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THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

SOCIAL AND HUMANITARIAN
WORK

Information Section,
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NOTE

This pamphlet is one of a short series issued by the Information Section of the Secretariat of the League of Nations on various aspects of League work. Other pamphlets deal with the constitution and organisation of the League, the Permanent Court of International Justice, the financial reconstruction of Austria, political activities, financial and economic work, the financial administration of the League and allocation of expenses, disarmament, health, mandates, transit, minorities, the administration of Danzig and the Saar, and intellectual co-operation.

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March, 1924.

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THE SOCIAL AND HUMANITARIAN WORK OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

INTRODUCTION

The League of Nations was founded primarily as an instrument for the maintenance of peace, but it was plainly intended also as a means of promoting such international co-operation as is essential to general progress. There are many problems in which fruitful action can be undertaken only on concerted plans. One State may adopt all reasonable measures towards certain ends, but may find that success is dependent not only upon its own efforts but also upon what policy is followed in other countries. This is true in many things, including what may be conveniently termed social and humanitarian problems, which form one broad division of League activities.

The work of the League in this respect has been varied and considerable; efforts have been directed, on the one hand, to the suppression of old abuses such as the traffic in women and children and the traffic in opium; and on the other hand, to mitigating the sufferings which war has left in its train, such as those caused by typhus epidemics, and to improving the unhappy lot of prisoners of war, of Russian refugees, Armenians, Greeks and Turks, whom conflicts or political upheavals have scattered far from their homes. Among these tasks some, such as the traffic in women and children and the traffic in opium, have been expressly committed to the League by the Covenant. Others, like the repatriation of prisoners of war or the refugee question, have been taken up by the League either in

general accordance with the spirit of the Covenant, or in response to the indications of public opinion. For the purpose of these tasks, the League has created permanent organisations, such as the Opium Committee and the Committee on the Traffic in Women and Children, or provisional organisations such as the High Commissariats for Prisoners of War and for Refugees. As in all League work, no rigid lines have been followed, but the particular organisations have been adjusted to particular needs. The following pages explain the machinery that has been applied to each subject, the methods employed, and the results achieved.

There is a Section for Humanitarian and Social Questions in the General Secretariat of the League, which prepares the work of the Commissions and follows up the execution of decisions arrived at. There is also a special Section temporarily established for secretarial work connected with Refugees.

PART I

I. TRAFFIC IN OPIUM AND OTHER DANGEROUS DRUGS

The problem of the suppression of the opium abuses assumed international proportions about the year 1906, when it was realised by certain States that if China was to be able to root out the evil which had so long affected her people, she must be granted every possible assistance by other countries. She herself had set a term, of ten years as a maximum within which to accomplish this task and certain missionary societies of China and other organisations urged the Government of the United States of America to take the initiative of calling together representatives of Governments concerned in the opium traffic. As a result of their solicitations, correspondence under the direction of President Roosevelt was opened with the interested Powers on the possibility of making an investigation into the problem, and eventually in 1909 an International Opium Commission met at Shanghai on the invitation of the Government of the United States of America. The following Powers were represented :

| | | |
|-----------------|-------------|------------------|
| Austria-Hungary | Italy | Russia |
| China | Japan | Siam |
| France | Netherlands | United States of |
| Germany | Persia | America |
| Great Britain | Portugal | |

An invitation was also extended to Turkey, but she did not nominate a representative.

The International Opium Commission, Shanghai.

This Commission may be said to have indicated the general lines on which the campaign was to be conducted,

and although the views of the Commission were not in any way binding on the Governments, their recommendations subsequently formed the basis of the Opium Convention drawn up at The Hague. International public opinion was created, the way was paved for further conferences and the abuse of opium was denounced as an evil and a degradation to those countries countenancing it. Measures were agreed upon to support and assist the efforts of China.

In order that the recommendations of the Commission might be made binding on States and that the public interest created should not be allowed to die out, the Government of the United States of America proposed an International Conference with a view to drawing up a Convention. This Conference was summoned at The Hague on January 22nd, 1912, its recommendations being incorporated in the International Opium Convention of 1912.

The Convention of 1912.

The Convention begins by defining the type of opium or dangerous drug to be controlled.

Raw opium is defined as the "spontaneously coagulated juice obtained from the capsules of the *papaver somniferum*, which has only been submitted to the necessary manipulations for packing and transport".

Prepared opium is described as the product of raw opium obtained by a series of special operations, especially by dissolving, boiling, roasting and fermentation, designed to transform it into an extract suitable for consumption.

Medicinal opium is described as raw opium heated to 60° Centigrade and containing not less than 10 % of morphine.

Morphine and cocaine are defined (their chemical formula being given) as the principal alkaloid of opium and

the principal alkaloid of *erythroxylon coca*, heroin being distinguished as *diacetyl morphine*.

The Convention insists that the control of the distribution of raw opium shall be ensured by the Contracting Parties and that the use of prepared opium shall be subject to gradual suppression with due regard to the circumstances of each country concerned.

On the side of international control of the traffic, the Contracting Parties undertake to adopt measures prohibiting entry and to control export to countries restricting import. They undertake also to prohibit altogether the export and import of prepared opium, except to those countries not yet ready for total suppression. With regard to the control of the alkaloids, the Contracting Powers undertake to confine their use to medical and legitimate purposes and to require all those engaged in their manufacture, sale, distribution, import and export, to do so under Governmental licence only.

The Convention contains a series of clauses specially designed to assist China; who, on her part, undertakes certain obligations.

All the countries represented at the first International Conference signed the International Opium Convention, although some of them did so with reservations. Invitations were sent out by the Netherlands Government to those Powers which had not been represented at the Conference to sign the Convention; in this way twenty-seven more signatures were received.

The question of the ratification of the Convention was not so simple a matter, and a second International Conference was called in 1913 to discuss this point. Twenty-five Powers participated, but for various reasons a number of them refused to ratify. In spite of this fact, the Conference passed a resolution urging them to do so, and decided

that, in the event of the necessary signatures not having been obtained by December 31st, 1913, the signatory Powers should be requested to appoint delegates to examine the possibility of bringing the Convention into force. The position being still unsatisfactory at the end of the year, the Third International Conference was convoked by the Government of the Netherlands in June 1914, and on this occasion more progress was made, for eleven countries ratified the Convention and seven others stated their readiness to do so. It was therefore decided to bring the Convention into force in spite of the fact that it had not been ratified by all its original signatories, and a Protocol was opened at The Hague by the signing of which any Power could put the Convention into force.

It seems probable that, had it not been for the Great War, more signatory Powers would have ratified, but during the war all action of this kind was suspended, and few, if any, of those countries which had ratified appear to have reached the point of passing the necessary national legislation. It may indeed be asserted that, despite the long period during which efforts had been made to secure applied action, nothing effective in this way had been accomplished before or during the war, though the existence of the Opium Convention had furnished a most valuable instrument, the full application of which would do much to suppress the illicit traffic.

