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NEW ZEALAND.

THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

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

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

SIXTEENTH ASSEMBLY OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

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

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

OPENING OF PROCEEDINGS.

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

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

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

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

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

The Third Committee (Disarmament) was not constituted.

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