered the Conference report, and had referred for study to the Organization for Communications and Transit the resolution dealing with rates, code telegrams, improvements in communication, conveyance of newspapers, and identity cards for journalists, but had deferred consideration of the other resolutions until December. The debate in the committee became rather lively, owing to veiled attacks made on some of the great press agencies and on a few newspapers, but the debate led nowhere, for there was little that the committee could do. The committee made a report to the Assembly (Document A. 77), and the resolution with which it concludes was passed on the 22nd September.

MANDATES.

Questions relating to mandates are usually referred to the Sixth Committee by the Assembly, and this year this was done on the motion of the Portuguese delegation. The debate in committee was very short. It was opened by Dr. Nansen, the principal Norwegian delegate, who dealt mostly with points of general interest; but in the course of his speech he suggested that perhaps the representative of New Zealand might wish to inform the committee of the steps which the Mandatory Power was taking to give the Mandates Commission full information on the situation at its next session. A reply to this suggestion was given immediately after Dr. Nansen had sat down. The reply, after referring to the approval which the administration of Western Samoa had elicited from the Permanent Mandates Commission since New Zealand had accepted the mandate in 1920, and to the recent agitation in Western Samoa against the Administrator, stated that according to the information which had been received the agitation had been stirred up by half a dozen white people; that the leader was a merchant who was the largest buyer of copra from the Natives and objected very strongly to the Administrator's action in improving the marketing of copra in their interests; that some of the European agitators were married to Samoan women, and consequently had influence with some of the Natives; but that, generally speaking, the large majority of the white population and of the Native population strongly approved of the administration. The reply concluded: "In the meantime I desire to state that a Royal Commission, of which the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court in New Zealand is the Chairman, has been appointed by the New Zealand Government to inquire into the alleged grievances and to furnish a report generally on the administration. The Royal Commission has reached Samoa and is now sitting. As soon as its report is available it is my Government's intention to lay it before the Permanent Mandates Commission, which will, I presume, examine it and report to the Council. In the circumstances, I respectfully suggest that it is premature to discuss the matter now."

There was no further reference to Western Samoa in the course of the debate. Dr. Nansen was appointed Rapporteur, and at the next meeting produced his report, which contains the following reference to Samoa: "The committee was glad to note the statement made by the representative of New Zealand concerning the special steps which the Government of that country is taking in order to provide the Mandates Commission with full information in regard to the recent difficulties in Western Samoa."

Dr. Nansen's report, which was adopted by the committee with a few modifications, was presented to the Assembly at its meeting on the 23rd September (Document A. 76 (1)).

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

C. J. PARR,

High Commissioner for New Zealand.

The Right Hon. the Prime Minister, Wellington, New Zealand.

[NOTE.—Copies of the documents referred to in the foregoing report have been placed in the General Assembly Library for convenience of reference.]

Approximate Cost of Paper.—Preparation, not given; printing (550 copies), £21 10s.

By Authority: W. A. G. SKINNER, Government Printer, Wellington.—1928.

Price 9d.]