II. THE LEAGUE'S PART IN THE PROBLEM

At the conclusion of the war a number of Governments took vigorous steps to secure more effective progress towards the suppression of the traffic. The most important step was the insertion of a provision in the Treaty of Versailles automatically bringing into force for each of its signatories the International Opium Convention of 1912. An-

other step was the insertion in Article 23 of the Covenant of the League of Nations of a provision, entrusting the League with the duty of supervising the execution of agreements with regard to the traffic.

It was in virtue of this provision of Article 23 that the First Assembly of the League of Nations (November 1920) decided to establish an Advisory Committee on Traffic in Opium and Other Dangerous Drugs. This it did with the full consent and co-operation of the Netherlands Government, which had convened the Conference at The Hague in 1912 and has since acted as the channel of communication between the signatories on matters affecting the application of the Convention.

Before the duties connected with the execution of the Opium Convention were transferred from the Netherlands Government to the League of Nations, all States Parties to the Convention were asked if they objected. Although only one country raised any objection, it was decided that, while the League should become the recognised centre for the carrying out of the Convention, all communication with countries not Members of the League should go through the Netherlands Government.

The Advisory Committee, set up in accordance with the resolution of the First Assembly of the League, consisted of representatives of the countries chiefly concerned. The States invited to nominate members were :

| | | |
|---------------|-------------|----------|
| China | India | Portugal |
| France | Japan | Siam. |
| Great Britain | Netherlands | |

In addition, three assessors, Sir, John Jordan, Mrs. Hamilton Wright, and M. Brenier were appointed for their special knowledge of the question, and subsequently representatives of the United States of America, Germany, and the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes were added;

The Committee is an advisory body to the Council, its secretarial work being in charge of the Opium Section of the Secretariat of the League of Nations, which, by the Assembly Resolution, is entrusted with the duty of collecting information on the arrangements made in the various countries for carrying out the Opium Convention, on the production, distribution, and consumption of the drugs, and on other necessary data for the purpose of enabling the League to exercise general supervision over the execution of the arrangements concluded.

The Advisory Committee has held five sessions and has obtained important results. These may be usefully divided into :

- (a) Steps taken to secure the effective execution of the provisions of the International Opium Convention of 1912, and
- (b) Steps taken to prepare a more comprehensive policy designed to supplement the provisions of that Convention in such a way as to lead to a more rapid suppression of the traffic.

A. MEASURES FOR THE MORE EFFECTIVE EXECUTION OF THE CONVENTION

I. Ratifications of and Adhesions to the Convention.

The Advisory Committee has repeatedly called the attention of the Council and the Assembly, and through them, of the Governments of the Members of the League, to the importance of securing the ratification of the 1912 Convention by all States of the world. At the date of the First Assembly, some forty States had signed, many of them having done so as signatories to the Treaty of Versailles. To-day there are fifty-six signatories, including 51 out of 54 Members of the League, and the majority of those

signatories have already ratified their signatures; among those which have ratified are forty-six Members of the League. In addition to the formal ratification, many of the Members of the League have already passed the necessary legislation.

2. *Questionnaire.*

The Advisory Committee at its first meeting prepared and sent to all States a questionnaire on the cultivation, production and manufacture of opium and other dangerous drugs. A summary of the answers received from the Governments formed a basis for discussion at the second meeting of the Committee. It was realised by the Committee that such information, coupled with the information received in the Annual Reports which the Governments undertook to send to the Secretariat, was a necessary preliminary to any satisfactory international policy for the limitation of the production of raw materials from which the drugs are manufactured, or for the limitation and the control of the drugs themselves.

3. *Importation Certificate System.*

An essential element in the system contemplated by the Convention of 1912 is the establishment of extremely strict control over the international traffic in dangerous drugs, and such control can best be secured by the establishment of a system of licences by all the signatory Powers. To this end, the Committee prepared a model for an import certificate. It recommended that no Government should allow the export of any dangerous drugs except on the production by the exporter of a licence from the importing State certifying that the drugs in question were required for legitimate purposes.

This system, which was first recommended by the Committee in 1922, has already been adopted by thirty-eight Governments, twenty-three of which have actually put it into force.

4. Penalties.

The Committee has suggested to the Council that it would be useful, if Governments were to institute more severe penalties for the internal traffic in and consumption of dangerous drugs. The Assembly and the Council, having declared themselves in agreement, a letter has been sent out to the Governments asking them to put the recommendations into effect. More than one country, without waiting for this step, has acted upon the Committee's suggestion.

5. Exchange of Information regarding Seizure of Drugs.

The Governments of the Members of the League have used the Secretariat as a centre for the exchange of information concerning any seizures of drugs within their territories, and important results have already been achieved by this system. This greatly facilitates the task of the Governments in arresting illicit traffic. The Secretariat has been able, on more than one occasion, when receiving news of some seizure of illicit drugs in one country, to report the matter immediately to the Government of the country from which the drugs have emanated.

6. Free Ports.

The question of the traffic in drugs through Free Ports was discussed at the second session of the Advisory Committee. It was felt that these ports provide a means whereby illicit traffic can easily be carried on, as they do not come under Governmental control. It was suggested that measures might be taken by the Governments enabling them to assume full control over consignments of drugs entering or leaving a free port, but as these measures involved a technical enquiry into the regime of free ports, the Advisory Committee for Communications and Transit was approached with a view to ascertaining what practical measures could be taken in these ports or in free zones to prevent illicit traffic, and what technical proposals could

be made to Governments to that effect. A Sub-Committee was formed by the Advisory Committee for Communications and Transit to which members of the Advisory Committee on Traffic in Opium were invited, and the following measures for the control of dangerous drugs in free ports were proposed:

"Opium should not be despatched from the country of origin to a free port except in the two following cases:

"(a) If the consignment is sent with a through bill of lading made out to a final destination via the free port, the country of origin must not, in such a case, despatch the opium unless the country of destination shown in the through bill of lading has given the necessary guarantees mentioned in the Opium Convention.

"(b) If, according to the bill of lading, the free port is the final destination of the consignment, the consignment should not be despatched by the country of origin unless the sovereign State of the port has given the same guarantees. In such a case, the free port is considered, in respect of these guarantees alone, as being on exactly the same footing as any other part of the territory of that State."

These proposals were incorporated in the Report of the Advisory Committee to the Council in January 1923, and were adopted by the Council at its meeting on February 1st 1923. The possibility of enacting them was expressly safeguarded in the Convention of the International Regime of Maritime Ports concluded at the Second General Transit Conference held at Geneva, November-December 1923. Article 17 of this Convention stipulates that none of its provisions shall affect the measures which one of the Contracting States may feel called upon to take in pursuance

of general international conventions, particularly conventions concluded under the auspices of the League, relating to the export or import of "particular kind of articles, such as opium or other dangerous drugs."

7. *Control of Transit.*

At a League Conference last autumn, an International Convention for the Simplification of Customs Formalities was drawn up and signed on November 3rd, 1923. In order to prevent the inclusion in this Convention of any provisions which might prejudice the application of obligations by which the Contracting Parties to this Convention might be bound by the International Opium Convention of 1912, a clause was inserted in the Protocol to the following effect :

"It is understood that the obligations of the Contracting States under the Convention referred to above do not in any way affect those which they have contracted or may in future contract under international treaties or agreements relating to the preservation of the health of human beings, animals or plants (particularly the International Opium Convention), the protection of public morals or international security."

As a further safeguard for the provisions of the International Opium Convention, an Article was inserted in the Convention and Statute on the International Regime of Railways concluded at Geneva in December 1923, which reads as follows :

"Nothing in this Statute shall affect the measures which one of the Contracting States is or may feel called upon to take in pursuance of general international conventions to which it is a party, or which may be concluded hereafter, particularly conventions concluded under the auspices of the League of

Nations, relating to the transit, export or import of particular kinds of articles such as opium, or other dangerous drugs, arms, or the produce of fisheries, or in pursuance of general conventions intended to prevent any infringement of industrial, literary or artistic property, or relating to false marks, false indications of origin or other methods of unfair competition."

B. MEASURES PROPOSED FOR SUPPLEMENTING THE CONVENTION OF 1912.

At an early stage in its labours, it became clear to the Advisory Committee that the measures above discussed for securing the application of the Convention of 1912 would not in themselves be sufficient to obtain the complete suppression of the illicit traffic in drugs, however sincerely the Governments might endeavour to carry out their undertakings. In other words, the Committee reached the conclusion that, if there were a vast production of the raw products from which drugs are manufactured, these drugs would inevitably find their way into the world market. They are so small in volume and of such immense value in comparison with their weight and size that illicit traffic is a very simple matter yielding great profit, and no measure of control can succeed entirely in suppressing it.

The Committee therefore decided, as has been previously mentioned, that it was necessary to evolve a policy for the limitation of the production of raw materials from which drugs are manufactured. Such a restriction of the production of the raw materials involved a self-denying ordinance on the part of Governments within whose territories the poppy and coca leaves are cultivated (that is to say, in China, India, Turkey, Persia, Serbia, Greece, Turkistan, Afghanistan, Bulgaria, Siberia, Java, Peru, Bolivia).

It would necessarily have to take the form of a new international agreement and the first step was to determine the world's annual legitimate, scientific and medical requirements of dangerous drugs. The Council therefore, on the recommendation of the Advisory Committee, invited the Governments of the Members of the League to prepare an estimate of their total annual requirements for the inhabitants of their territories for medicinal, scientific and other uses, and an Opium Sub-Committee, formed with the assistance of the Health Committee of the League, was set up to examine the question.

This Sub-Committee has reported its opinion that 600 milligrammes (about 10 grains English) per head per year might be considered a provisional maximum amount of raw opium (containing on an average 10 per cent. of morphine) required for medical and scientific purposes. The Health Committee, at its meeting in February of this year, considered this report and took the view that 450 milligrammes might be taken as a provisional maximum for countries possessing a well-developed medical service.

The report of the Sub-Committee has yet to come before the Opium Committee, whose ultimate object is to work out an approximate total of the world's legitimate requirements of dangerous drugs, and then to propose to the States a new distribution of production which would limit the total output to the amount required for the purposes already defined. Agreement once secured as to the legitimate requirements of each State, the practical execution of this plan would raise few difficulties for the reason that poppy plants and coca leaves cannot be concealed and are easily destroyed in the fields of cultivation.

The Advisory Committee had decided upon this plan of procedure, and had received a number of replies from Governments giving estimates of their annual internal requirements for legitimate purposes, when, at its session

in May 1923, it received further proposals on the subject from the American delegation to the Committee. These proposals were summarised as follows :

"As a concrete expression of principles so far as concerns opium and its derivatives, the following propositions are submitted to the Opium Advisory Committee in the earnest hope that they will be agreed to and their adoption recommended to the Council and Assembly of the League of Nations, in order that the doubts, if any, which now exist as to the true intent and meaning of the Hague Opium Convention shall be permanently removed :

"1. If the purpose of the Hague Opium Convention is to be achieved according to its spirit and true intent, it must be recognised that the use of opium products for other than medicinal and scientific purposes is an abuse and not legitimate."

"2. In order to prevent the abuse of these products it is necessary to exercise the control of the production of raw opium in such a manner that there will be no surplus available for non-medicinal and non-scientific purposes."

The American Delegation urged the adoption of the proposals as a political necessity for the true fulfilment of the purposes of the Convention. The Advisory Committee expressed agreement with this view and decided to continue its investigations into international requirements and to take all the other necessary preparatory measures to facilitate the convening of an international conference of the producing and manufacturing States in order to agree on a basis of distribution.

While the Advisory Committee was engaged on the question of the limitation of production as suggested in the American proposals, it was at the same time confronted with the acute problem of the continuance of opium-smoking

in a number of countries in the Far East. As the purpose of Chapter II of the International Opium Convention of 1912 is to secure gradually the complete suppression of such smoking, and as the provisions of that chapter are not at present being carried out owing partly to a number of international difficulties, the Advisory Committee recommended that a special conference on the suppression of opium-smoking should be summoned. This conference would consist of States with Far Eastern Possessions and its purpose would be to concert measures to secure gradual suppression. A programme of police measures for the consideration of this conference was sketched by the Advisory Committee. The Report of the Advisory Committee recommending the two conferences and accepting the American proposals came before the Council at its July session. The Council transmitted the Report of the Advisory Committee without comment to the Assembly for its full consideration.

After discussion, the Assembly adopted the Report and Resolutions and asked the Council to take the necessary steps to put these resolutions into effect. In regard to the second conference, which is to deal with the limitation of the production of raw opium and the coca leaf for export to the amount required for medicinal and scientific purposes and the limitation of the amounts of morphine, heroin and cocaine to be manufactured, the Assembly suggested, for the consideration of the Council, the possibility of enlarging this Conference so as to include within its scope all countries which are Members of the League or Parties to the Convention of 1912, with a view to securing their adhesion to the principles that may be embodied in any agreement reached. The Council fixed the date of the Conferences for November 1924, and decided to enlarge the second conference in the manner suggested by the Assembly. At the same time it appointed a representative preparatory committee to draw up the programme of the two conferences.

PART 2

I. TRAFFIC IN WOMEN AND CHILDREN.

The League of Nations has occupied itself with the question of the traffic in women and children in virtue of Article 23 (c) of the Covenant, which states that the Members of the League "will entrust the League with the general supervision over the execution of agreements with regard to the traffic in women and children, and the traffic in opium and other dangerous drugs."

It will be readily admitted that the traffic in women and children is a problem to the solution of which the new machinery provided by the establishment of the League of Nations is properly applied. It is in the first place an international problem. Very rarely are the various acts which together constitute a case of trafficking perpetrated within the boundaries of a single State. Normally a trafficker buys his wares in one country and sells them in another, often transporting them through a third country or more. Against so widely ramified an evil the isolated efforts, however strenuous, of individual States cannot be fully effective.

Secondly, the problem directly concerns Governments. That the traffic may be suppressed, it is necessary that the trafficker be subject to punishment, the exercise of which is a function of the State.

These characteristics make the problem eminently fitted for treatment by the League.

Impelled by the recognition of these two essential features of the traffic, the voluntary organisations which, towards the end of the last century, had been formed in various countries to combat the traffic, proceeded, in the

first place, to unite their scattered efforts in an international plan of actions, and secondly, to invoke the aid of Governments.

As a result of the first International Congress of the voluntary organisations, held in 1899, the International Bureau for the Suppression of the Traffic in Women and Children was formed, with the object of co-ordinating the work of the voluntary organisations.

The Congress was followed by governmental action. On the invitation of the International Bureau, the French Government convened, in 1904, the first diplomatic Conference to deal with the traffic. The second diplomatic Conference was convened by the same Government in 1910. These two Conferences were followed respectively by the Agreement of 1904 and the Convention of 1910.

Under the terms of the Agreement, the parties thereto undertook each to appoint a central authority with the duty of collecting information about the traffic, of watching ports where the traffic might be carried on, and of assisting its victims.

The parties to the Convention bound themselves to punish those guilty of the traffic, as defined in the Convention, even though the acts constituting the offence had been committed in other countries.

By the time of the institution of the League of Nations (January 10th, 1920), sixteen States were parties to the Agreement, which was also applied in a number of British, Dutch, French and German colonies, and nine States were parties to the Convention.

ADVENT OF THE LEAGUE

Such, briefly stated, was the result of the application to the question of the preliminary machinery for the solution of international problems. In the following pages an attempt

will be made to show to what effect the machinery made available by the institution of the League of Nations has been applied to this particular problem.

The first step taken in execution of the provision of the Covenant was administrative; and consisted in the appointment in May 1920, of an official on the Secretariat of the League "to keep in touch with all matters relative to the White Slave Traffic."

1. The Conference of 1921.

The First Assembly of the League, which was held in November 1920, showed a determination to make effective use of the new organisation. Having taken stock of the results achieved by previous international efforts, it decided that a questionnaire should be sent by the Secretariat to all Governments to ascertain the measures taken or proposed in the various countries to combat the traffic. It also invited the Council to convene an International Conference which, having co-ordinated the replies of the Governments to the questionnaire, should "endeavour to secure a common understanding between the Governments with a view to united action."

This International Conference on the Traffic in Women and Children was held at Geneva from June 30th to July 5th, 1921. Thirty-four States were represented.

Before examining the results of the Conference, reference should be made briefly to the manner in which it was conducted. League methods are of interest to those who wish to appreciate justly not only what has been done through the League in any one sphere of activity, but also its special characteristics as a means of international co-operation.

The Conference of 1921 differed from the earlier diplomatic Conferences and broadly resembled the other Conferences held by the League, in the following respects.

The ground was prepared in the first instance by the issue of a questionnaire designed to elicit all available information on what various Governments had done, and generally what they were prepared to do, for the suppression of the traffic. The replies to the questionnaire provided delegates with a firm ground of fact from which they could proceed without delay to discussion, compromise, and agreement on clearly defined issues.

To the Conference were invited, not only States which were parties to the previous international engagements, but all States willing to take part.

The Conference was held in public. It heard not only delegates of Governments, but the representative of a voluntary organisation—the International Bureau for the Suppression of the Traffic in Women and Children—who furnished a detailed and instructive report on the work of the voluntary organisations.

Having examined the replies to the questionnaire, the Conference engaged in a comprehensive discussion of the situation as it presented itself in the light of these replies, and of the other information at its disposal. The result was the adoption of a Final Act (1), containing a number of recommendations for action by Governments. The Final Act having been approved by the Council, the Second Assembly (September 1921) invited Governments to authorise their delegates to sign forthwith a Convention, submitted by the British Government, in which many provisions of the Final Act were given conventional form, and the *International Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Women and Children* (2) was opened for signature at Geneva on September 30th, 1921.

(1) League of Nations document C. 223. M. 162. 1921.

(2) League of Nations document A. 125 (2). 1921.

The Convention was signed by thirty-three States. Of these, seventeen (1) have, at the time of writing, ratified the Convention, and of non-signatory States three (2) have adhered to it.

2. *Features of the Convention of 1921* (3).

The new Convention was intended to supplement rather than to replace the earlier international acts relating to the traffic. More than one delegate bore witness to the remarkable effect of both the international Agreement of 1904 and the Convention of 1910, which, in those countries where they had been applied, had rendered the traffic difficult, dangerous and unremunerative. The First Article of the new Convention therefore prescribes that the High Contracting Parties, if not already parties to the Agreement of 1904 and the Convention of 1910, shall ratify or adhere to them without delay. Of the new provisions in the Convention of 1921, the first is that the punishments prescribed by the Convention of 1910 for traffickers in women and girls are also made applicable to those who engage in the traffic of children of both sexes.

The Convention of 1921 requires the punishment of those guilty not only of the offences committed, but of attempts to commit, and, within legal limits, of acts preparatory to the commission of such offences.

The new Convention raised to 21 the age-limit which in the earlier Convention had been fixed at 20.

The provisions of the Convention of 1921 relating to extradition go further than those of the Convention of

(1) South Africa, Australia, Austria, Belgium, British Empire, Canada, Cuba, Greece, India, Czechoslovakia, Norway, Netherlands, Roumania, New Zealand, Siam, Portugal, Latvia.

(2) Denmark, Finland, Panama.

(3) The Conference of 1921, decided to employ throughout the expression "Traffic in Women and Children" instead of the familiar "White Slave Traffic".

1910; for, whereas the Convention of 1910 simply provided that the offences contemplated in the Convention should be included in the list of offences for which extradition might be granted in accordance with extradition conventions already existing between the Contracting Parties, by the Convention of 1921 the High Contracting Parties agreed that in cases where there were no extradition conventions in force between them, they would take all measures within their power to extradite or provide for the extradition of persons accused or convicted of the offences specified in Articles 1 and 2 of the Convention of May 4th, 1910.

Another important addition in the 1921 Convention was that the High Contracting Parties agreed that if they had not already taken legislative or administrative measures relating to the licensing and supervision of employment agencies and offices, they would prescribe such regulations as were required for the protection of women and children seeking employment in another country.

At the Conference of 1921 it was pointed out that the hitherto unprecedented scale of emigration, due to the recent political changes especially in Central and Eastern Europe, had created a situation of which the traffickers had quickly taken advantage. An Article dealing with the protection of emigrants was therefore embodied in the new Convention.

3. The League Organisation.

Another important result of the Conference of 1921 was the recommendation that the Council of the League, in dealing with the traffic, should be assisted by a standing Committee. Acting on this recommendation, the Council appointed, in September 1921, the Advisory Committee on Traffic in Women and Children, which has now held two sessions—in June 1922 and March 1923.

The Advisory Committee, as originally constituted, was composed of the delegates of nine Governments (1) and of Assessors appointed by five voluntary organisations (2), enjoying all the rights of Government delegates except the right to vote.

At its first session, the Committee recommended, and the Council subsequently agreed, that the Governments of Germany and the United States of America should be invited to send delegates to the Committee. A delegate from the United States attended the second session of the Committee in an advisory capacity. Germany has not yet accepted the invitation.

Formally invested with the function of advising the Council on all matters relative to the traffic, and counting among its members representatives of those voluntary organisations which are closely acquainted with the problem, the Advisory Committee is the organisation which, in the first instance, examines relevant proposals brought before the Assembly, and generally defines the policy which should guide the League in this sphere of its activity. Effect has already been given by the Council or Assembly to most of the proposals of the Committee, whose existence is a guarantee that the policy of the League in this, as in other domains, will, in so far as Governments give effect to it, be continuous, properly co-ordinated, and based on expert knowledge.

4. *Supervision of Ratification.*

The League makes a constant endeavour to ensure the ratification of the Convention of 1921, as well as adhesion

(1) Denmark, France, Great Britain, Italy, Japan, Poland, Rumania, Spain, Uruguay.

(2) International Bureau for the Suppression of the Traffic in Women and Children; Jewish Association for the Protection of Girls and Women; Association internationale catholique pour les œuvres de protection de la jeune fille; Fédération des unions nationales des amies de la jeune fille; Women's International Organisation.

to the Agreement of 1904 and the Convention of 1910. Not only has the Council specifically urged States which have failed to ratify or adhere to the Convention to do so without delay, but the question has been exhaustively discussed at each of the last two sessions of the Assembly. It will probably be found that this open discussion goes far to encourage acquiescence, which, in most cases, is delayed merely by administrative difficulties.

5. *Reports.*

Annual reports on the traffic are, each year, received from Members of the League and from non-Member States which are parties to any of the International Agreements on the subject. These reports are of great help in enabling the Committee to appreciate the situation at any given time,

6. *Licensed Houses.*

Whilst it is sometimes claimed that the question of licensed houses is an internal question and therefore outside the competence of the League, the majority of the members of the Advisory Committee have supported the opinion that the licensed house is much the most hospitable market for the traffic and that, consequently, the traffic cannot be suppressed if the phenomenon which, on this hypothesis, is its principal cause is to be overlooked.

The Committee, at its second session, adopted a resolution to the effect that "pending the abolition of the system of licensed houses no foreign woman should be employed or carry on her profession as a prostitute in a licensed house". As this resolution was adopted by the Committee only after considerable opposition, the Council decided simply to communicate it to Governments, along with the relevant portions of the minutes of the sessions of the Council and the Committee.

The Council, however, "recognising the connection which may exist between a system of licensed houses and

the traffic in women and children", has invited States which have recently abandoned the system to explain the motives of their decision to abandon it, in so far as they concern the traffic, and States which still maintain the system to indicate whether their experience leads them to the conclusion that the system encourages the traffic or otherwise. On the nature of the replies of Governments to these questions will doubtless largely depend the future action of the League on this subject.

7. Enquiry into the Traffic.

At the second session of the Advisory Committee, the delegate of the United States proposed that, in order to furnish the Committee with full and accurate information on the traffic, experts should be appointed to investigate on the spot in such countries as they might select, the extent of the traffic in women and children and the effectiveness of the measures hitherto taken to suppress it. The Council, approving the principle, which subsequently received the warm support of the Fourth Assembly, that such an enquiry should, with the consent and collaboration of the Governments concerned, be held, asked its member Governments each to appoint an expert. Seven nominations have been received. The Council itself has appointed as President Dr. William Snow, Chairman of the United States Social Hygiene Bureau. The choice of these recognised experts (1) gives reason to expect that the enquiry will be conducted on thoroughly scientific lines and will give good results.

The American Bureau of Social Hygiene has shown its interest in the enquiry by offering to bear its expenses up

(1) Dr. William Snow (United States of America); M. Isidore Maus (Belgium); Mr. S. W. Harris (British Empire); M. Hennequin (France); Princess Cristina Giustiniani Bandini (Italy); M. Alfred de Meuron (Switzerland); Dr. Paulina Luisi (Uruguay).

to the sum of 75,000 dollars. This offer has been accepted by the League.

The experts are to meet early in April this year.

II. SUPPRESSION OF THE TRAFFIC IN OBSCENE PUBLICATIONS

The traffic in obscene publications, like the traffic in women and children, is an evil which has its roots in many countries and no country may hope to escape its effects unless all combine to dislodge the cause. In attempting to achieve this result through the League, the nations of the world have but applied the latest method to the solution of a problem which has baffled earlier attempts.

I. Pre-League Efforts.

The history of pre-League efforts follows a course parallel to that already indicated in connection with the traffic in women and children. A Congress of voluntary organisations formed in various countries to combat the spread of pornographic objects and writings, which was held in 1908, recommended that action should be taken by Governments to frame a common policy. On the invitation of the French Government, a diplomatic Conference for the suppression of the traffic in obscene publications, consisting of the delegates of Governments, invited to be represented at the Conference on Traffic in Women and Children of 1910, was held in Paris from April 18th to May 4th of that year.

This Conference drew up two Acts : (1) An International Administrative Agreement by which the Contracting Parties undertook each to appoint a central authority whose duty should be to supervise the suppression of the traffic in the country in question, and to communicate information to the corresponding authorities of other countries, and (2) a draft International Convention.

When this question was brought before the League of Nations in 1922, the Agreement had been ratified or adhered to by seventeen States, but the Convention had never passed the drafting stage.

2. *The Intervention of the League.*

Unchecked by the existence of international engagements for the punishment of offenders, there were signs that the traffic had of recent years grown in extent and audacity. Consequently, the proposal for an International Conference, brought before the Third Assembly of the League (September 1922) by the British Government, was welcomed by the Assembly, and the French Government, in recognition of the initiative which it had taken in 1910, was invited to convene a Conference under the auspices of the League.

The French Government having accepted this offer, the International Conference for the Suppression of the Circulation of and Traffic in Obscene Publications, consisting of the representatives of thirty-five States, was held at Geneva from August 31st to September 12th, 1923.

Nine months before the Conference opened, a questionnaire was addressed by the Secretariat to Governments asking their opinion on the various important points on which debate was expected, such as the advisability of attempting to include in the Convention a definition of the word "obscene", increase of penalty for offences committed in respect of minors, and extradition of those guilty of serious offences. The replies received from thirty-one Governments provided the delegates with remarkably full information on the attitude of the Governments to the various questions, and this information enabled them to concentrate at once on the vital issues.

The Conference, basing its discussions on the draft Convention of 1910, drew up an International Convention for

the Suppression of the Circulation of and Traffic in Obscene Publications, followed by a Final Act. The Convention was opened for signature on September 12th, 1923, and has already been signed by the representatives of thirty-four States.

3. *Special Features of the Convention of 1923.*

The punitive provisions of the new Convention are drawn up with a fullness and precision calculated to expose the traffic at each of its vulnerable points. A comparison of the punitive articles of the Draft Convention of 1910 and of the Convention of 1923 is instructive.

Article I of the draft Convention of 1910 reads :

“It shall be a punishable offence :

“(1) To manufacture or be in possession of obscene writings, drawings, pictures or articles for the purpose of trading in or distributing the same;

“(2) To import or cause to be imported, convey or cause to be conveyed, for the above purpose, any such obscene writings, drawings, pictures or articles, or to put them in circulation in any other manner;

“(3) To trade, even privately, therein or to make a trade of lending thereof;

“(4) To advertise such trade by any means whatsoever.”

Article I of the Convention of 1923 reads :

“It shall be a punishable offence :

“(1) For purpose of or by way of trade or for distribution or public exhibition to make or produce or have in possession obscene writings, drawings, prints, paintings, printed matter, pictures, posters, emblems, photographs, cinematograph films, or any other obscene objects;

"(2) For the purposes above mentioned to import, convey or export or cause to be imported, conveyed or exported any of the said obscene matters or things, or in any manner whatsoever to put them into circulation;

"(3) To carry on or take part in a business, whether public or private, concerned with any of the said obscene matters or things, or to deal in the said matters or things in any manner whatsoever, or to distribute them or to exhibit them publicly or to make a business of lending them,

"(4) To advertise or make known by any means whatsoever, in view of assisting in the said punishable circulation or traffic, that a person is engaged in any of the above punishable acts, or to advertise or to make known how or from whom the said obscene matters or things can be procured either directly or indirectly."

Besides the numerous punitive provisions which, as will be seen from the above texts, have been added to the new Convention, the latter contains new Articles providing for the right of search, the convocation of further conferences to revise the Convention, should need arise; and submission of disputes arising out of the interpretation of the Convention to the Permanent Court of International Justice.]

The governmental replies to the questionnaire showed virtual unanimity of opinion in favour of leaving each State free to give to the word "obscene" the meaning which seemed to it appropriate, and a statement upon this and other important points is given in the Final Act, which also contains certain recommendations on subjects not considered suitable for incorporation in the Convention itself, such as the recommendation that offences connected with the

traffic should be held to be aggravated when committed in respect of minors.

Moreover, the Final Act refers to a very important question on which opinions were sharply divided at the Conference, namely, that of incitement to abortion and anti-conception propaganda. Some delegates maintained that an article should be inserted in the Convention making the spread of such propaganda punishable; some others opposed on the ground that, in so far as the propaganda was obscene, its suppression was already provided for by the Convention, but that it could not be considered as *ipso facto* obscene.

The Conference contented itself with expressing in the Final Act a desire, with which some delegates disagreed, that steps be taken to arrive at an international agreement on the subject.

It is, of course, too soon to speak of the ratification of the Convention of 1923. The Convention of 1921 on the Traffic in Women and Children, as the figures already quoted show, has within two years been ratified or adhered to by twice as many States as was the Convention of 1910 over the much longer period which ensued between the adoption of the Convention and the institution of the League and it may be hoped that the Convention on Obscene Publications of 1923 will fare at least as well. Whatever may be the ultimate success of the League in obtaining the ratification of these Conventions, to secure which must be its principal task in these two fields of common international endeavour, it is noteworthy that within a year of the application of the machinery of the League there were drawn up and signed international acts of so comprehensive a character that the final eradication of both the traffic in women and children and the traffic in obscene publications may be said to wait only on the effective application of the Conventions of 1921, and 1923.

III. INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION FOR MUTUAL ASSISTANCE IN THE RELIEF OF PEOPLES OVERTAKEN BY DISASTER

The Fourth Assembly had before it a scheme formulated by Senator Circolo, President of the Italian Red Cross Organisation, in which it is proposed that the Members of the League of Nations constitute themselves a federation for the purpose of rendering aid to countries which have been the victims of great catastrophes. It is hoped that if the nations of the world were formally to engage to help one another in such emergencies, the provision of relief would be more sure and more speedy than it is at present, when it is left to private benevolence. The Assembly decided, as a first step, that the scheme, which is in the form of a Draft Statute defining the organisation of the proposed federation and its relation to the Red Cross, should be sent to all Governments for their observations. When the observations of Governments are received, the League will be in a position to decide upon the further action to be taken.

PART 3

I. THE REPATRIATION OF PRISONERS OF WAR

Since its foundation, the League of Nations has been actively engaged in mitigating the human wretchedness caused by the war. On one point—that of returning prisoners of war to their homes—it has attained complete and final success.

In April 1920 nearly half-a-million war prisoners or interned soldiers were still vainly waiting, sometimes in conditions of appalling misery, for means to be sent home. A number of charitable organisations had been formed to deal with the situation and their activities had done much to lessen the suffering. But their resources were insufficient and the position became so serious that one report predicted the probable death in the ensuing winter of most of the prisoners left in Siberia, variously estimated at between 120,000 and 200,000.

In these circumstances the Council of the League, by a resolution dated April 11th, 1920, appointed Dr. Nansen to co-ordinate all the efforts made hitherto on behalf of the prisoners of war and to organise their repatriation. The undertaking was tremendous and funds were almost non-existent. Nevertheless, by July 1st, 1922, Dr. Nansen had carried out the task at a cost of not more than £400,000. Altogether 427,386 prisoners belonging to 26 different nationalities were repatriated, thanks to the efforts of the League High Commissioner, assisted by the International Red Cross and other charitable institutions.

II. RUSSIAN REFUGEES .

In 1920 there were more than a million and a-half refugees scattered about Europe, old and young, men, women, and children, belonging to every class and every walk in life, unable to claim any State as their own, most of them penniless and not in a position to earn their living. As the result of an appeal addressed to it by the great charitable associations, the Council of the League, convinced of the necessity of co-ordinating all relief work on behalf of refugees, entrusted Dr. Nansen with the task of "attaining a definite settlement of the question of Russian refugees."

(a) *Inter-Governmental Conference (August 1921).*

A Conference of Government representatives, which met under the auspices of the League at Geneva in August 1921, declared that aid to refugees was a moral duty in the fulfilment of which all States must co-operate. The Conference laid down the lines of action for Dr. Nansen, the High Commissioner, and asked each Government to appoint a special official to keep in touch with Dr. Nansen. The most urgent task was to help the refugees to find food and lodging, for most of them were completely destitute. Through Dr. Nansen's efforts this difficulty was overcome, with the help given by the Governments and charitable associations. But this was only a palliative, since the High Commissioner could not continue indefinitely to ask for considerable sums of money from the Governments and charitable associations. It was objectionable also from the point of view of the refugees themselves. The real solution of the problem, pending repatriation, was to enable the refugees to live by their own work. This required preliminary work of two kinds, namely: to take a census of refugees according to their professions, and to find what

countries would be willing to receive them and give them work.

The census was taken at the instigation of the High Commissioner's office and with the help of the International Labour Office. The High Commissioner set up offices in most of the capitals of Central and Eastern Europe, and employment agencies were formed in several of these cities.

(b) *Russian Refugees in Constantinople.*

The work of helping refugees was well under weigh when the position of refugees at Constantinople grew suddenly worse owing to the cessation of the very important assistance hitherto rendered by the French Government and the American Red Cross. Twenty-five thousand refugees were threatened with death by starvation. The High Commissioner urgently despatched a cargo of flour to Constantinople. On his intercession, the French Government agreed to continue the maintenance of part of the refugees. On the other hand, the American Relief Administration and the American Red Cross undertook to provision the refugees for four months, and to contribute 25,000 dollars towards evacuating them to countries where they could find work, on condition that the League found a sum of £30,000. Great Britain offered to give £10,000 if the other members of the League would contribute between them £20,000. The sum was raised and a Committee undertook to organise the work of evacuation. With their help 25,000 refugees were sent from Constantinople to America, Germany, Austria, Bulgaria, Hungary, Czechoslovakia and the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes. One thousand others found work locally. The business of evacuating and placing refugees is still continuing, through the close co-operation of the High Commissioner, the International Red Cross, the great relief organisations and the Governments.

(c) *Legal-Status of Russian Refugees.*

The business of evacuation raised a very delicate point, namely that of the legal status of refugees. Some refugees possessed identity cards issued to them by the Government of the country in which they resided, but these cards were not recognised by other Governments and so could not take the place of passports. The result was that refugees could not go to a country where they had either relatives or friends or in which they could find work, merely because they possessed no papers recognised by passport authorities. A Conference of Government representatives summoned at Geneva by the High Commissioner in July 1922 agreed upon a simplified "standard" identity card. The High Commissioner asked all the Governments to adopt this card for refugees in their territory and to recognise similar cards issued by other Governments. Thirty-four Governments, including Germany and Turkey, have up to date accepted this proposal.

As certain categories of Russian refugees showed a strong desire to return home, negotiations were undertaken with the Soviet Government for the purpose of assuring their return to Russia under satisfactory conditions. About eight thousand refugees from Bulgaria and Greece were repatriated in this manner. The High Commissioner repatriated only those refugees who wished to return to their country. No measure has been taken that could be interpreted as an attempt to induce refugees to return to Russia.

In view of the fact that the present position of Russian refugees, although substantially improved, is still precarious, and that the cessation of the High Commissioner's work would undo at one stroke everything so far achieved in favour of the refugees, the Fourth Assembly of the League asked the Council to request the Governments of States

Members of the League to be good enough to continue the assistance they have given the High Commissioner hitherto, particularly in developing facilities for the general and professional education of refugees, and in finding work for those who are unemployed.

III. PROTECTION OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN IN THE NEAR EAST

A task akin to that of the suppression of the traffic in women and children on which the League has engaged is the rescue of the deported women and children in the Near East. As is generally known, in the course of the protracted military operations in that region, many women were taken from their homes and removed by their captors to the interior of Asia Minor. The Council of the League, in April 1921, appointed a Commission (1) which acted with strict impartiality and without making any distinction between the various races and religions. Working with great devotion under most trying conditions, it assisted in restoring to their own people large numbers of women and children; it secured the help of the Inter-Allied Police and other authorities in Constantinople and founded League of Nations "houses of refuge" at Constantinople and Aleppo, where persons of every nationality were received. The religious authorities of the Greek, Armenian, and Mussulman communities were invited to furnish contributions and to give their advice on the administration of these houses.

The one at Constantinople acts as a clearing-house where the women and children remain while enquiries are made into their nationality. Once this is established, if it is not known where their relatives are, they are entrusted to the

(1) Dr. Kennedy, Miss Emma Cushman, Madame Gaultin (since replaced by Miss Jeppé, for work at Aleppo).

care of one of the various charitable voluntary organisations which operate in the city. At Aleppo there are no private organisations of this nature on, whose assistance the League Commission may rely. Consequently, at the Aleppo home, the women and children remain, in some cases, for periods of several months while the necessary enquiries are being made. It is an interesting feature of the home at Aleppo that the women and children sheltered there are taught useful trades during their period of residence.

The work of the League Commission, both at Constantinople and Aleppo, has been warmly praised by Turkish and Christian women alike.

IV. REFUGEES IN ASIA MINOR

The League took energetic action for the help of Armenian, Greek and Turkish refugees in Asia Minor. On the receipt of a telegram announcing the defeat and retreat of the Greek Army followed by tens of thousands of refugees, the Third Assembly in 1922, which was in session at the time, immediately authorised Dr. Nansen to use for the benefit of the refugees the organisation that had been set up to deal with the Russian refugees in that part of the world.

(a) *First Aid.*

The Council at the same time voted a credit of 100,000 gold francs so that Dr. Nansen might take the administrative measures that were immediately necessary while waiting for further funds. Before the close of the Assembly, New Zealand, Greece, Canada, Spain, Switzerland, Norway, Denmark and Brazil made important contributions. Great Britain alone contributed £19,208. Delegates of the International Committee of the Red Cross left at once for

Constantinople in order to bring help put at their disposal by the British Red Cross and the International "Save the Children" Fund. They were followed by Dr. Nansen, who made a rapid survey of the situation and discovered that it was much graver than had been imagined. The number of refugees was no less than 750,000, of whom 80 % were women and children, most of them without clothes, food or lodging. The danger of epidemics increased daily. Upon his arrival the High Commissioner got into touch with the Government authorities and charitable associations. A general plan of co-operation was drawn up in concert with the American Relief Administration, the American Red Cross, the Near East Relief and other organisations; measures were taken to assure the urgent transport of flour from Egypt and Bulgaria; and two members of the Epidemic Commission of the League went to the Near East to help in the sanitary organisation of the refugee camps (1).

The Allied High Commissioners put six British ships at the disposal of Dr. Nansen for the purpose of evacuating refugees.

With the collaboration of the Greek High Commissioner and the Patriarchate, the League High Commissioner was able, after having collected the necessary information as to the location, number and destination of the refugees, to issue instructions to the ships and to take measures for the reception of the refugees at the other end. More than 25,000 were evacuated. The High Commissioner put 200 tons of flour at the disposal of the Red Crescent at Smyrna, supplied this organisation with a large quantity of medical stores, and assured the transport from Constantinople to Asia Minor of 10,000 Turkish refugees in time to take part in the autumn sowing.

(1) For a description of the sanitary measures taken, see the pamphlet in this series on the work of the League Health Organisation.

Finally, Dr. Nansen appealed to the Governments and public opinion to furnish him with what he needed in money or in kind to relieve the lot of the refugees. Belgium sent 2,000 tents and clothes to the High Commissariat, the Italian Red Cross sent a tent-hospital of 200 beds together with the necessary medical and administrative staff, and Great Britain sent more than 200,000 suits of clothes; further gifts came from France, Greece, Poland, etc. This enabled Dr. Nansen to work out a plan to establish the refugees in Western Thrace and other parts of Greece as self-supporting colonies. The development of these colonies made it possible at relatively small expense to take care of at least 10,000 refugees and to set them to productive work.

The High Commissioner took energetic measures, for helping the thousands of refugees from Anatolia, who in the spring of 1923 were at Constantinople in a condition of absolute destitution and ravaged by disease. There were more than 500 deaths a week from epidemics among these refugees. With the limited funds put at his disposal by the "All-British Appeal", the High Commissioner organised a supply of medical assistance, which brought mortality down to a normal figure. Some thousands of these refugees were subsequently installed in the Western Thrace colony and the rest evacuated by the Greek Government,

(b) *A Settlement Scheme.*

All this assistance, however, had reached only a comparatively small number of refugees, and help from charitable associations gradually decreased. The United States Government had already notified the British, French and Italian Governments that American Relief Associations would be obliged to bring to an end by June 30th the important work they had undertaken in Greece unless a general

plan of such a nature as to settle finally the whole problem could be framed by that time.

The Greek Government lacked the resources necessary to deal with the problem and asked the League to lend its moral support for the floating of a loan, the proceeds from which should be devoted to the settlement of refugees (1).

The Council decided to undertake a double enquiry. On the one hand, it asked the Financial Committee of the League to study Greece's possibility of raising an international loan; on the other hand, encouraged by the success of the colonisation scheme in Western Thrace, it requested Dr. Nansen, the High Commissioner, to study how the bulk of the refugees could be settled and made self-supporting.

Colonel Procter, a representative of Dr. Nansen, went to Greece to study the means of settling refugees on Greek soil either as farmers or as industrial workers, and the Financial Committee of the League sent one of its members, M. Parmentier (France), to Greece to collect the information necessary for studying the loan question. On the basis of these reports, the Council of the League, on September 29th, 1923, adopted a settlement for Greek refugees on a productive basis.

(c) *Autonomous Committee for settling Refugees.*

The settlement scheme involved the raising of a loan of between three and six million pounds sterling, its expenditure to be controlled by an Autonomous Committee. The Greek Government has already received, through the good

(1) For a full description of the scheme, see the pamphlet in this series devoted to the economic and financial activities of the League.

offices of the Bank of England and on certain conditions, the offer of an advance of one million sterling for the time when the Autonomous Committee was appointed.

The Greek Government is to transfer to the Autonomous Committee full rights over an extent of territory of at least 500,000 hectares suitable for settlement. It is to put at the disposal of the Committee the revenues from the loan and from any provisional advance that it may obtain.

The Committee is composed of four members. The President is Mr. Henry Morgenthau, former United States Ambassador to Constantinople. Mr. Morgenthau, who is a member of the Executive Committee of the American Red Cross and of the Near East Relief Fund, has been appointed by the Council of the League and in the Committee will primarily represent American relief organisation. A second member, Colonel Campbell, represents the League in the Committee, which includes two other members appointed by the Greek Government in agreement with the Council.

The Autonomous Committee is not an executive organ of the Council, but is a separate body to carry out the scheme. Once this scheme is set up, the responsibility of the Council consists chiefly of the consideration of periodical reports. The Committee started work in November 1923 and has presented its first report.

V. BULGARIAN INHABITANTS OF WESTERN THRACE

In the month of April 1923, the Bulgarian Government asked the Council to recommend measures for improving the position of Bulgarians who had been deported from Western Thrace by the Greek authorities.

The Council requested Dr. Nansen to do everything in his power to relieve the lot of these people and to

recommend the Greek Government to assist in this work with all the means at its disposal. The representative of the High Commissioner in Greece left immediately for Thessaly, to which the Bulgarians from Western Thrace had been deported.

The High Commissioner was able to secure food and lodging for the deportees from the Greek Government and, at the suggestion of the High Commissioner, the Government began to organise the return of the deportees to their homes. By the end of September 2,000 had already been repatriated. The return of the whole of the further 4,000 from Thessaly and the Island of Cerigo is now taking place.

VI. SCHEME FOR ESTABLISHING ARMENIAN REFUGEES IN THE CAUCASUS

The President of the Armenian National Delegation, M. Noradounjhan, put before the Council in its session of September 1923 a scheme for settling 50,000 Armenians in the Caucasus near Eghtmiadzré and Sardarabad. The Armenians would support themselves by cultivating a great tract of what is now waste land. The Council decided to publish an appeal to all the States Members of the League for charitable contributions to this enterprise. If the sums obtained as a result of this appeal and the funds that the promoters of the plan succeed in collecting either from charitable organisations or by any other means are sufficient, the Council would be ready to put the technical organisations of the League at the disposal of the promoters of the plan for any assistance they could render.

The Council asked Dr. Nansen to examine the possibility of getting identity cards issued to the Armenian refugees similar to those with which Russian refugees are now provided.

CONCLUSION

This is a considerable record of League achievement in humanitarian and social tasks, and it is a field in which the League has become more nearly universal than in any other, for countries such as Germany, the United States, Turkey and Soviet Russia, which are not Members of the League, co-operate with its agents or organisations.

In dealing with these questions the machinery and methods of the League have proved adaptable, effective, and swift in action. Ample and precise information is gathered and concentrated through questionnaires, enquiries, expert investigations, annual reports, etc.; Governments and private organisations are then brought together in conferences, and their decisions entrusted for action to the standing machinery that exists for the purpose, such as the League Committees or other agents. If the moment proves unripe for decision, further study is devoted to the subject, advance is made at such points where advance is possible, and the opportune moment for a general step forward is awaited. Efforts that were formerly dispersed and intermittent are co-ordinated, systematised, and made continuous under a permanent organisation. This continuity extends the atmosphere of understanding which is essential to progress.

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